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## Preserve and promote 'Hansa Akshara' manuscript writing style via a Sinhala typeface

**Abstract** – 'Hansaakshara' is a Sinhala manuscript writing style that has the features of an abstract swan (Hansaya = Swan). The letters are very precise and round in shape and contain a swash at its terminals. The research addresses the need to create a Sinhala typeface to preserve and promote Sinhala manuscript writing, and its application as a digitized typeface, by protecting the visual perception of the traditional Manuscript. The research looked to manuscript samples collected from Buddhist temples and the National Museum of Sri Lanka and was conducted as experimental research. It tested the readability of visuals referred to comprehension and visual comfort in reading long text passages. The research was conducted in four stages. The author begins by defining the theoretical ground, and the importance of preserving and promoting an ancient Sinhala manuscript writing style as a typeface, and a discussion on the boundaries of this project. The second part introduces the framework of analysis developed for recording the relevant design features of the manuscript type to use as a model. In the third phase, the author applies the framework to the 10 selected 'Hansakshara' manuscripts. The fourth phase introduced the process of reviving the manuscript type. Although the author focuses on defining a process for designing a Sinhala manuscript-type revival, the suggestions were applicable further than the scope of a Sinhala-type revival project. The method ensured a strong connection to the original source while also providing considerable assistance in understanding how to take inspiration from historical types of writing styles in a contemporary context. This project also documents several findings regarding traditional typeface design.

**Keywords:** Sinhala manuscripts, Hansakshara writing style, Type revival