To: Unicode Technical Committee  
From: Peter Scharf, Sanskrit Library  
Date: 23 July 2015  
Subject: Feedback on “Editorial updates for Vedic characters” [L2/15-164]

Below is feedback from Peter Scharf, who worked on the original Vedic proposals. The comments are in response to L2/15-164 “Editorial updates for Vedic characters.”

**General Comments**

Although he may have some point, it appears that Shriramana Sharma may be using some specific terminology of his own limited circle or common in Tamilnadu and discounting terminology of another circle, namely one that may be current in Maharashtra. He may also not be aware of multiple uses of characters. A comprehensive literature review should be undertaken. He cites only one general glossary as authority. In general, concerning changes to the Sanskrit annotations provided by the CDAC Bombay group, he should consult with them, although R.K. Joshi, who led the group, is no longer with us. Everson and I did not quibble over the terms they wanted, which were provided as annotations, since it was hard enough to agree on the set of characters to include. In our explanations, we included only explanations found in published literature; we did not make them up. For Samavedic notations, we used Wayne Howard’s works listed in our bibliography. If Shriramana Sharma finds fault in these explanations, he should see whether the source is in Howard’s explanation and whether it is mistaken there.

**Specifics**

1CD0

Shriramana Sharma should explain what the Vedic sign karshana DOES denote and the significance of the name Ayata Shruti. The latter term itself means ‘held sound’ which is also exactly what karshana signifies ‘drawing’, i.e. prolonging.

1CD1

We did not include ‘svarita’ in our name; it is in the CDAC annotation. As for the explanation, check Howard.

1CD4

The line of 1CE2 is in fact probably no different from that of 1CD4 (both denote svarita), but we couldn’t convince the CDAC group of this. But 1CD4 has general use as a svarita in Maitrayanisamhita while the midline of 1CE2 occurs only in combination with the character visarga. 1CD4 often trails the character while 1CD2 will come in line right between the two dots or circles of a visarga; yet the former behavior is surely due just to the fact that otherwise it would overwrite part of the character and might therefore be obscured.

1CF2

In fact, the ardhavisarga is no different from the character used for jihvamuliya and upadhmaniya but it is generally not written outside of Vedic except in grammatical texts.

The X put in 1CF5 duplicates Kannada 0CF1. The difference is a minor graphical one which should not have appeared in a duplicate character.

1CF4 duplicates 0945, both are combining candra above.

The candra below put in 0956, after our proposal, duplicates the candra below we put in 1CD8 earlier.
These signs have multiple uses but should never have been duplicated, nor do all the uses have to appear as annotations.

1CD2
The term vibrato indeed seems approximately correct. Refer to Howard’s description of prenkha and the definition of prenkha ‘trembling, rocking, swaying’ in Monier Williams’ dictionary.

I question whether the proposed subheaders are desirable.
Re 1CF4, it should never have been included at all.

I think that annotations on characters such as ’p’ ’u’ in Devanagari should remain in graphic terms unless thorough research is completed on the use of these characters. Sharma gives some interesting evidence for the transference of this character from candra to Tamil pa to Devanagari pa but more work should be done to verify this.

I myself don’t have time now to look further into these matters.

Yours,
Peter

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