PALIMUKHI | ਪਾਲਿਮੁਖੀ

Palimukhi is an adaptation of the Gurmukhi script for writing Pāli. Among the various writing systems used in India, Gurmukhi is perfectly suited to transcribe Pāli for the following main reasons:

◆ It contains exactly as many letters as Pāli needs, no more and no fewer.
◆ Pali uses conjunct consonants of primarily 2 kinds, both of which can be expressed succictly using Gurmukhi in the following ways:
  ➢ nasalised consonants expressed using the [ਁ] mark preceding the letter
  ➢ doubled consonants expressed using the [ਁ] mark preceding the letter

The following are the letters of the Palimukhi script. These are identical to those of Gurmukhi for Punjabi except for the last letter 'ੜ', which has the [ɾ] sound in Punjabi but is used for the [ḷ] sound in Palimukhi:

ੳ *	ਅ *	ੲ *	ਸ s	ਹ h
ਕ k	ਖ kʰ	ਗ g	ਘ gʱ	ਙ ŋ
ਚ tɕ	ਛ tɕʰ	ਜ dʑ	ਝ dʑʱ	ਞ ɲ
ਟ ṭ	ਠ ṭʰ	ਡ ḍ	ਢ ḍʱ	ਣ ɳ
ਤ t̪	ਥ t̪ʰ	ਦ d̪	ਧ d̪ʱ	ਨ n̪
ਪ p	ਫ pʰ	ਬ b	ਭ bʱ	ਮ m
ਯ j	ਰ r	ਲ l	ਵ ʋ	ੜ ḷ

* THESE LETTERS ARE USED FOR REPRESENTING STANDALONE VOWELS

All the aforementioned letters represent consonants, except for the first 3. these 3 letters are used to represent vowels with the help of vowel marks. Such vowel marks can be used on other letters as well to add their respective vowel sound to that consonant sound (the vowel follows the consonant sound). The following are the vowels, and their respective marks (shown in purple), used Palimukhi:

ਅ Λ	ਆ $a:$	ਇ $ı$	ਈ $i:$
N/A	ਂT	ਿ	ੀ

ੳ u	ੳ $u:$	ਏ $e:$	ੲ $o:$
ੁ	ੂ	ੇ	ੋ
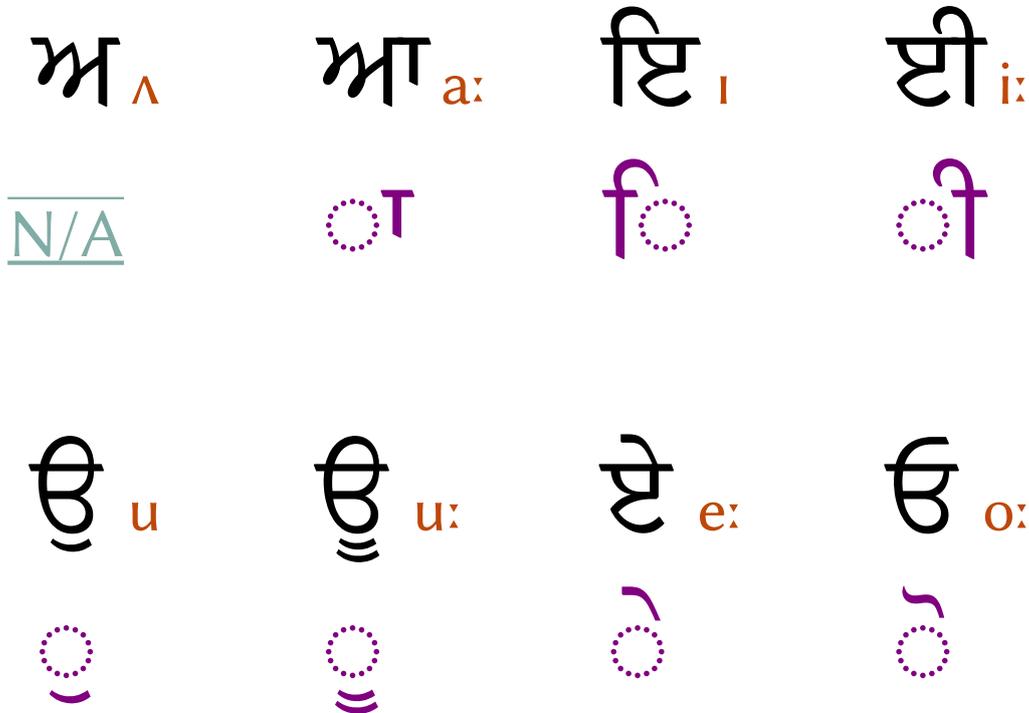
Apart from the letters and vowel marks, there are also a few other marks used in Palimukhi. They are the following:

◆ NIGGAHITA [◌ੰ]: this is identical to the Punjabi 'tippi' mark in form and function except that it can be used at the end of a word as well, unlike in Punjabi. In general, it is used to precede the following letter with the most suitable nasal sound, but at the end of a word, it is pronounced like a final [ŋ] or [m] sound.

◆ ADHAK [◌ੱ]: this is a mark peculiar to the Gurmukhi script which doubles the following letter wherever it occurs in text. Most conjunct consonants in Pali are formed by doubling a consonant sound, thus the adhak mark proves to be particularly useful to transcribe them succinctly.

◆ VIRAMA [◌੍]: this is used to remove the inherent [ʌ] vowel in a letter so that the latter can combine directly with the following consonant sound. Since most conjunct consonants used in Pali can be expressed using the previous 2 marks, the virama doesn't find much use except when both of the former 2 marks aren't suitable. Using the virama can result in ligatures.

In all, the Gurmukhi script brings out the intrinsic simplicity of Pali phonetics while expressing Pali words in the most compact yet simple fashion, at least as compared to other scripts of India. To demonstrate the use of Palimukhi, consider the following passage in Pali, which has been used as a sample text for the language on the Omniglot webpage for 'Pali' (written with Pali romanization):

Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā;
Manasā ce paduṭṭhena, bhāsati vā karoti vā;
Tato nam dukkhaṁ anveti, cakkaṁ'va vahato padaṁ.

The aformentioned text can be transcribed into Palimukhi as the following sample text for Palimukhi ('ı' is used to conclude sentences and 'ıı' likewise for stanzas or paragraphs):

ਮਨੋਪੁੱਬੰਗਾਮਾ ਧੱਮਾ ਮਨੋਸੈੱਠਾ ਮਨੋਮਜਾ।
ਮਨਸਾ ਚੇ ਪਦੁੱਠੇਨ ਭਾਸਤਿ ਵਾ ਕਰੋਤਿ ਵਾ।
ਤਤੋ ਨਮ੍ ਦੁੱਖੰ ਅਨ੍ਵੇਤਿ ਚੱਕੰਵ ਵਹਤੋ ਪਦੰ॥