

**Feedback on Siddham proposal (WG2 N4294) Comments by Suzuki
Toshiya, Hiroshima University, Japan**

Comments by Rev. Eijun (Bill) Eidson

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This document is in response to feedback presented by Toshiya Suzuki of Hiroshima University to the proposal to encode Siddham script, WG2 N4294.

The encoding document that is being proposed and the underlying font The Tenchiji Siddham Font are based on the primary university textbook (Bonji Tai Kan) reference work that is used by Shuuchi-in University and Koyasan University. This font has over 7,000 glyphs that are a part of the conjoined glyphs. Commentaries say that are over 10,000 distinct conjoined glyphs, when all of the conjoined glyphs are included. This is a text that has been used for the education of Shingon Priests for a number of years and is considered the authoritative source for reference.

The SBII has translated over 31,000 pages of Japanese text into English and has struggled with the problem of not having a way to represent Siddham for many years. This includes the 600 pages of the Siddham Commentary Taisho 2710 by Shin Anryu Founder Jogon.

There is no simple way to reproduce all of the Siddham glyphs in the texts that include Siddham (including the Taisho-Shinshu-Daizokyo (大正新脩大藏經)).

In Japan alone there are numerous variations based on the following:

1. There are variations based on the source document (for example the Sutra).

There are different glyphs for the same sound in different source documents but they follow the same pattern (the Varnapartha Structure) and could be encoded through the existing method using different fonts, not encoding.

2. There are variations based on individual masters style.

In the example pointed out by Dr. Suzuki the variant is commonly used because it is from the Brush of the Shingon Founder Kukai (Kobo Daishi).

There could also be a complete font based on the Calligraphy of great Masters such as Kukai, Annen, Chogen Jogon and many others. This would require the replication of a complete font set from the masters work. This can be accomplished within the current encoding structure.

3. There are summaries of the styles based on commentaries such as:

Shittanzō (悉曇藏) by Annen (安然), in Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (大正新脩大藏經), No. 2702, volume 84. and Shittan Sanmitsushō (三密鈔) by Jōgon (淨嚴), in Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (大正新脩大藏經), vol. 84, no. 2710, 715–810.

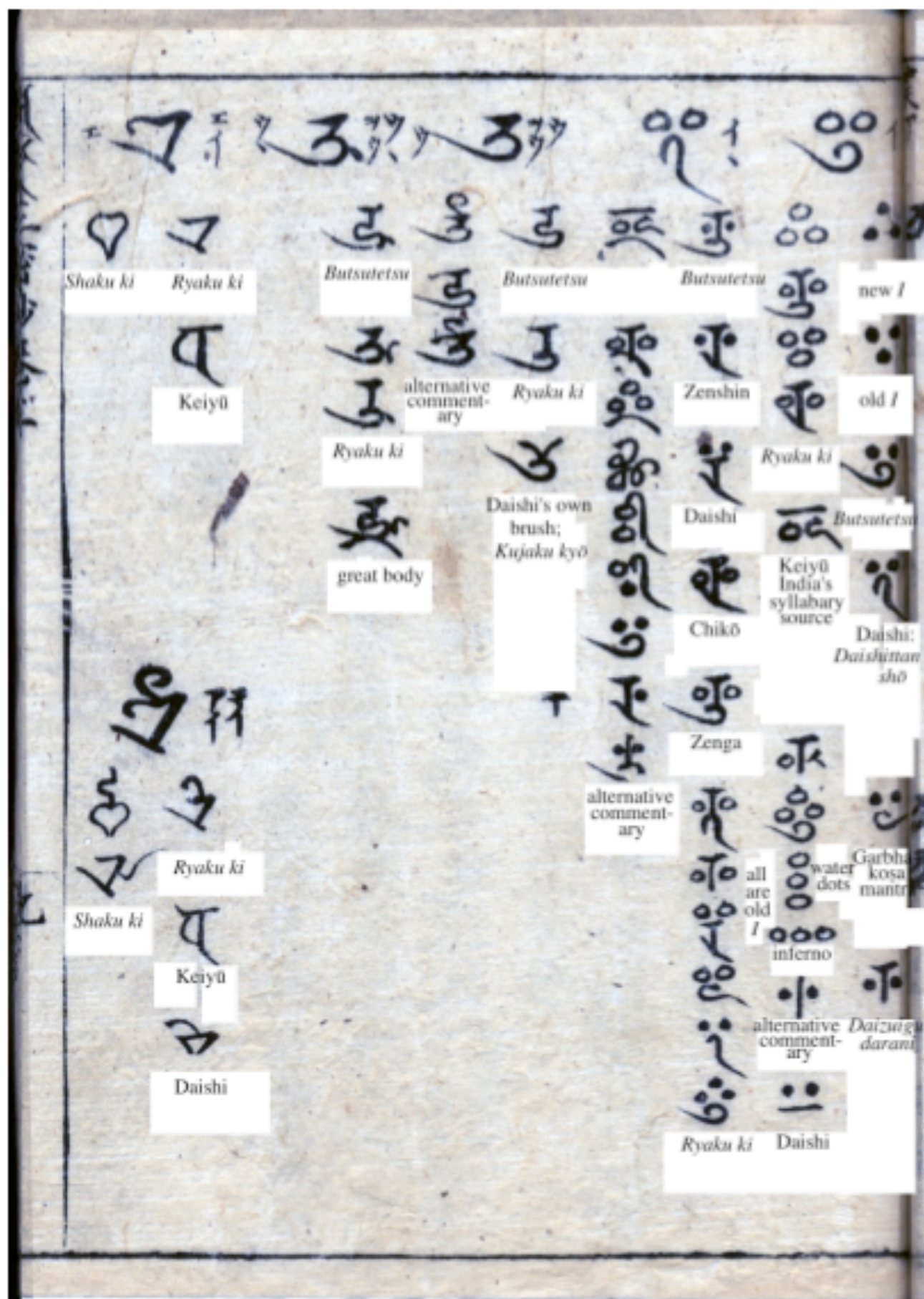
This is the most difficult problem. In a commentary there are numerous mixes of brush styles, master differences and source documents and in many cases errors from generations of copying, by hand.

In the Jogon Commentary there are variants based on the following sources:

Busetsutsu, Dai Shittansho, Garbhakosa Mantra, Daizuigu Dharani, Ryaku ki, Daishi (Kukai), Keiyū, Kujaku kyō, Chikō, Zenga, Koryū, Shaku ki, and others.

It is not necessary to encode stylistic variants depicted in these sources as independent characters. Glyphic variants are to be managed through fonts, which should be developed for each style of Siddham used in these sources.

Samples from original Wood Block print (1684) 淨嚴 [Jōgon] 三密鈔 [Shittan Sanmitsushō] With translation by SBII showing variants of vowels in various sources.



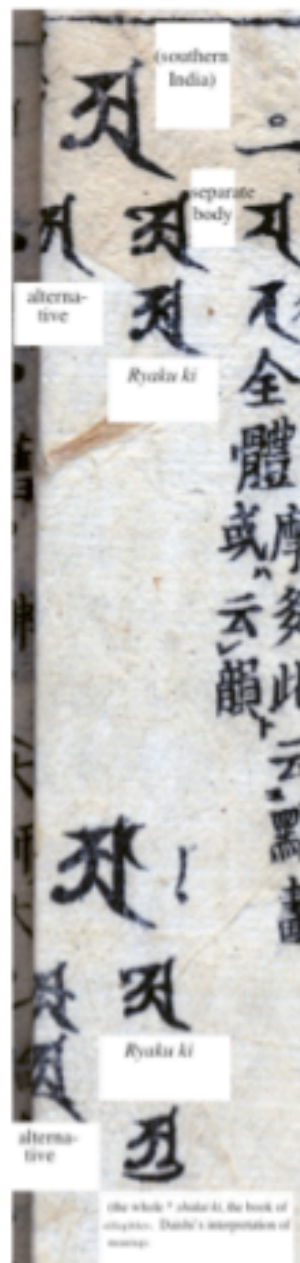
<50>

Third The sound-gates of the letter-shapes proper.

• **brahma** (this is Brahmā) **akṣara** (this is letters) (south India, central India).

The three letter-shapes and sounds proper have two gates. The first shows the letter-shapes. The second gives the sound-intonations.

The first shows the letter-shapes and also, there are three gates. The first is Maṭa. The second is the body-text. The third is that of singlets joined as half-body. The first Maṭa is also divided into two gates. The first corresponds to Maṭa. The next is of separate Maṭa (the Siddhām of southern India does not explain the separate Maṭa). The first corresponds to the Maṭa. The letters of the chapter are added to them universally, hence the name of 'corresponds.' Of the corresponding, there are 1-12 letters. Of the corresponding there also are two. The first ten are separate and do not have mutuality of form, which are added. The two letters of **am aḥ** are common, and above the common are added the dots on top. Moreover, next, of the common twelve, there also are two. The first is the whole-body. The second is the half-body. ○ 1. The whole-body of Maṭa (of Maṭa, it is said that this is of dot-ciphers, or it is said, intonations).



4. The Ancient texts may use Chinese characters instead of Siddham

Chinese classical texts often used Chinese characters in place of Siddham and are based on the sound. This complicates translation because texts must be carefully studied to determine the meaning.

5. Regional Variants

The regional differences can be handled as a separate font, for example Korean Siddham Font with the same encoding structure. This would enable simple translation between regional variations by simply switching fonts.

The current encoding appears to be able to handle the variants; regional styles, differing sources and individual master differences in style.

We respectfully ask to proceed with approval.