

# Proposal to encode MALAYALAM SIGN PARA

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## Introduction

Historically Para has been an important measurement unit in Kerala, for measuring rice grain. The word also described the area of a paddy field by the amount of grain in Para it produces. So this unit is often used in historical agricultural land transactions.



Image 1: The vessel used to measure one Para of grain is also called a Para.

Shape of the sign looks like this:



This sign is used to indicate a Para is typically preceded or followed by a number. Its usage period seems to be in the later 19th century from its attestations below. Para sign needs to be encoded to record the documents from its above usage period.

### Confusability

In theory, this letter could be confused with the traditional rendering of <NNNA(ന), VIRAMA, RA(ര)>. However, the symbol for NNNA was largely a theoretical one proposed by the

grammar Kērala Pāṇinīyaṃ by Rājarāja Varma<sup>1</sup>. So this ligature is never attested in historical documents and fonts are unlikely to have it. Anyway, to avoid security issues, this character should be excluded from IDNs since it is not needed for contemporary Malayalam use.

## Attestations

### Elements of South-Indian Palæography<sup>2</sup> (1871) by A.C.Burnell

This book reproduces some pages of Zamorin’s Granthavari (book of counterparts of leases etc.).

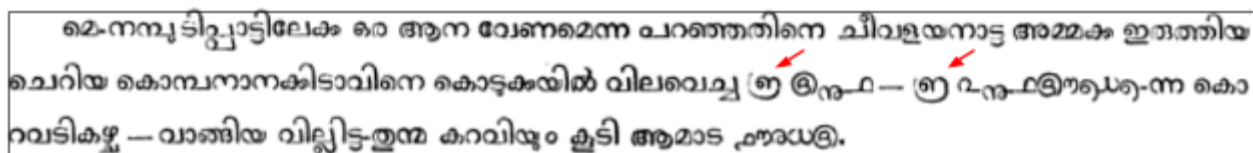


Image 2: Para signs used before the Malayalam digits in this running text. It reads as: <para>5000—<para>2577.

### Malayalam selections: with translations, grammatical analyses and vocabulary<sup>3</sup> (1851) by A.J.Arbutnot

This book reproduces many pages of communication between collector of Malabar and various regional administrators in Kerala. In the book, each communication is translated and then and describes in English.

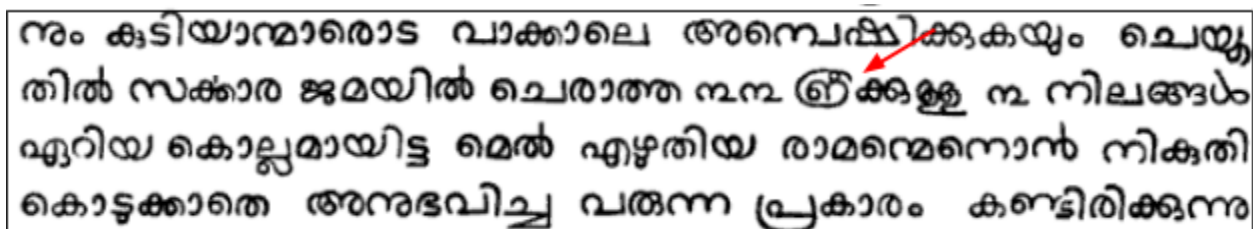


Image 3: Para signs used after the digits. It reads as: 33<para>.

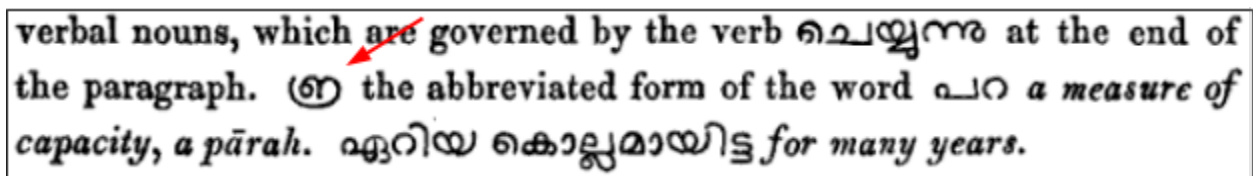


Image 4: Arbuthnot describes the Para sign.

Please note that there is variation in the glyph used in the Malayalam only text, from that in the English description — the tail reaches the top and and makes a loop. Arbuthnot did not bother to describe this variation and we can assume that this is a glyph variation until contrary evidences emerge.

<sup>1</sup> See N3295 in L2/07-283: <http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2007/07283-n3295-malayalam.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><http://books.google.com/books?id=pHMIAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA141> page 141.

<sup>3</sup><http://books.google.com/books?id=VGM-AAAAcAAJ&pg=PT134> page 118 and 119.

# Choice of codepoint

The proposed codepoint is **OD65** which is the closest location available to fractions and digits. In Devanagari chart corresponding location of 0965 is assigned to Double Danda. Today Devanagari Dandas are used for Malayalam like in rest of the Indic. In the unlikely event of future attestation of a Malayalam specific Double Danda, that Danda would need to be placed elsewhere.

Malayalam Code Chart

	OD0	OD1	OD2	OD3	OD4	OD5	OD6	OD7
0	◌̇	ഐ	ഠ	ര	ീ		ഋ	ധ
1	◌̈		ഡ	റ	ൂ		ൠ	ൡ
2	◌̉	ഓ	ഌ	ല	ൂ		ൠ	ൡ
3	ഃ	ഔ	ണ	ള	്യ		ൠ	ൡ
4		ഔ	ത	ഴ	ൂ	ൠ		ൡ
5	അ	ക	ഥ	വ		യ	ൠ	ൡ
6	ആ	ഖ	ഭ	ശ	െ	ഘ	ഠ	ഡ
7	ഇ	ഗ	ധ	ഷ	േ	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
8	ഈ	ഘ	ന	സ	ൈ	ധ	ൡ	ൢ
9	ഉ	ങ	ണ	ഹ		ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
A	ഊ	ച	പ	ട	ൊ	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
B	ഋ	ൠ	ൡ	◌̇	ോ	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
C	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ	◌̈	ൠ	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
D		ൠ	ൡ	ൢ	ൣ	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
E	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ	ൣ	൤	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ
F	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ	ൣ	൤	ൠ	ൡ	ൢ

## Legend

*White*: Published as of Unicode 6.3.

*Green*: Accepted and at advanced stage not permitting changes.

*Yellow*: Fractions, accepted.

*Orange*: Chillu LLL accepted but preferably to be moved to group with Chillu Y.

*Blue*: New location proposed for Chillu LLL.

*Purple*: Locations of ongoing proposals of Anusvara Above, Chillus M and Y, and Vertical Bar and Circular Viramas.

*Red*: Location proposed for Para.

## Proposed character with properties



0D65;MALAYALAM SIGN PARA;So;0;L;;;;N;;;;;

## Official Proposal Summary Form

(Based on N3902-F)

### A. Administrative

1. Title

**Proposal to encode MALAYALAM SIGN PARA**

2. Requester's name

**Cibu Johny**

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution)

**Individual contribution**

4. Submission date

**2014-Jan-16**

5. Requester's reference (if applicable)

6. Choose one of the following: This is a complete proposal (or) More information will be provided later

**This is a complete proposal.**

### B. Technical – General

1. Choose one of the following:

1a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters), Proposed name of script

**No**

1b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block, Name of the existing block

**Yes, Malayalam**

2. Number of characters in proposal

**1 (one)**

3. Proposed category

**Category B1, specialized small (for this character)**

4. Is a repertoire including character names provided?

**Yes**

4a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document?

**Yes**

4b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?

**Yes**

5. Fonts related:

a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?

**Michael Everson**

b. Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail etc.)

**Michael Everson, everson@evertype.com**

6a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?

**Yes**

6b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?

**Yes**

7. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?

**Yes**

8. Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script.

**See detailed proposal.**

### C. Technical – Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES, explain.

**No**

2a. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?

**Yes**

2b. If YES, with whom?

**Sunil V.S., Kevin Siji and Biju C.P. in a public Google+ post. The author is himself one of the user community.**

2c. If YES, available relevant documents

**None specifically. The matter was discussed via email and social media like Google+.**

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?

**Those (scholars and enthusiasts) who desire to store old Malayalam documents using this character.**

4a. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)

**Rare**

4b. Reference

**See detailed proposal.**

5a. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?

**No. This character was in historical use.**

5b. If YES, where?

6a. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?

**Yes**

6b. If YES, is a rationale provided?

**It belongs in the Malayalam block which is in the BMP.**

6c. If YES, reference

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?

**Only one character is proposed.**

8a. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?

**No**

8b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

8c. If YES, reference

9a. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?

**No**

9b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

9c. If YES, reference

10a. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?

**No**

10b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

10c. If YES, reference

11a. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences?

**No**

11b. If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

11c. If YES, reference

11d. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?

12a. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?

**No.**

12b. If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)

13a. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?

**No**

13b. If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified?

13c. If YES, reference: