

To: Unicode Technical Committee
From: Deborah Anderson
Title: Differences between L2/14-024 Zanabazar Script proposal and L2/13-198 Mongolian Square proposal
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In November 2013, the UTC approved the Mongolian Square script, based upon Anshuman Pandey’s proposal [L2/13-198](#) “Revised Proposal to Encode the Mongolian Square Script.” However, feedback was received after the proposal was submitted, so it was revised and several important changes made. The author of the proposal requests the UTC review the new proposal, [L2/14-024](#) “Proposal to Encode the Zanabazar Square Script,” and rescind its approval of the earlier Mongolian Square script proposal.

This document summarizes changes between the two proposals to aid the UTC in its review of the new proposal.

1. Script Name Change

The script’s name has been changed to ‘Zanabazar Square’ script, which is the term commonly used in academic circles. Additional rationale for the change from the earlier name, ‘Mongolian Square’ script, is contained in §3.1.

2. Character Name Changes

The descriptor ‘GALIG’ was removed from the names of 20 consonants. The term GALIG was used in the transcription of non-Mongolian sounds, but since the script is used for Sanskrit and Tibetan as well as Mongolian, consonant letter names that correspond to Tibetan were deemed more appropriate, and allow for distinctive set of names. For further discussion, see §3.3.

The consonants KA, KHA, TA, THA, PA, PHA, BA, TSA, TSHA have new names and now show the Mongolian values in the annotations. (In the Mongolian Square proposal, the names of these consonants were: GA, KA, DA, TA, BA, PA, VA, JA, CA.)

The conjunct initial and final consonants now have added “CLUSTER” into their names:

- CLUSTER INITIAL RA (was: INITIAL RA)
- CLUSTER FINAL YA (was: FINAL YA)
- CLUSTER FINAL RA (was: FINAL RA)
- CLUSTER FINAL LA (was: FINAL LA)
- CLUSTER FINAL VA (was: FINAL VA)

These conjunct characters are discussed in §4.10.

The character LETTER SSA (11A2F) was renamed; it was earlier called REVERSED LETTER SHA. See §4.7.2.

3. Characters Removed:

REVERSED LETTER NA and REVERSED LETTER DA were removed from the Mongolian Square proposal, because they were deemed to be glyph variants. The reversing of glyphs, including these two, is discussed in §4.7.4.

CONSONANT SIGN FINAL SMALL A was removed; it is essentially the same as the VOWEL LENGTH MARK.

HEAD MARK was removed; instead the new proposal decomposes the head mark into a bare head mark and a separate combining character.

The generic SUBJOINER was removed, and was replaced by a VIRAMA, which fits more closely with the overall model of the script. For details and discussion, see §4.8.2.

4. Added characters:

The VIRAMA character was added, see §4.8.2, §4.10, and figure 30.

LONG TSHEG was added.

The head mark that occurs at the beginning of texts is now proposed as a bare INITIAL HEAD MARK that can take various combining marks (see below). A CLOSING HEAD MARK is also proposed, since it can occur alongside the INITIAL HEAD MARK to create a double head mark, as is found in Tibetan. For further details, see §4.11.

Three combining marks were added: CANDRABINDU, CANDRABINDU WITH ORNAMENT and CANDRA WITH ORNAMENT. The latter two occur most frequently with INITIAL HEAD MARK. The combining marks are discussed in §4.6.

5. Order:

The order of the characters was changed from an order based on the traditional Mongolian arrangement to an order based on Tibetan. Further discussion is contained in §3.4.

6. New sections added:

A section on the syllable structure of the script was added in §4.1.

A section on Consonant Modifiers (Final Consonant Mark and Virama) was expanded, with an added section on the justification for having two vowel-silencing marks (§4.8.3).

A section on Vertical Text was added, §4.15, based on feedback from Laurentiu Iancu, Andrew Glass, and Ken Whistler. The new section includes an example and discussion

The maximum number of consonants present in stacks is specified in §4.10.5, based on the evidence in available sources.

Details on glyph interaction is provided in §4.17.