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Title:	Principles on Encoding Phags-pa Script
Source:	China National Body
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Reference	WG2 N2622

In document N2622, Mr. Andrew C. West proposes 52 Phags-pa to be encoded in ISO/IEC 10646. Chinese experts reviewed this proposal and provide their comments on encoding Phags-pa script in this document. **Unfortunately, Chinese experts on Phags-pa Script are not enable to attend the WG2 #44 for the discussion since we received the document N2622 is too late to arrange the trip.**

Principles on Encoding Phags-pa Script

1. Phagags-pa script used to be a kind of “Mongolian script” for “translating all kinds of script”, i.e., script of Mongolian Khan Empire and Yuan Empire. It had become a dead script with the collapse of Yuan Dynasty. Phags-pa script shall not contain Zhuanti (篆體) Tibetan script which was formed later on the basis of Phags-pa letters.
2. Phagags-pa script has its unique alphabetic repertoire although it was derived from Tibetan. Phags-pa alphabetic repertoire consists of 41 letters including 34 consonants and 7 vowels (primal alphabets). Some letters were added later for other languages using Phagags-pa alphabet to represent. The added letters are variants with changing forms or mirroring images of original basic Phags-pa letters.

3. Historic literature should have been the basis of ordering of Phags-pa script. There are differences in ordering among Fashu Kao (法書攷), Shushi Huiyao (書史會要) and Menggu Ziyun (蒙古字韻). The reason is that the ordering shown in Menggu Ziyun (蒙古字韻) was formed with affection of Chinese Han language tradition which is suitable for Chinese Han language only. The ordering shown in Fashu Kao (法書攷) and Shushi Huiyao (書史會要) are the connatural ordering generally used for “translating all kinds of script”. Hence, **Phags-pa ordering shall be formed according to Fashu Kao (法書攷) and Shushi Huiyao (書史會要)**. Letters added later should be placed after the basic letter repertoire and sorted on the ordering of corresponding language/script.

4. Typical Typeface for encoding: There are 3 typefaces of Phags-pa script, e.g., Kaiti (楷體), Zhuanti (篆體) and Caoti (草體). Typeface used for encoding Phags-pa script should be the most widely used one. When Choosing Kaiti(楷體), its typical and authoritative properties shall be considered. Undoubtedly, imperial edicts and documentation have these properties . Hence, typeface for encoding shall be designed according to the imperial edicts or monumental inscriptions on stone.

Conclusion

The points above are so important that without consensus on them, it seems immature or impractical to discuss any Phags-pa encoding scheme.

Phags-pa script was invented in China, major user communities are nationalities in China. Most cultural relics and literatures are found in China, key researchers and outstanding scholars are living and working in China. Chinese Phags-pa scholars are capable and willing to propose a scientific, usable and history accorded Phags-pa encoding scheme under ISO arrangement.