

Request to encode 1135D GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA

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§1. Background

In my Grantha proposal L2/09-372, I had proposed a character 1135D GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA which is attested for Grantha as denoting ‘prolated’ or ‘extra-normal’ length for a vowel.



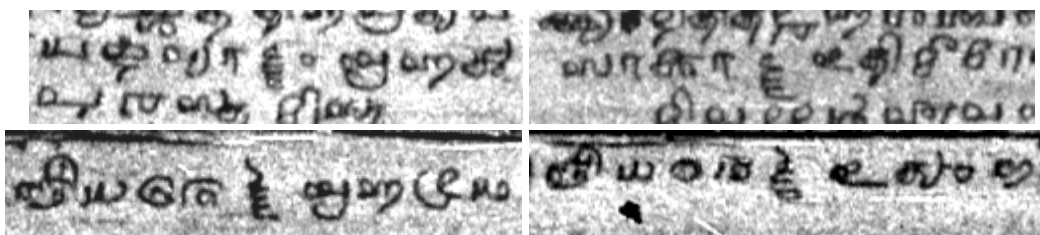
1135D GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA

The summary of Grantha proposals L2/10-053 makes note of this character in p 8 under the subheading “Vedic characters” while recognizing that “it is not an exclusive Vedic sign”. The same document indicated that this character “is being included for this discussion in the set of other Vedic signs” and later (in p 11) recommended that “Vedic characters” “be postponed for further study”.

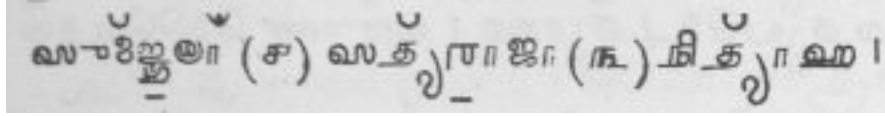
While I submitted L2/10-235 repeating my request from L2/09-372 to encode the Vedic characters that are specific to Grantha, I omitted to include 1135D GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA because I never considered it as a Vedic character and furthermore forgot that L2/10-053 had considered it as one and hence postponed it too. This document now requests the encoding of this character for Grantha, adapting from the relevant section of L2/09-372.

§2. Discussion

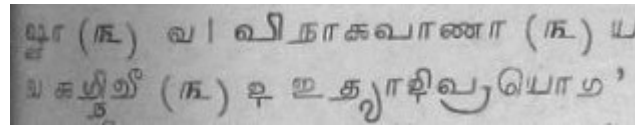
Grantha texts use a unique sign for pluta. ‘Pluta’ means a vowel that has an extra-normal length – usually 3 or 4 moras. Ref 1 (a compilation of manuscripts) shows a distinct sign for denoting this, as seen in the following samples:



whereas in most contemporary printings the actual number of moras is indicated in Grantha-Tamil digits within parantheses, as seen in the following sample from ref 2 p 162:



The archaic sign for pluta must be encoded as a separate character since it has been attested and cannot be considered a glyphic variant of any other character. It is also not to be considered a purely Vedic character despite the preceding samples being provided from Vedic texts, since non-Vedic Sanskrit also indicates pluta (in modern orthography by the digits three and four), as seen in the following sample from p 365 of ref 3. If one wishes, one may easily use this character to denote the pluta in such a non-Vedic Sanskrit text as well:



For the two reasons that this is not a Vedic-specific character and that it has not been attested in any other script, it should be encoded in the Grantha block and not the generic Vedic Extensions block. We point out that ref 4 which describes the character forms and signs used in manuscripts and prints of a number of South Indian scripts has attested (on p 17) this character specifically for Grantha and not for any other script:

₹ *pluti*

Therefore, this character should not be over-genericized to pan-Indic status like the Kannada characters for jihvamuliya and upadhmaniya were previously.

As regards the representative glyph chosen for this character, I note that two samples each of two glyphic variants of this character are seen in the manuscript source shown above. One variant has a 'flourish' on top whereas the other does not. While ref 4 has shown the variant without the flourish as the 'pluti' sign, I prefer the one with the flourish as it seems to comparatively look better than the other.

As regards the name, I note that while ref 4 has used the word 'pluti', I have used the word 'pluta' in the name as it is much better known, even among students of Sanskrit – hrasva, dīrgha and pluta are the three kinds of vowels as taught to students. Technically speaking, 'pluti' refers to the action of lengthening a vowel whereas 'pluta' refers to the vowel so lengthened. It would be more appropriate to use the word which can better serve directly as the adjective of the vowel, especially since it is the better known, as said above.

§3. Collation and Linebreaking

A vowel that is pluta (extra-long) will be sorted after the corresponding dīrgha (regular long vowel). Therefore the collating order should be such that:

CONS 1 + AA-SIGN + CONS 2 < CONS 1 + AA-SIGN + PLUTA + CONS 2

Linebreak is not to be allowed before a pluta sign as it should immediately follow a vowel.

§4. Unicode character properties

1135D;GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA;Lo;0;L;;;;;N;;;;;

§5. Acknowledgement

Special thanks are due to Dr Gerhard Ehlers of the Orientabteilung of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin who supplied manuscript samples for the archaic pluti sign.

§6. References

1. A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Central Library Baroda. Vol. I Vedic. Compiled by Gajanan K. Shrigondekar and K.S. Ramaswami Shastri Siromani. Nos. 9851 a-f. Baroda 1925.
2. Taittiriya Brāhmaṇam, Heritage India Education Trust, Chennai, India, 1980.
3. Smṛti Muktāphala – Varṇāśrama Dharma Kāṇḍa, Sharada Vilasa Press, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, 1939.
4. South Indian Scripts in Sanskrit Manuscripts and Prints, Reinhold Grünendahl, Wiesbaden, Germany, 2001. ISBN 3-447-04504-3.

§7. Official Proposal Summary Form

A. Administrative

1. Title

Request to encode 1135D GRANTHA SIGN PLUTA

2. Requester's name

Shriramana Sharma

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution)

Individual contribution

4. Submission date

2010-Aug-21

5. Requester's reference (if applicable)

6. Choose one of the following:

6a. This is a complete proposal

Yes.

6b. More information will be provided later

No.

B. Technical – General

1. Choose one of the following:

1a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters)

No. This is a proposal for adding one more character to the Grantha script currently being encoded.

1b. Proposed name of script

1c. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block

Yes.

1d. Name of the existing block

Grantha

2. Number of characters in proposal

1 (one)

3. Proposed category (A-Contemporary)

Category A.

4a. Is a repertoire including character names provided?

Yes.

4b. If YES, are the names in accordance with the “character naming guidelines” in Annex L of P&P document?

Yes.

4c. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?

Yes.

5a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard?

Elmar Kniprath (kniprath—at—online—dot—de), Germany, TrueType

5b. If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used:

6a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?

Yes.

6b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?

Yes.

7. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?

Yes.

8. Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script.

See detailed proposal.

C. Technical – Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES, explain.

Yes, as part of L2/09-372. Since this character did not make the consensus between the various Grantha proposals and hence was not recommended in L2/10-053 or -167, it became necessary to separately request the encoding of this character.

2a. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?

Yes. The proposer himself is a member of the user community and has consulted with experts.

2b. If YES, with whom?

Dr Reinhold Grünendahl, University of Göttingen, Germany. Dr Gerhard Ehlers, Orientabteilung, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

2c. If YES, available relevant documents

None specifically. Mode of contact was personal conversation via email.

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?

This character would be used by those using Grantha as described in L2/09-372.

4a. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)

Not very common, but seen in manuscripts of Vedic texts. May also be used in non-Vedic texts.

4b. Reference

5a. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?

Yes.

5b. If YES, where?

By research scholars who wish to transcribe Grantha manuscripts.

6a. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?

No.

6b. If YES, is a rationale provided?

6c. If YES, reference

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?

Not applicable. There is only one character.

8a. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?

No.

8b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

8c. If YES, reference

9a. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?

No.

9b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

9c. If YES, reference

10a. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?

No.

10b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

10c. If YES, reference

11a. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences (see clauses 4.12 and 4.14 in ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000)?

No.

11b. If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

11c. If YES, reference

11d. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?

No.

12a. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?

No.

12b. If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)

13a. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?

No.

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