

*Specimens of Sanskrit, Kannada and Tamil in Latin transliteration  
in various Unicode fonts (February 13, 2010)*

The following lines were written using NeoOffice (version 3.0.2) with Mac OSX version 10.5.8 on a PowerMac G5 (model 7,3). The sample text contains underdots for retroflex consonants and the vocalic *r*, the accent on the palatal sibilant, macrons over vowels, und and underlines for certain Tamil consonants. Also italics and bold print have been tested.

Nowadays many fonts containing all the Indologically necessary signs, including bold and italic typefaces, are freely available: they either come as a standard part of Mac OSX 10.5 (**Times, Helvetica, Palatino**), or they can be downloaded free of cost from a number of web sites that can easily be found by means of an internet search engine, e.g., from the Summer School of Linguistics (SIL) (**Gentium Basic, Gentium Book Basic, Charis SIL**); the various Unicode fonts produced by Dr. J. Smith at the University of Cambridge (**IndUni-P, IndUni-N, IndUni-T, IndUni-H, IndUni-C**, modelled after Palatino, New Century Schoolbook, Times, Helvetica and Courier); and some fonts from other sources, such as the **DejaVu** series, **FreeSerif, FreeSans, Linux Libertine**, and **Gandhari Unicode**.

Not every Unicode font is suitable for all Indological work. If one works with transliterated classical Sanskrit, or with modern Kannada, one could also consider using the otherwise fine fonts of the TeX Gyre series, originally designed for use with TeX but also available in OpenType format; but if one needs to transliterate Old Kannada, Tamil, or Malayalam, one needs underlined consonants (l, r, n), which are not provided by these, as well as many other fonts. (However, underlined consonants are easily synthesized when one creates texts by using the XeTeX type setting system.)

Why should one choose not to use the standard system fonts that come with OSX? If one compares the sample text in Palatino and in other Palatino-style fonts (TeX Gyre Pagella, IndUni-P), one will notice that the spacing between letters and diacritical marks is greater, which makes the text clearer and easier to read. (Compare also Times and Times-like fonts: Linux Libertine, Gandhari Unicode, TeX Gyre Termes, IndUni-T.)

The fonts that are shown in the samples below have been found to give usable

results with several different word processors, but not every word processor understands every font equally well. For instance, both **OpenOffice** and its (nowadays, after version 3.1, only slightly) more Mac-like derivative **NeoOffice** are excellent products, but the various styles of the Cambridge fonts (italic, bold, bold italic) are recognized as different fonts by NeoOffice, and this leads to unpleasant surprises if a text that is written in NeoOffice is later opened in OpenOffice. This may be a consideration when choosing a font.

In **Nisus Writer** one can print any font in bold or italics, but other word processors (e.g., **NeoOffice**, **OpenOffice** and **Pages**) do not synthesize type faces in such a manner, which means that some type faces (that are esthetically not very appealing anyway, when thus synthesized) cannot be used: the original Gentium by SIL cannot be used bold, the OSX system font Lucida Grande has no italics; and many others, not included among the samples below, have neither. Also, the height of the letters differs from one font to another, and the user may want to increase the line spacing settings of the word processor when using any of them.

The results with **Microsoft® Word** (Word 2004, version 11.0) are plainly unsatisfactory. Although the tested fonts are recognized when a document written in Nisus Writer Express or NeoOffice is opened in Word, some of the same fonts cannot be found in Word's font selection menus, and in the case of some fonts the text is shown distortedly.

*Important note when making PDF files.* Differences also occur when making a PDF file from a text with these fonts. If one makes a simple PDF from NeoOffice, then text in Times, Helvetica, the Cambridge fonts, Linux Libertine and the TeX Gyre fonts becomes unreadable. If one uses the function (given in one of the menu bar pull-down menus) "Export as PDF..." and then chooses "PDF/A-1a", these problems are avoided with Times and Helvetica. In the case of the Cambridge fonts, Linux Libertine and the TeX Gyre fonts, one must create a PDF-X via the Mac OSX print system, so that the font is embedded. Embedding the fonts (in PDF-X) leads to considerably larger files, but is always advisable if one wishes to share one's work with others who may not have the fonts one has used.

The sample paragraph below was formatted in 12 point size, with single spacing between the lines.

### Standard system fonts:

(Times) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

(Palatino) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

(Helvetica) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

### Fonts by SIL:

(Gentium Basic) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

(Gentium Book Basic) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

(Charis SIL) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

### Cambridge fonts:

(IndUni-P) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Alakānatā?**

(IndUni-T) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(IndUni-N) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(IndUni-H) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(IndUni-C) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

#### Fonts from other sources:

(DejaVu Serif) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(DejaVu Sans) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(FreeSerif) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide, ivu jōtive, ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?**

(FreeSans) Idānīm tu vyaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca drśyante tarhi vyaṃ tān akṣarān

upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?***

(Gandhari Unicode) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?***

(Linux Libertine) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive. Aḷakānatā?***

**A few fonts without underlined consonants:**

(TeX Gyre Pagella) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive.***

(TeX Gyre Schola) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive.***

(TeX Gyre Termes) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive.***

(TeX Gyre Bonum) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān upayoktum śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive.***

(TeX Gyre Heros) Idānīm tu vayaṃ etādrśān saṃdeśān Unicode-akṣareṣu draṣṭum icchāmaḥ. Yadi sundaratvena spaṣṭatvena ca dr̥śyante tarhi vayaṃ tān akṣarān

upayoktuṃ śaknumaḥ. **Idu dappa akṣaragaḷalli ide**, ivu jōtive, ***ivu dappavāgi jōtive.***