Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set
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Title: Proposal to correct LATIN SMALL LETTER TONE SIX (U+0185)

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In 1957 the People's Republic of China introduced an alphabetical script for the Zhuang language. The alphabet included some uncommon letters for different tones in the language. It was the official writing system for Zhuang language before a reform in 1982 replaced those "tone letters" with Latin letters (z, j, x, q, h). Nowadays, the old Zhuang orthography is not used at all, while the new Zhuang script is used very little, either.

In Unicode Latin Extended-B, some letters are introduced for those "tone letters" in the old Zhuang orthography.

- Zhuang tone two is U+01A7/U+01A8 2/2 Latin Capital/Small Letter TONE TWO
- Zhuang tone three is U+0417/U+0437 3/3 Cyrillic Capital/Small Letter ZE
- Zhuang tone four is U+0427/U+0447 4/4 Cyrillic Capital/Small Letter CHE
- Zhuang tone five is U+01BC/U+01BD 5/5 Latin Capital/Small Letter TONE FIVE
- Zhuang tone six is U+0184/U+0185 b/b Latin Capital/Small Letter TONE SIX

However, the shape of **b** (U+0185, LATIN SMALL LETTER TONE SIX) in Unicode is not typical. In the old Zhuang orthography, there are 11 letters which can be the last letter in a syllable to mark the tone. Those are **z**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **b**, **p**, **t**, **k**, **b**, **d**, and **g**. Tone letter **b** is supposed to be as tall as **z**, **3**, **4**, and **5** (just like Cyrillic soft sign **b**), thus not to be confused with taller **b**.

## Here are some examples:

I. Scheme for the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (《僮文方案》). The official standard for the old Zhuang orthography. Published in 1958.

大 楷	s	3	Ч	5	1	
小 楷	2	В	ч	5	ъ	
大 草	\$ 50 998 00 198					
小 草	. 2	3	#	8	6	
	haz:	nas	тач	gva5	das	
	第二調	第三調	第四調	第五調	第六調	
标准音調值	低降	高平	中降	高升	中平.	
例字	haz 茅	草 nas 脸	may 馬	gva5 过	das 河	
	小	小     塔       2       大     草       小     草       2     haz       母名称     第二調       标准音調値     低降	小     楷     2     3       大     草     2     3       小     草     2     3       中名称     ha2     na3       第二調     第三調       标准音調値     低降     高平	小     楷     2     3     Y       大     草     2     3     Y       小     草     2     3     Y       田名称     ha2     na3     may       第二調     第三調     第四調       标准音調値     低降     高平     中降	小 楷     2     3     4     5       大 草     2     3     4     8       中名称     ha2     na3     may     gva5       日本名称     第二調     第三調     第四調     第五調       标准音調値     低降     高平     中降     高升	小 楷     2     3     4     5     b       大 草     2     3     4     6       小 草     2     3     4     6       母名称     ha2     na3     may     gva5     dab       第二調     第三調     第四調     第五調     第六調       标准音調値     低降     高平     中降     高升     中平

The whole tone letter **b** is as tall as letter **a**. Also notice the tiny bar, which makes the letter like Cyrillic hard sign **b**, only slanting a little bit.

調		类	表示方法	調值	例	a Pinego Statu e la	字
舒声	第一	調	(不标調)	中升	na 厚	dəm 春	go 裸
	第二	調	后加。	低降	naz 🖽	dəmz塘	cos 年青
	第三	調	后加3	高平	na3 脸	dəm3織	do3 赌
	第四	調	后加咀	中降	vau 瓦	rəmux	一04 知道
- 前	第五	調	后加5	高升	va5 褲	dəm5矮	do5 大黃ీ
	第六	調	后加5	中平	vab 話	həmt夜	not 肉
塞	高音組	短元音	用P、t、k做韻尾	高平	dəp 肝	bət 扫	bek 插
	(第七調)	长元音	(同上)	高升	dap 塔	bat 盆	bak 🗆
声	低音組	短元音	用b、d、g 做韻尾	中平		məd 蚁	
韻	(第八詞)	长元音	(同上)	中平	hab 盒	mad 袜	bag 劈

Bous miz guncandan, cout bous miz Cunguek mos. Guncandan dug en dans gunyin-gaigi, dug doitsienfun gunyin-gaigi.

Cungo-Guncandan yous bi 1921 duen 7 nonz 1 haus lobbonz. Sam cib geis bi neiu dous, de dazyinu gyons yinmin Cunguek rouz hunsdous gomin, gubbonz Cunva-Yinmin-Gunhogo, hous donu guek yinmin dois fandan.....

The tone letter **b** is very different from the consonant letter **b**.

Tous min guncandan cous bous min Cunquek mor. Guncandan dung rn dans gunyun-gaigi, dung doirienfun gunyun-gaigi. Cungo Guncandan your bi 1921 duen 7 mon 1 haus lobbone. Sam cib geis bi neig dous, de darying gyongr yinmin Cunquek rour hunsdows gomin, gusbone Cunva Yinmin-Gunhogo, hows dong quek yinmin dois fandan...

The same paragraph in handwriting.

II. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region(《广西僮族自治区》). A book by the Guangxi government to celebrate Guangxi, formerly a province, becoming an autonomous region in March, 1958. Published in February, 1958.

You5 Guenssei miz hauslai en minzcuz cei5 lauu, Bouucuene gos dug en deu, de daie dam daie cuns miz gis gemin-lisi miznas, debe gyeus bak bi neiu deus, Bouucuene ceu5 Bouugun denzceiz fatdene en gemin-yindun vunzguenaz Daibinzedenegoz, en gemin-yindun neiu, senzdene denu, Bouucuene ceu5 Bouugun denzceiz hunsdeus fanshenu Fazgozdigocuyi gva5. Das bi 1921 denz bi 1930 ceuzden, yinmin Bouucuene Bouugun son en minzcuz neiu ceu5 yinmin gak minzcuz beiunuenu, you5 las Cungo-Guncandan dazyinu, you5 henz Dae Cosgyane ceu5

## III. Renminbi banknotes.

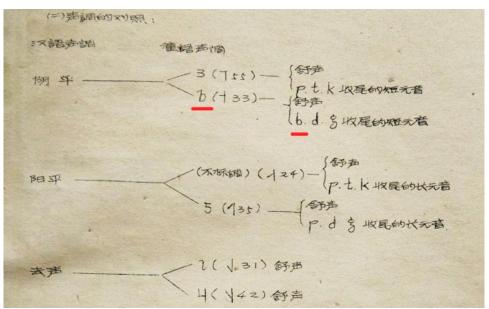


The third series of Renminbi (1965). 10 Yuan. Left-top. "Cunbgoz Yinzminz Yinzhanz cib mənz". b and b are not as tall as each other.



The fourth series of Renminbi (1965). 10 Yuan. Right-down. "Cunbgoz Yinzminz Yinzhanz cib mənz". b and b are not as tall as each other.

IV. The Pronunciations and Meanings of Toponym in Zhuang Language (《僮语地名用字的读音和意义》). Handwritten and mimeographed. Published in 1964.



Tone letter **b** was written like Cyrillic hard sign **b**, to be distinguished from **b**.

Thus, I suggest that the shape of **b** (U+0185, LATIN SMALL LETTER TONE SIX) in Unicode is not typical and should be corrected.

I have three suggestions of which either has its own reasons.

(α) Simply use Cyrillic soft sign **b**, just like the case of using Cyrillic letters **3** and **4** for Zhuang tone three and four. The printed forms of tone letter **b** in example II seem like this.

de dais dam dais

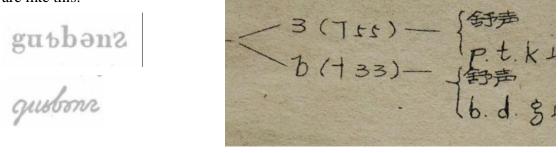
Bouveuens cous E

densgoz, on gomin

(β) Change it into the shape of b only with the height of b (like small capitals A, B, C, or D). The printed forms of tone letter b in example III are like this. In the example, tone letter b's "belly" is rounder and taller than the "belly" of Cyrillic soft sign.



( $\gamma$ ) Reshape it like letter  $\mathbf{b}$  or shorter  $\mathbf{b}$ , but with a slant bar. The printed and hand written forms of tone letter  $\mathbf{b}$  in example I and the handwritten forms in example IV are like this.



It should be noticed that U+0184 b LATIN CAPITAL LETTER TONE SIX should be adjusted, too, especially in case ( $\alpha$ ) and ( $\gamma$ ).