

L2/05-257

ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2 N2979

Title	Phags-pa Glyphs
Source	Andrew C. West
Document Type	Expert Contribution
Date	1st September 2005

1. Background

At M46 in Xiamen an agreement was reached to use a "Khubilai" style font in place of the font used in PDAM 1 and PDAM 2 for Phags-pa, and this new style of font was used for the first time in FPDAM 2 (N2936). This document highlights a number of discrepancies between the glyph shapes used in the FPDAM and the glyph shapes used in the PDAM. The glyph shapes of Phags-pa letters has been the subject of detailed review by experts, and the shapes of the glyphs in PDAM 2 (N2846) were accepted by all parties (see N2829). Although a change in font style was agreed on, no decision was made at Xiamen to change the basic glyph shape of any letter (see N2922).

2. Glyph Shapes of Letters Ya and Alternate Ya

The glyph shapes for PHAGS-PA LETTER YA [A857] and PHAGS-PA LETTER ALTERNATE YA [A86D] in the FPDAM are significantly different from the previously accepted glyphs for these two letters. As the glyphs in the FPDAM do not reflect the typical shape of these letters in actual Phags-pa texts and inscriptions, there is potential for confusion as to which character is intended to represent which of the two forms of the letter YA. Document N2972 discusses this issue in detail, and recommends that the glyphs for A857 and A86D be modified as shown below, in order to maintain both the agreed font style and the previously agreed glyph shapes.

Code Point	Character Name	Original Glyph (N2622)	New Glyph (N2936)	Proposed Glyph
A857	PHAGS-PA LETTER YA			
A86D	PHAGS-PA LETTER ALTERNATE YA			

3. Positional Forms of Glyphs

The PDAM (N2846) used isolate forms of glyphs for all Phags-pa letters. However, in the FPDAM (N2936) a number of letters are represented with initial or medial positional forms, with a hanging stem extension on the right hand side of the glyph. Although a hanging stem extension does occur for the isolate form of some letters in some sources, it is atypical, and isolate forms are best represented without a hanging stem extension.

The suggested glyph forms for these letters are shown in the table below.

Code Point	Character Name	PDAM Glyph	FPDAM Glyph	Suggested Glyph
A843	PHAGS-PA LETTER NGA	 A843	 A843	 A843
A844	PHAGS-PA LETTER CA	 A844	 A844	 A844
A845	PHAGS-PA LETTER CHA	 A845	 A845	 A845
A852	PHAGS-PA LETTER DZA	 A856	 A852	 A852
A856	PHAGS-PA LETTER SMALL A	 A85A	 A856	 A856
A857	PHAGS-PA LETTER YA	 A85B	 A857	 A857
A859	PHAGS-PA LETTER LA	 A85D	 A859	 A859
A863	PHAGS-PA LETTER XA	 A863	 A863	 A863
A864	PHAGS-PA LETTER FA	 A864	 A864	 A864
A867	PHAGS-PA SUBJOINED LETTER WA	 A866	 A867	 A867
A868	PHAGS-PA SUBJOINED LETTER YA	 A867	 A868	 A868
A870	PHAGS-PA LETTER ASPIRATED FA		 A870	 A870
A871	PHAGS-PA SUBJOINED LETTER RA	 A868	 A871	 A871