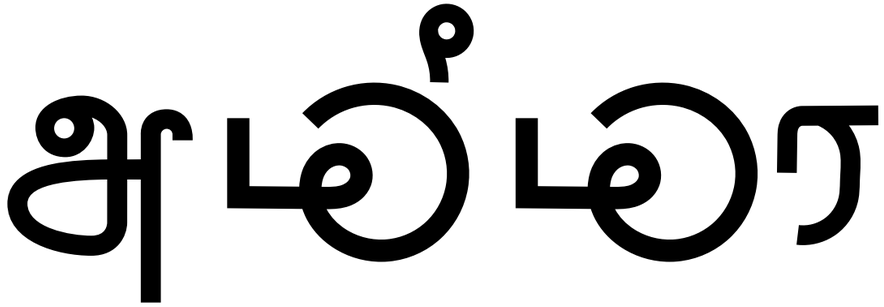
A Few Other Kinds

A Fusion of Sinhala and Tamil Letters



A Few Other Kinds
A Fusion of Sinhala and Tamil Letters

Harmony is not difficult. We will rejoice living in one world when we learn to see our similarities instead of differences.

Our isolation in our own worlds is a construct of our cultures, not a part of who we are. It is not harmony that is difficult, but understanding the true nature of that which divides us.

This is a recognition of a linguistic obstacle that separated us as Sinhala and Tamil people.

-Pathum Egodawatta

Special thanks to Denzel Rajitha, Rajitha Madhbhasha, Rajitha Madhbhasha, Ruwan Egodawatta, Kasun Indie,Ishara Jayathilake, Lasantha Deepal, N.K. Ashokbharan, Sajaan Peries, Alain Parizeau, Aaron Glasson, Sumudu Hemachandra, Amreeya Mowlana, Diana George, Asele Jayarathne, Kosala Senevirathne, Prabhath Sirisena, Natasha Perera, Arunothayan Ravindran

This is a project by Pathum Egodawatta as partial fulfillment of Final and Personel project module of the Bachelor of Arts Graphic Design degree programme at Nothumbria Unversity, UK.

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Dedicated to all the humans that provided shelter and protection - or LIFE - for the displaced Tamil community during the 1983 Black July Riots

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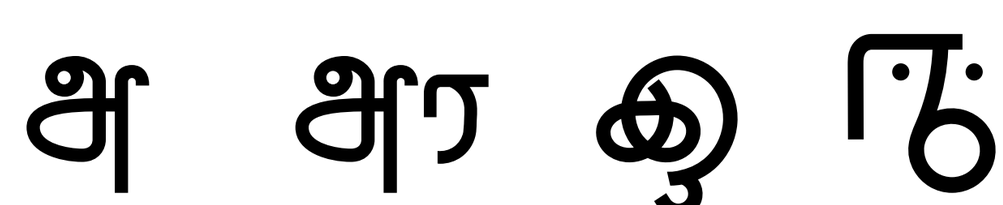
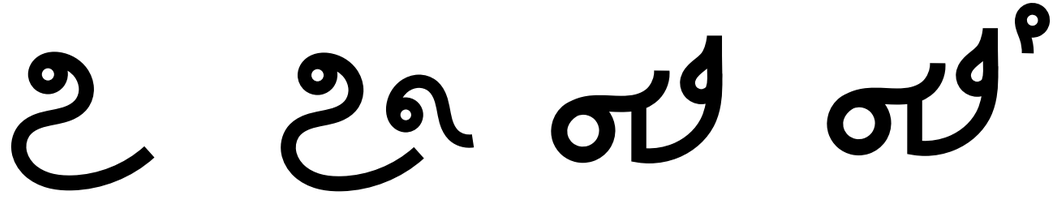
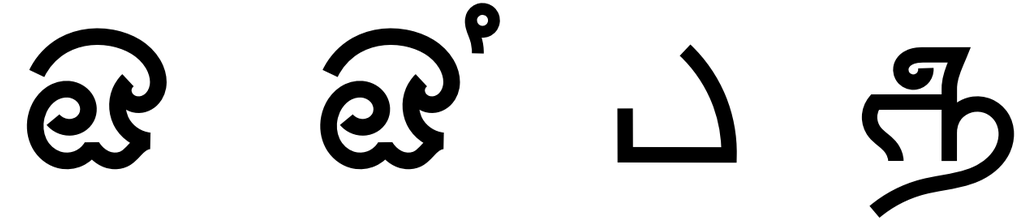


அ + அ ஆ + ஆ இ + இ ஈ + ஈ

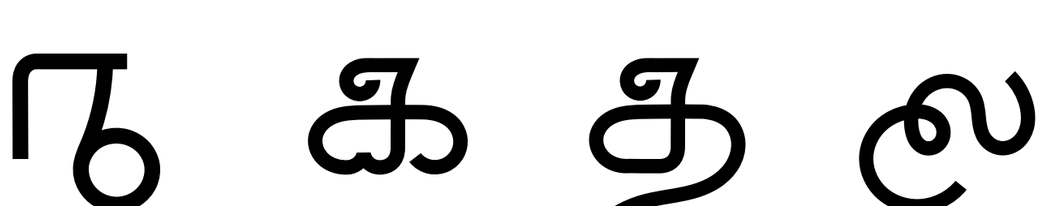


உ + உ ஊ + ஊ எ + எ ஏ + ஏ



ஒ + ஒ ஓ + ஓ ட + ட ந + ந

ப + ப ஜ + ஜ ம + ம ய + ய



ர + ர க + க த + த ல + ல

வ + வ ஷ + ஷ ஸ + ஸ

யக்கலே

Yakkala

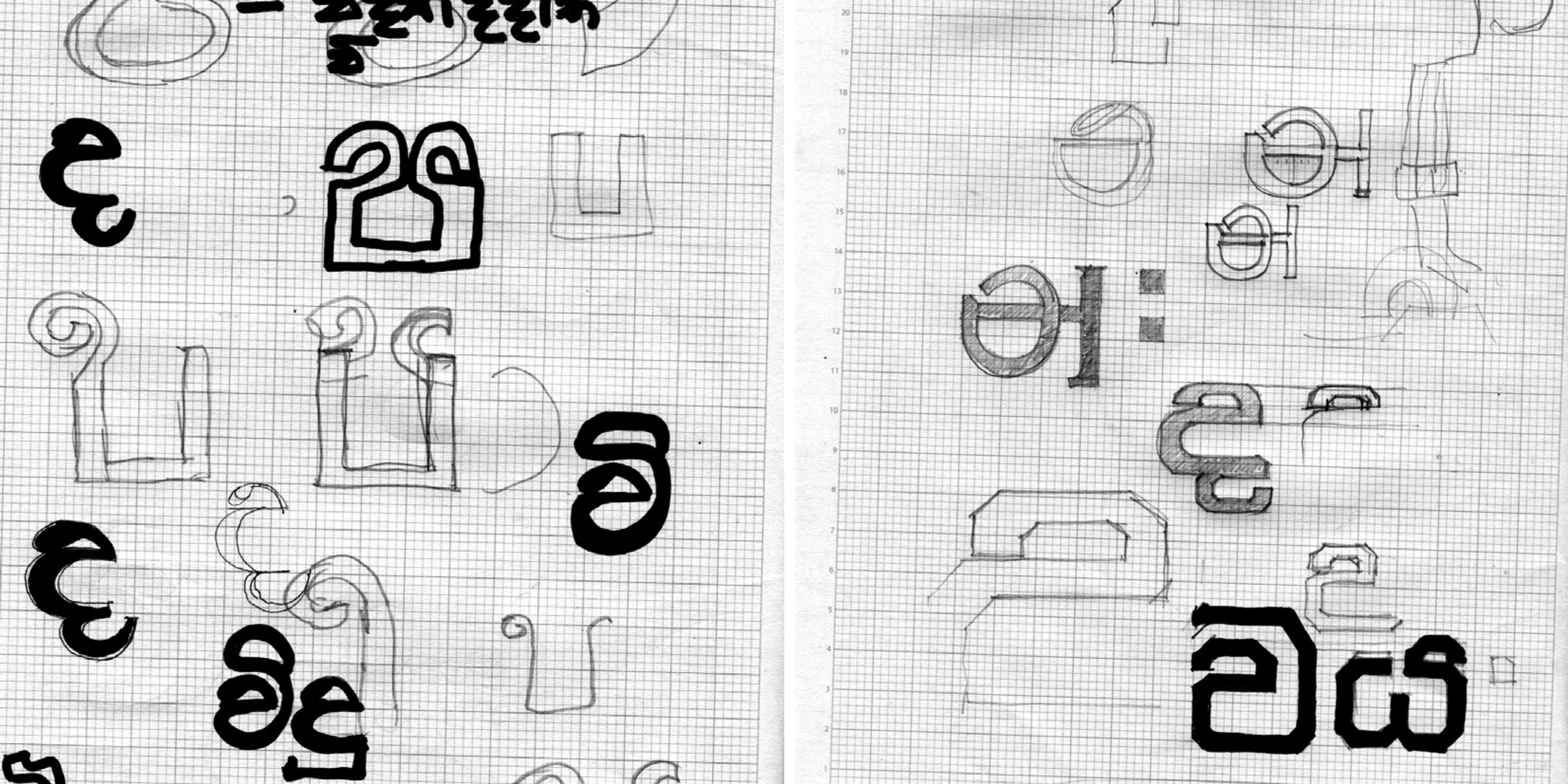
Introduction

The ethnic conflicts in Sri Lanka surfaced in a new form as a language problem in 1950’s and eventually it led to a series of unfortunate events which included much political turmoil and a 30 year long war. It is evident that the damage has already been done and in the light of peace in Sri Lanka, the ethnic tension continues to grow.

This project is not about solving the political problems in the country, but to explore the different graphical aspects of cultural boundaries between ethnicities in Sri Lanka and an attempt to dissolve these boundaries in a selected context.

The main boundary between cultures is the language and it happens that both sinhala and tamil languages come from the same branch of indic languages. The two ethnicities share many similar pronunciation of words as well. A deeper look into the visual properties of the two alphabets, and their development prompts that there is a possibility of building a one set of letters to be used for both languages essentially blurring out the language barrier on a different level.

Both the Sinhala and Tamil alphabets and writing systems were simplified and changed to accommodate the idea of hybrid letters. Basically this is a new writing system based on sinhala and tamil that could be easily learnt by the both ethnicities.



Developent of the glyphs

Guidelines and limitations followed in developing the letters.

1. Writing systems should be simplified. Follow a standard whenever possible and unify the system. Create a balance between unification, simplification and preservation of original qualities.

2. Characters should be easy to recognize and this should be evaluated along with the following different aspects.

i. The readability

ii. Preserving the original visual aesthetic qualities of the both languages.

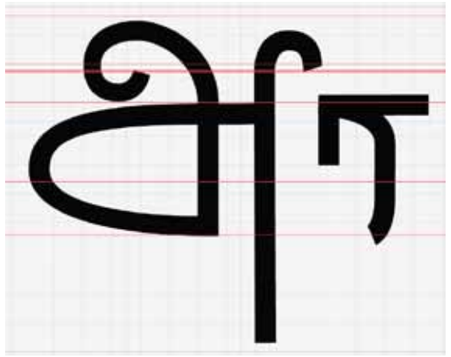
iii. Characters that work together visually as one typeface.

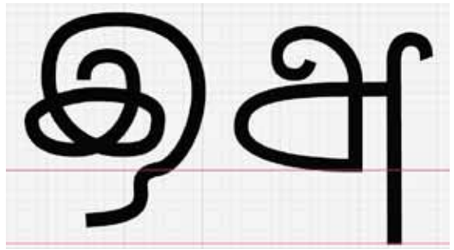
iv. Always test for readbilty and legibility (with different demographic segments

3. Consider the project as one community seeking for a better writing system. Sinhala and Tamil are some languages they know, they will learn, teach and use the new language.

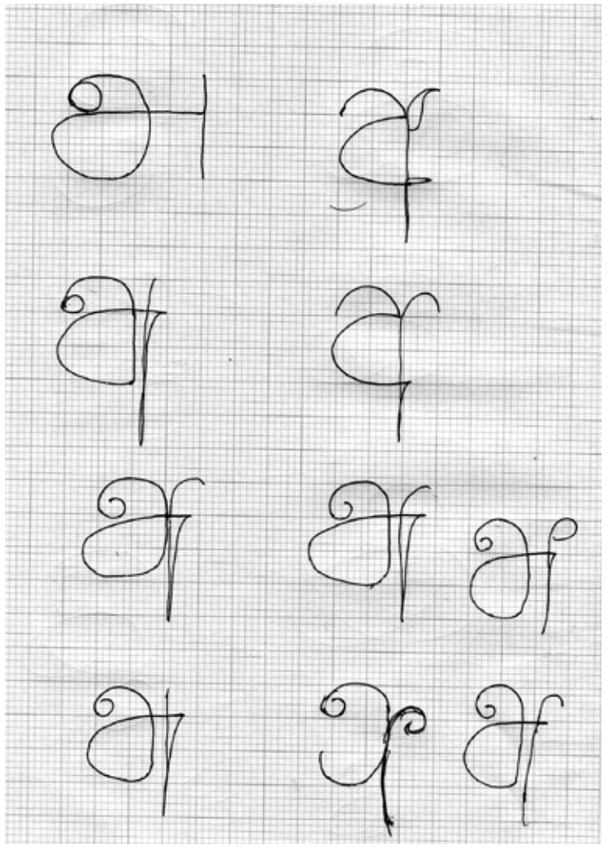
4. Malayalam and Kannada alphabets were referenced for the development of the glyphs, as these two languages has strong historical ties with Sinhala and Tamil languages.

initial digital draft

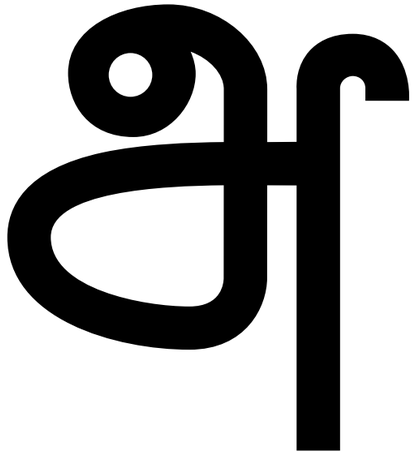




sketches



different typefaces

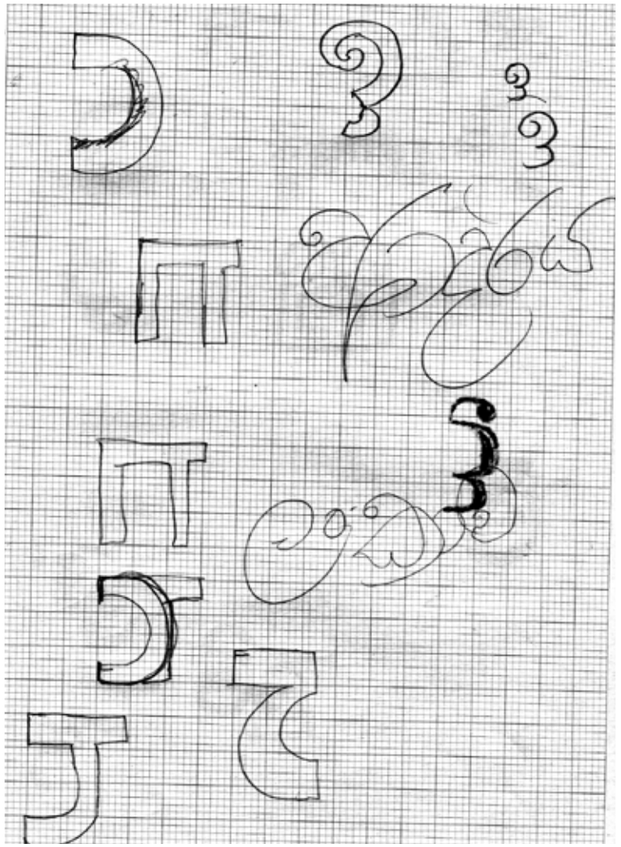


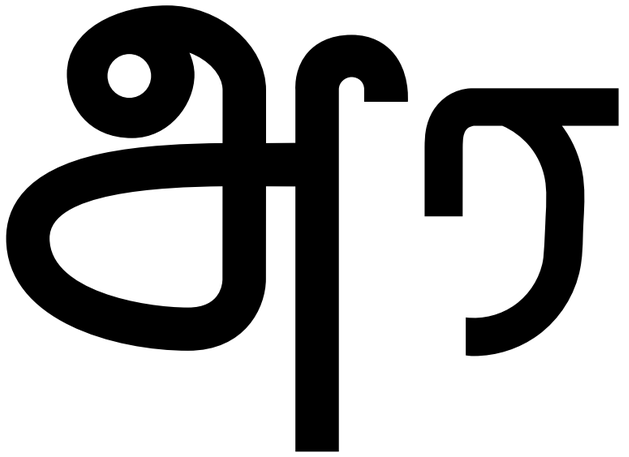
ᴀᴇ /அ/ æ

ᴀᴇ + அ

initial digital draft

sketches



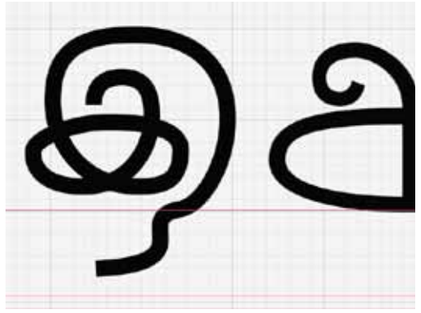


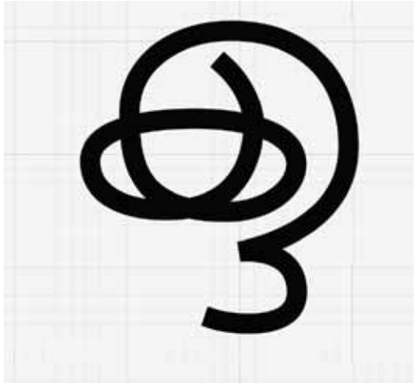
different typefaces

ஃ /அ/ /æ/

க + ஆ

initial digital draft





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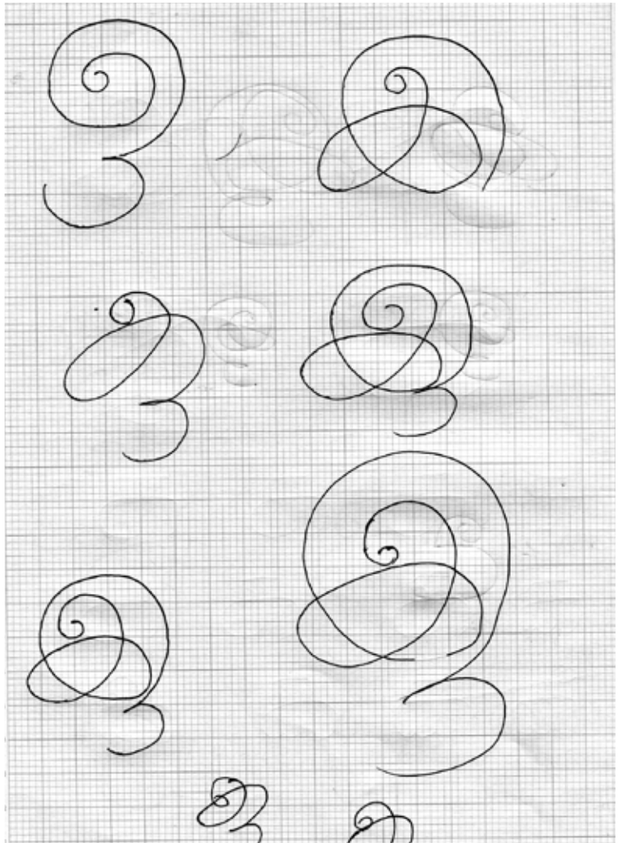
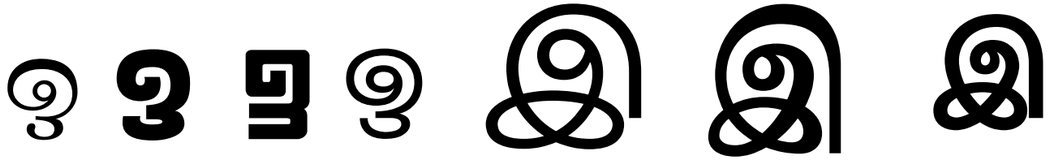


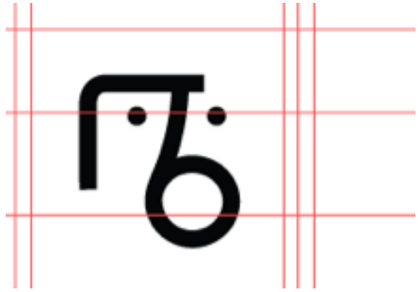
different typefaces



ഉ / ഇ / /ə/

ഉ + ഇ

initial digital draft



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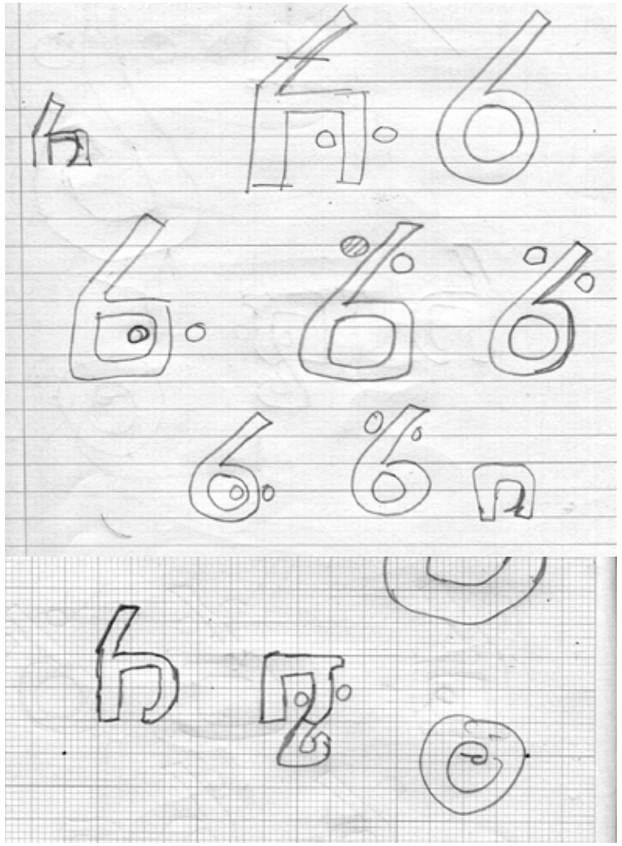

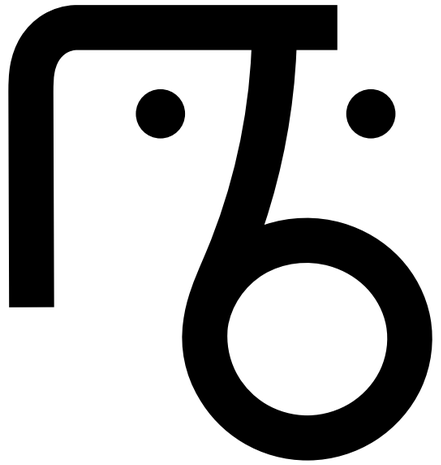

different typefaces

ᳪ / ᳬ / /iː/

initial digital draft

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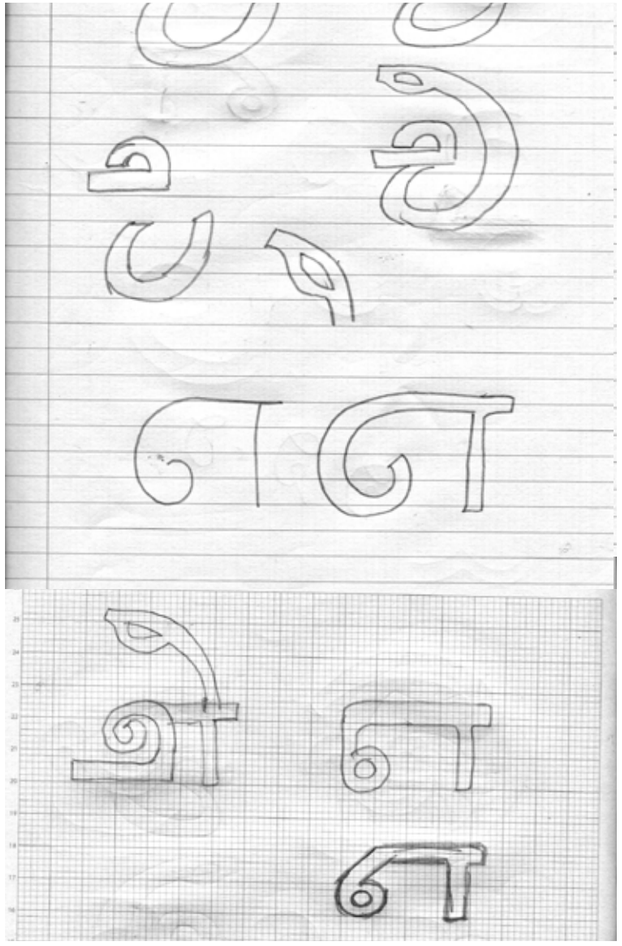
sketches



different typefaces

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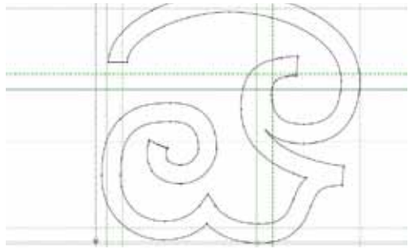
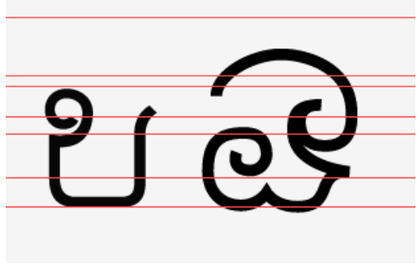
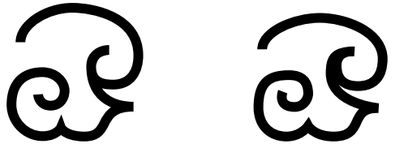
ඒ / ෆ / /ɛ/

ඒ + ෆ

initial digital draft







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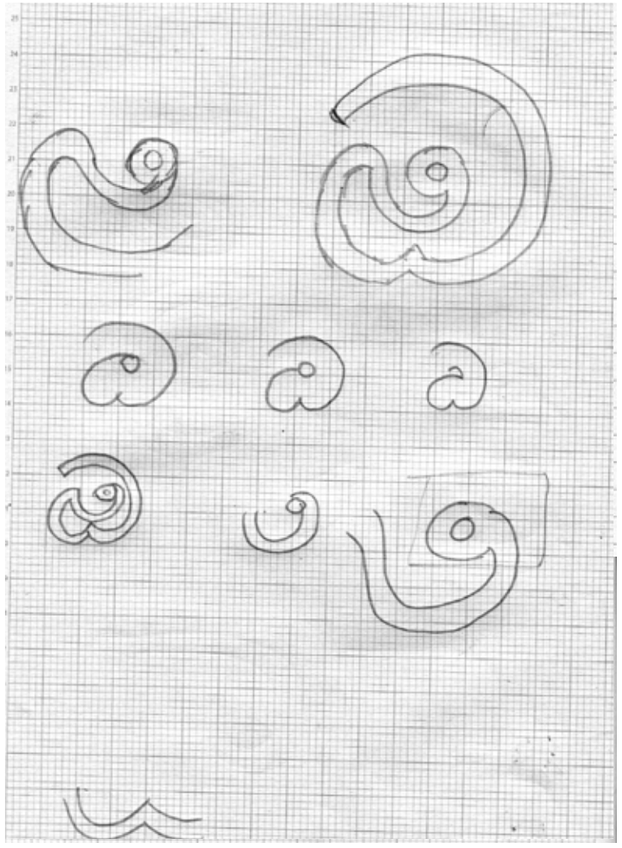
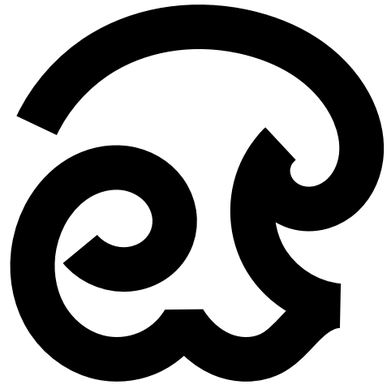


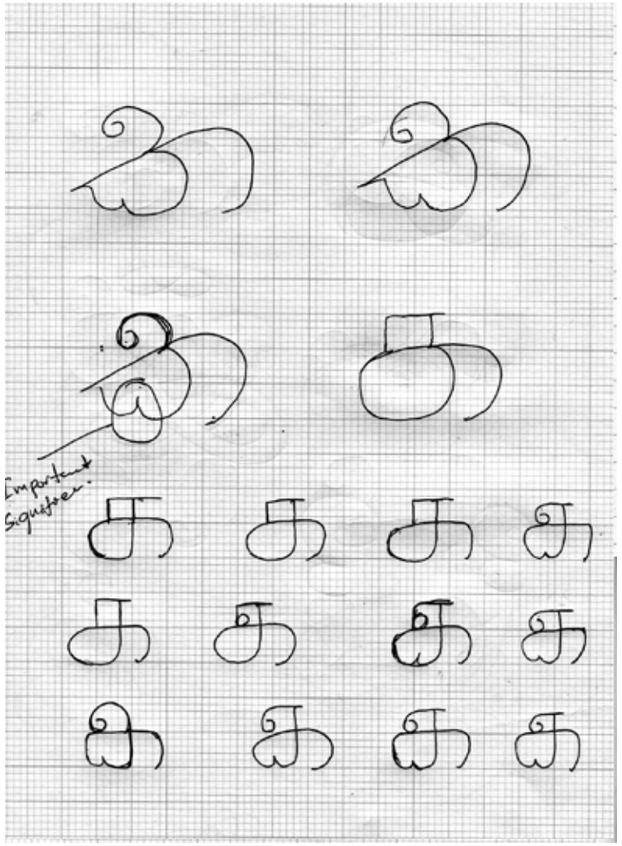


different typefaces

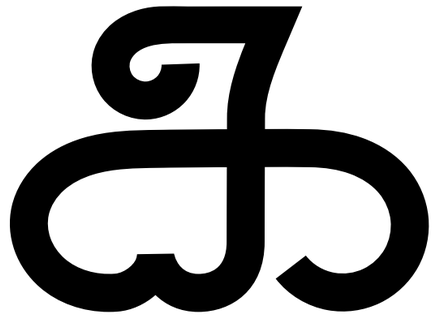
ඔ / ඵ / /ɒ/

initial digital draft

sketches



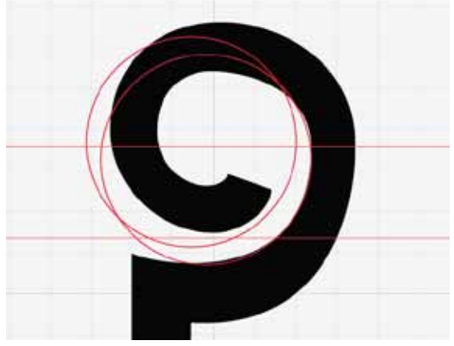
different typefaces



ந / ந் / /n/

க + க

initial digital draft



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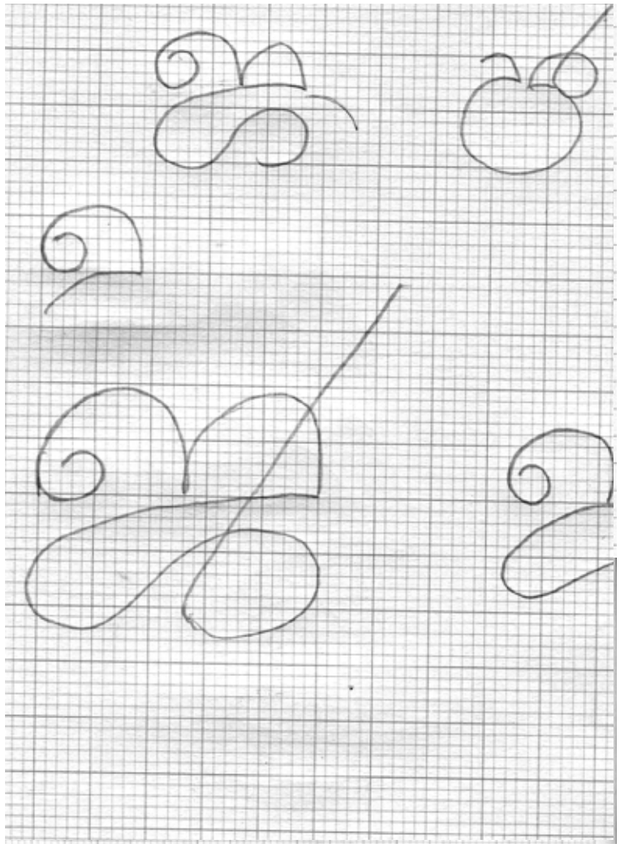
sketches



different typefaces

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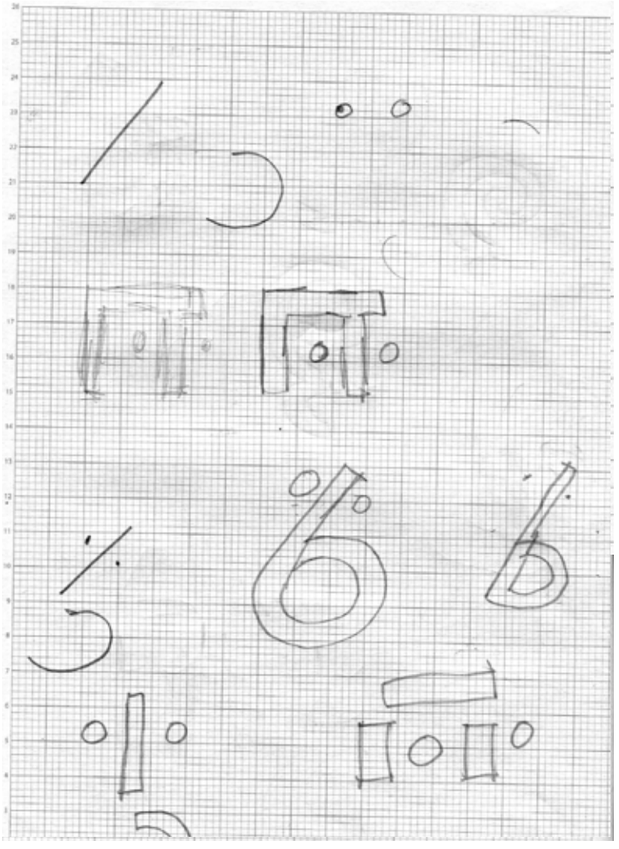
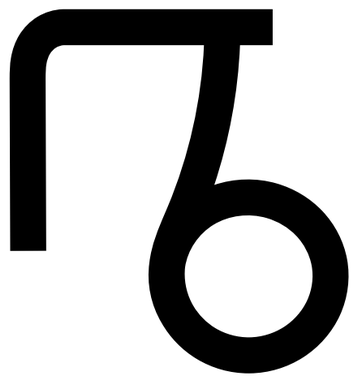
ජ / ජ / /dʒ/

ජ + ජ

initial digital draft

sketches



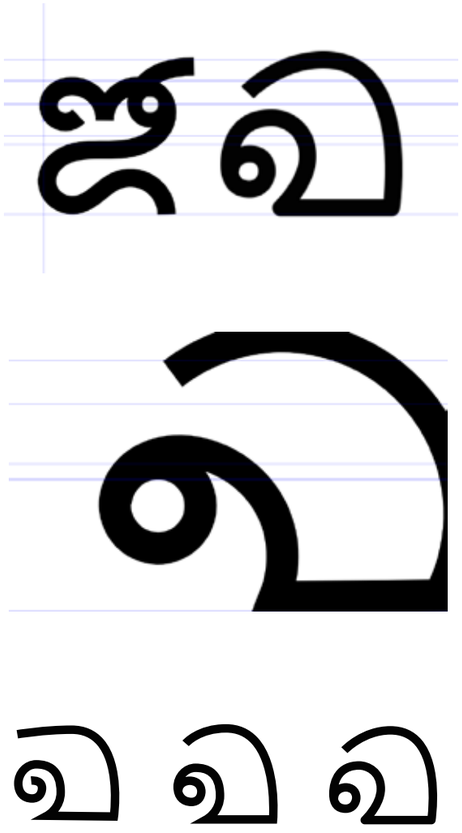


different typefaces

ഠ / ന / /r/

ഠ + ന

initial digital draft



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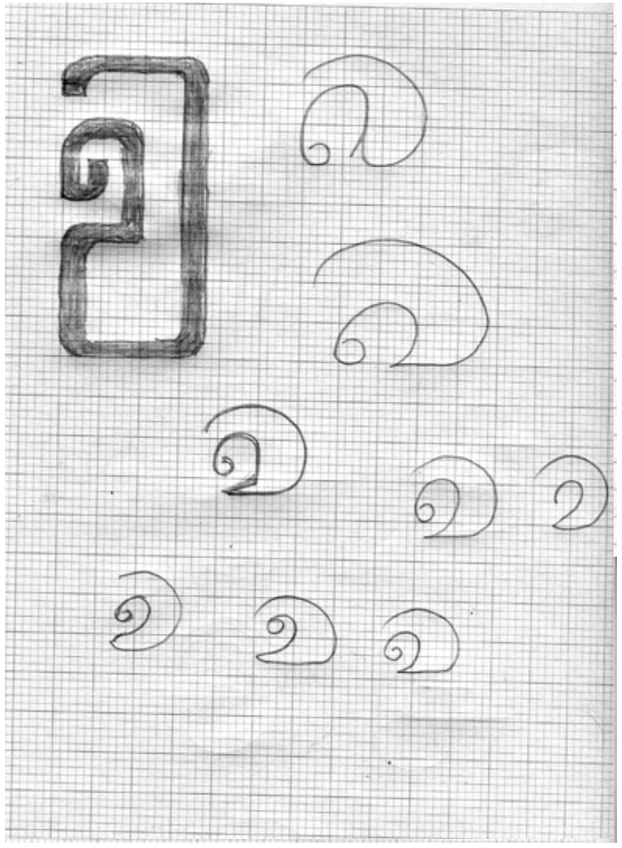
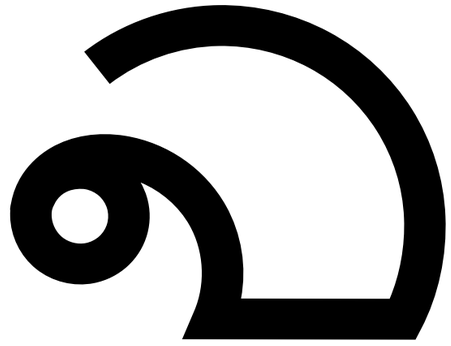


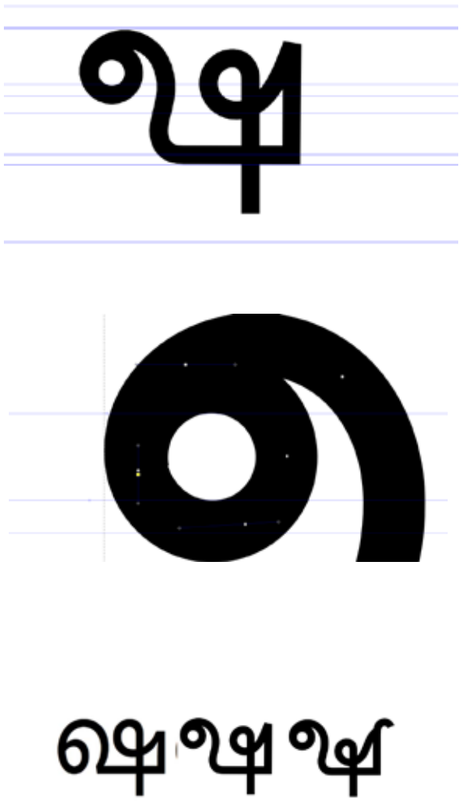


different typefaces

ව / ඛ / /v/

ව + ඛ

initial digital draft



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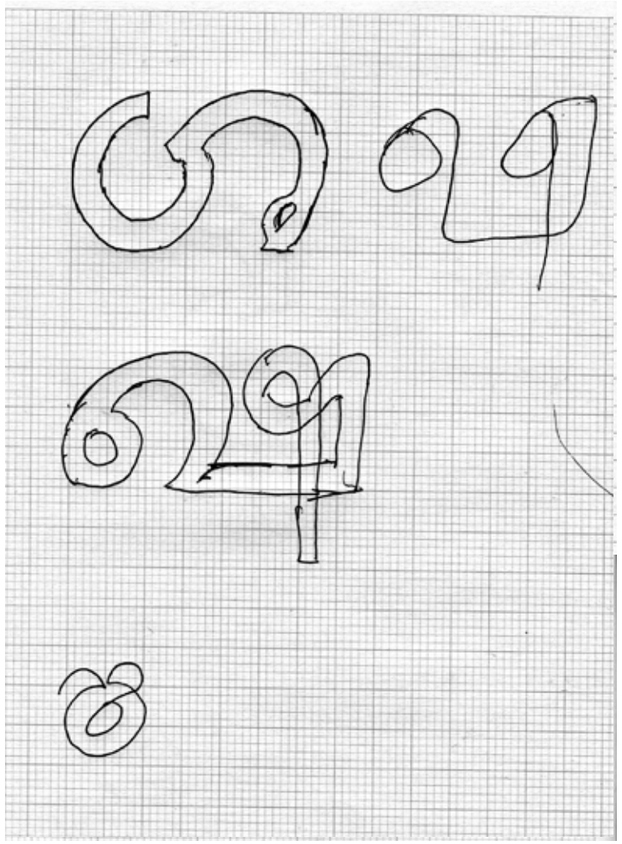


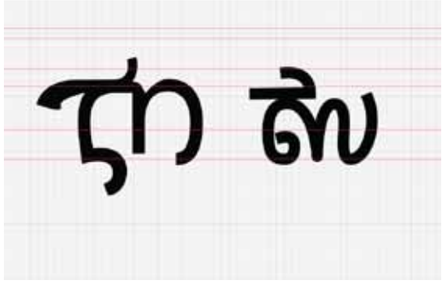
different typefaces

ஜ ஜ ஜ ஜ ஷ ஷ ஷ

ஜ ஶ / ஷ / /ʃ/

ஜ + ஷ

initial digital draft



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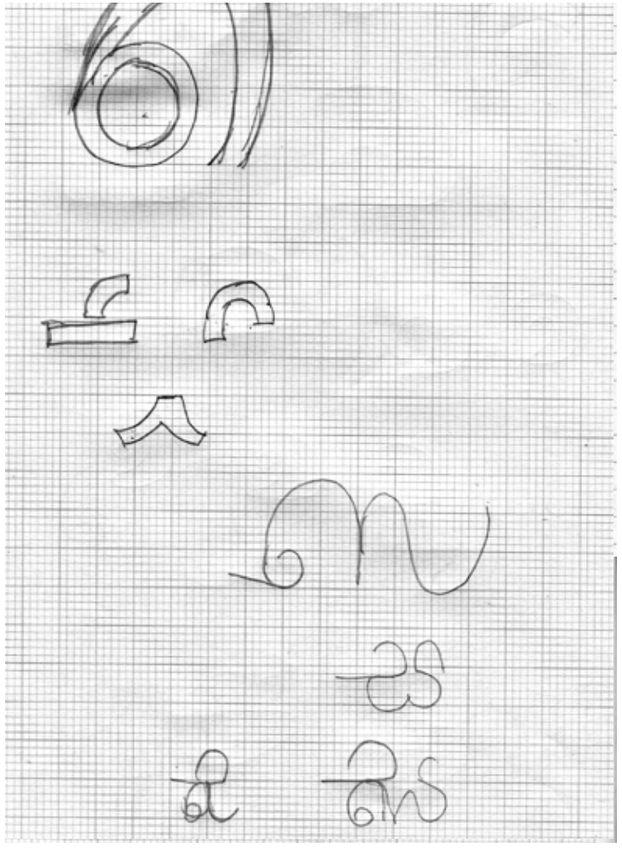

different typefaces

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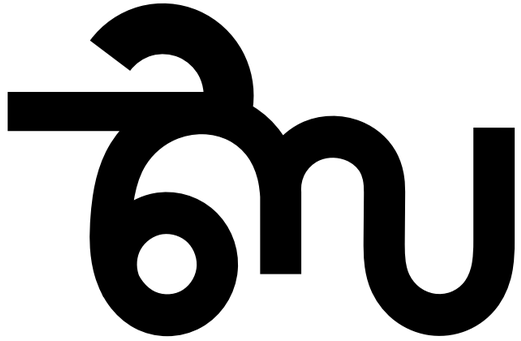
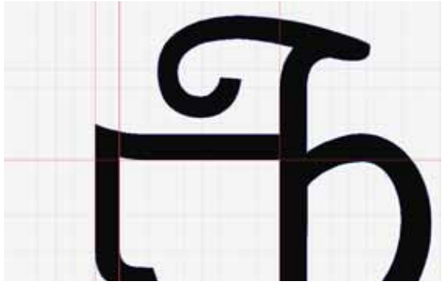


ඝ / ඟ / /s/

ඝ + ඟ

initial digital draft



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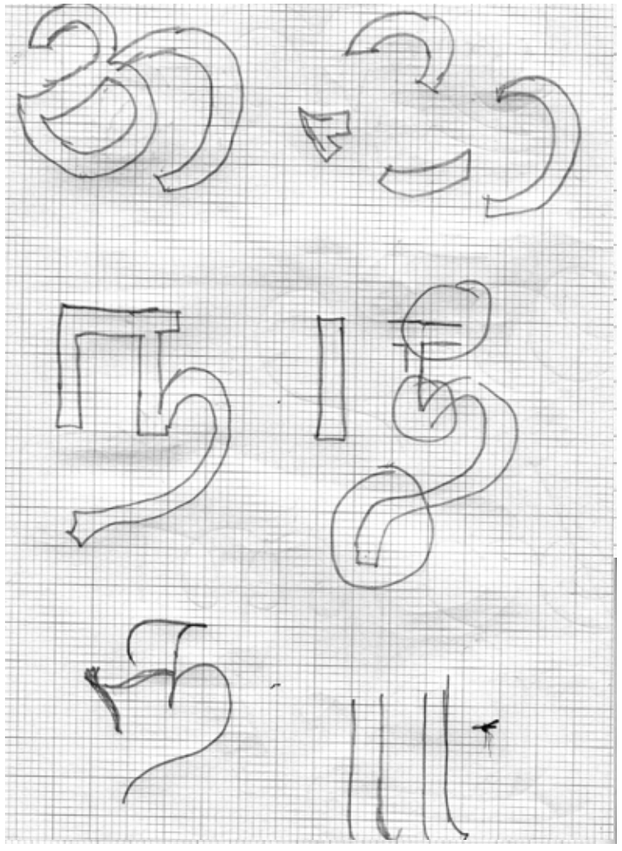
sketches



different typefaces

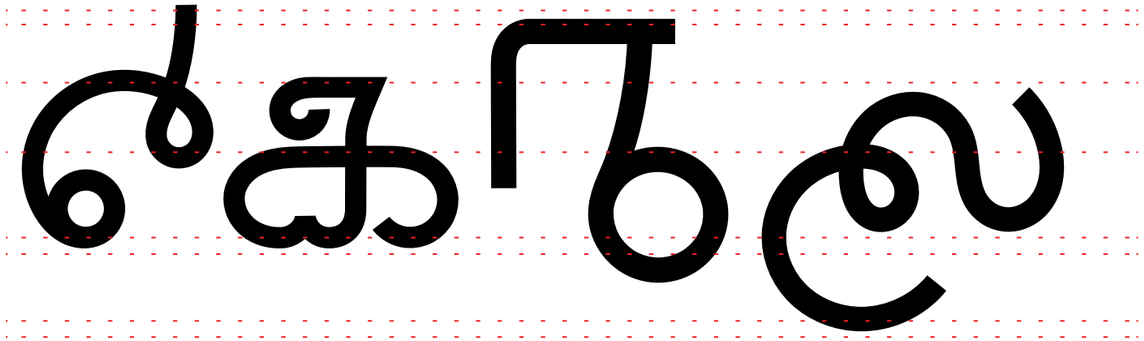
ස ස ස සි සෙ සෙ ස

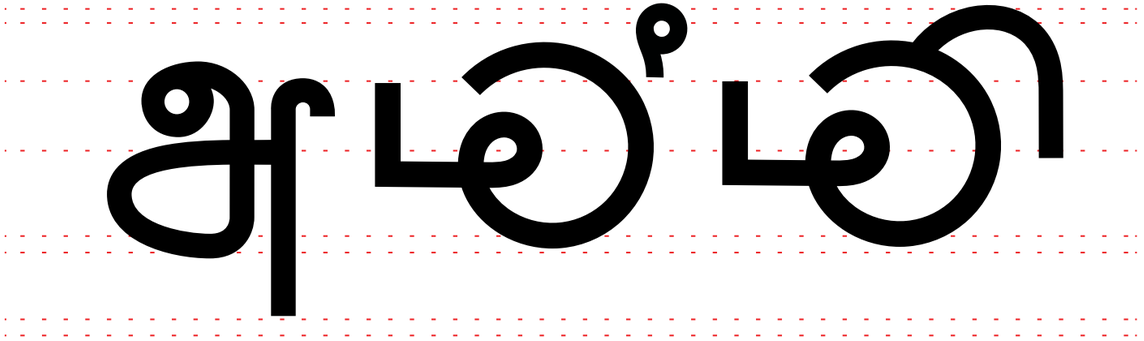
න / ந / /n/

න + ந

Typeface Grid

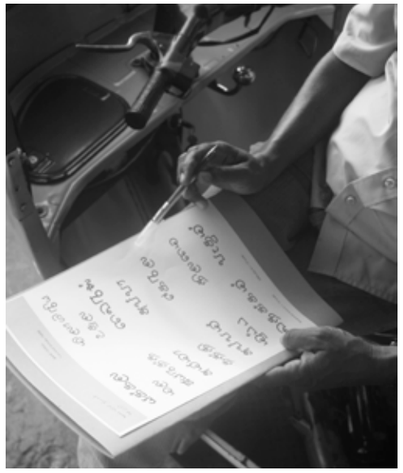
Due to the hybrid nature of the typeface, the baseline, ascender height and the descender height had to developed into two different heights,bench marked from ‘Font Master Malithi’ font family and ‘Kohinoor Tamil’ font family.

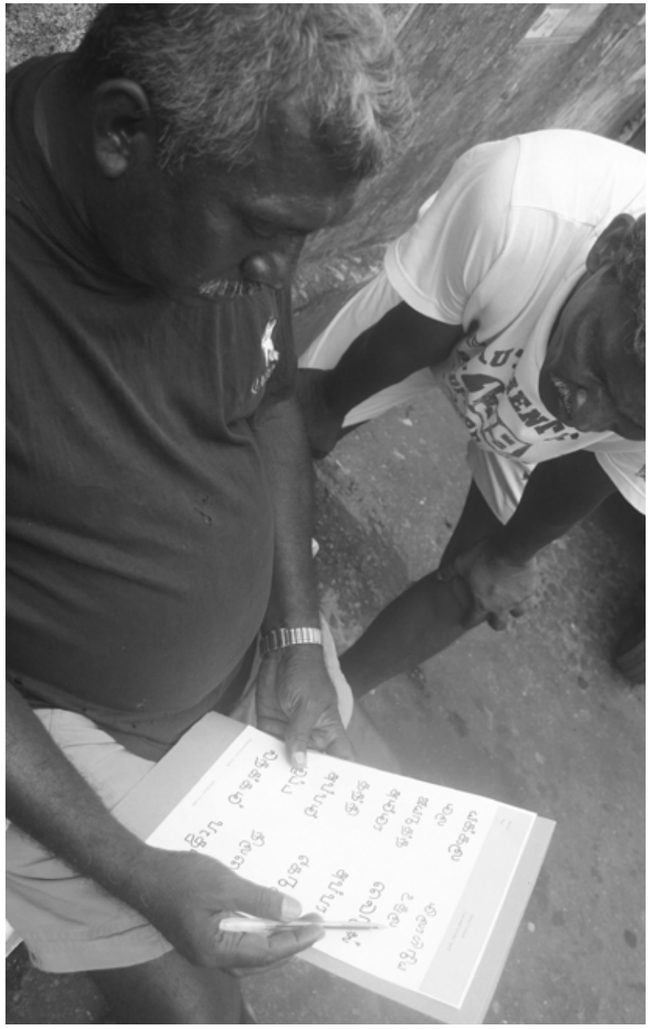


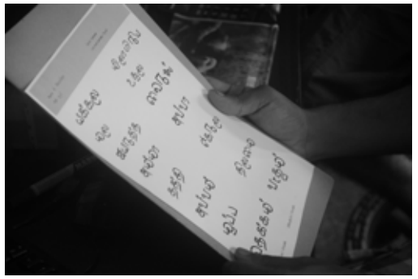


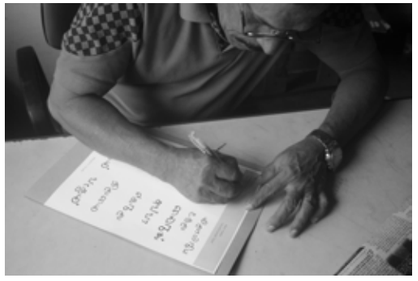
User Testing

Other-Letter is designed to be used as a title typeface and regardless of the hybrid nature, the typeface could be manipulated into different forms.









Sizes and useages

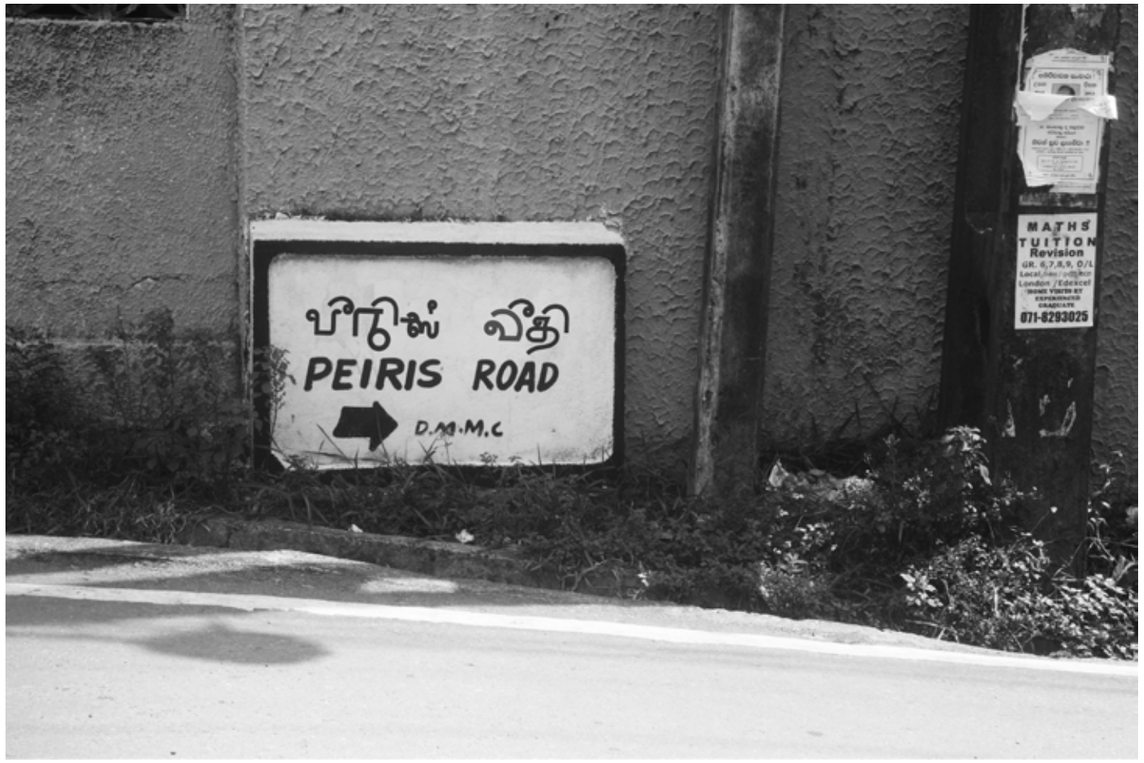
Other-Letter is designed to be used as a title typeface and regardless of the hybrid nature, the typeface could be manipulated into different forms.

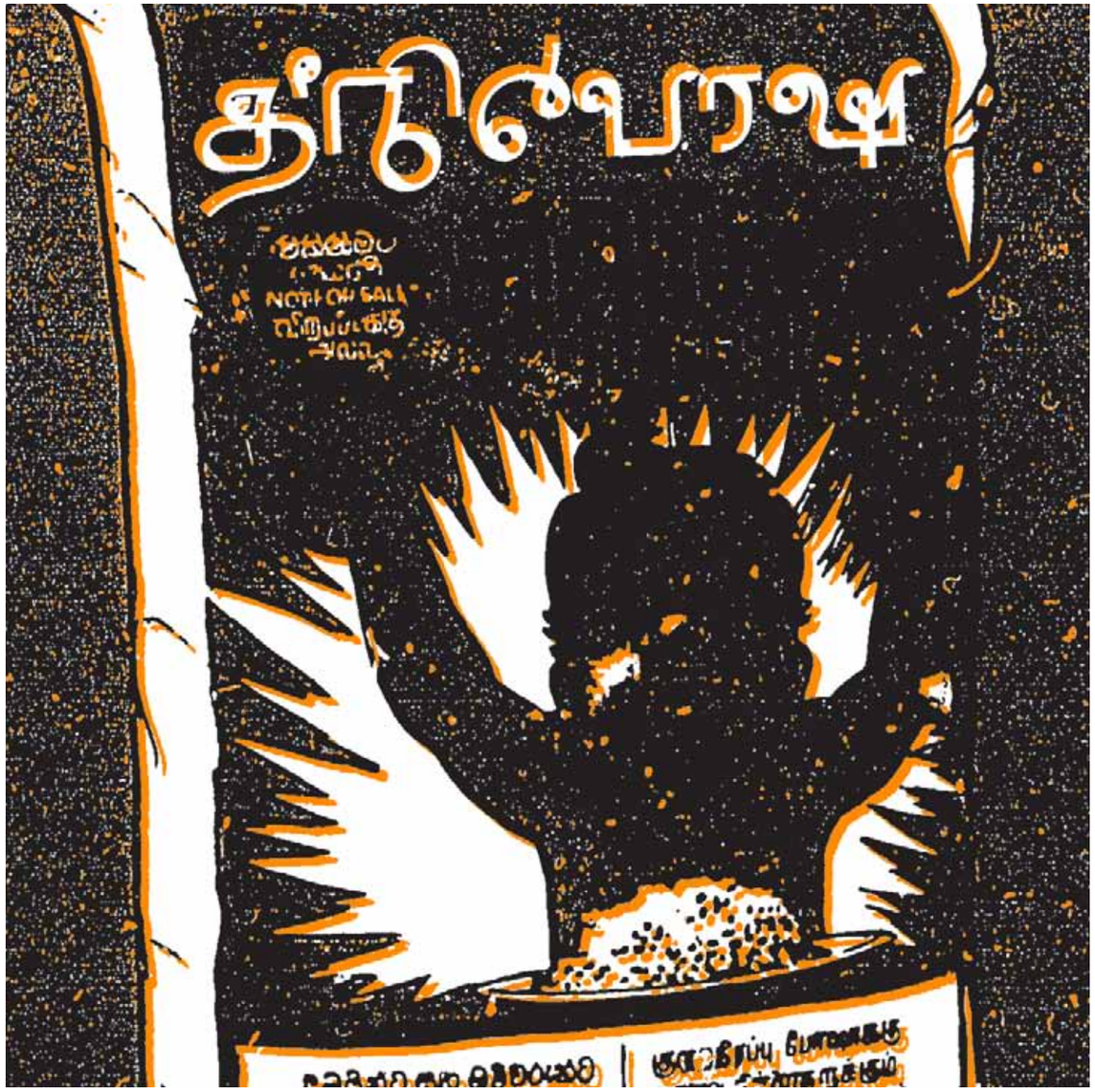
Presented here are set of imagined useages of the typeface. From signage to the one of the most popular cereals in Sri Lanka,Thriposha pakaging, is redone using the Other-Letter to show how can this typeface could be used.

தபால்
POST
CODE NO
10350

ஹில் வீதி
HILL STREET
கொலம்பு
COLOMBO
காலி
GALLE
STATION ROAD
ஸ்டேஷன் வீதி

மவுண்ட் லவினியா
MOUNT LAVINIA


பீரிஸ் வீதி
PEIRIS ROAD
D.M.M.C
MATHS
TUITION
Revision
071-8293025



කලඛලය

ඉතිහාසයට ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කියන්නෙ හිස්ටරී ඒක හිස්-ස්ටොරි විදිහටත් සද්දෙ අනුව කඩා ගන්න පුළුවනී ඒ කියන්නෙ ඔහුගේ කතාව් ඒක තමයි අපි ඉතිහාසය විදිහට කියවන්නේ ඒක බලය මූලික පිරිමි කතාව් අපි හොයාගන්න ඕන හර්-ස්ටොරි ඇගේ කතාව් ජීවිතය මූලික ගැහැණු කතාව් මං හිතන්නෙ ඒක තමයි නුදී ජන-ජනයාගෙ කතාව් ඒක තමයි ජාතියක ඇත්ත උරුමය වෙන්නේ ගල්කණුවත් වැව් දාගැබ් වත් නෙමෙයි මේ ගැන හිත හිත ඉඳිද්දියි හදිස්සියෙ මැණික් සන්දසාගර් මුණගැහුනේ

එයා ගේනවා ලිවින් හෙරිටේජ් කියල අදහසකී ඒක ඇත්තටම ව්‍යාපෘතියකී අපේ චර්යාමය උරුමයන් හා ප්‍රොතෙස්තන්ත වෙන්න කලින් අපේ ඇත්ත විශ්වාස

ෂකති

ஆண்டுகளுக்குப் பிறகு கண்ணாடிகள் மூலம் சூரியஒளியை தரிசிக்கும் ருஜுகான்மக்கள்
டோணியின் நண்பர், ஹெலிகாப்டர் 'ாட்டை கற்றுக் கொடுத்தவர் மரணம்
புதுவையில் இன்று முதல் காலவரையற்ற லாரி ஸ்டிரைக்
நைட்டோட நைட்டா காசை குறைச்சுட்டாங்கப்பா!
இத்தாலி பாசிஸ்டுகள்... ட்விட்டர் கருத்தால் சர்ச்சையில் சிக்கிய சசி தரூர்!
டெல்டா பகுதிகளில் மீத்தேன் எடுக்க தடை: ஆய்வு குழு அமைப்பு... ஜெயலலிதா
மெட்ரோ ரயில்: பாரம்பரிய கட்டங்கள் தவிர பிற கட்டிடங்களை இடித்து தள்ளலாம்
உங்க கதைக்கு இவர்தான் ஹீரோ- கோலிவுட்

වැදගත්

මිත්‍යා පද්ධති හොයාගෙන යන එකී මට හිතෙන්නෙ උරුමය ගැන සජීවී සංකල්පයක් සන්දසාගර් කතා කරනවා විතරක් නෙමෙයි එයා ඒක ජීවිත පුහුණුව-ක් විදිහට ගන්නවී ඒකට හේතුවත් මැණික්ම විස්තර කරනවී නෳායිකෘ විෂයික දැනුම් සංදර්භයන් බටහිර දැනුම් කලාපයට අයිති අර්ත ගැන්වීම් ඒ වෙනුවට පෙරදිග තිබුනෙ අවබෝධයෘ භාවනාව සහ ඇවතුම් පැවතුම්
අද ලංකාවෙ අපි ගත කරන ජීවිතේ ගැන එයාගෙ විස්තරය හරි අලුතී අපි එන්නෙ කොහෙන්ද කියල

ஹீரோக்களை நறநறக்க வைக்கும் சந்தானம்
'ராஜிதாவாகி ஜகுபர் சாதிக்கை மணந்த சத்யபிரியா:
பாதுகாப்பு கோரி மதுரை ஹைகோர்ட்டில் மனு
நாய்க்குட்டி கமெண்ட்: மோடி மீது வழக்கு!
நடிகை லீனாவின் காதலன் சுகாக்கு நாட்கள் போ-லீஸ் காவல்!
மீண்டும் ஒரு மொழிப் போருக்கு தமிழ் இனம் தய-ாராக வேண்டும்: சீமான்
பீகார்: மதிய உணவு சாப்பிட்ட குழந்தைகள் பலி - பேருக்கு தீவிர
நைட்டோட நைட்டா காசை குறைச்சுட்டாங்கப்பா!
இத்தாலி பாசிஸ்டுகள்... ட்விட்டர் கருத்தால்

Website

A live website was developed where users can type anything they want using the typeface, and download it as a image, or share it on facebook. And the user generated images are displayed in a single web page as a gallery.

Additionally the website contains a readability test, a discussion forum and a blog with the process of the development. This will lead a discussion on the project and it will bring it from the academic project level to a public accessible toolkit oftype.

The site is live at following URL
http://la-ulu.com/afewotherkinds/

This project is based mainly on a concept in order to prove that the intended purpose can be fulfilled. It is a design assignment that can however, work as a very much usable typeface for industry use as well.