

To: UTC

From: Debbie Anderson (SEI, UC Berkeley) and John Jenkins (Apple)

Date: 3 April 2013

Subject: Options for handling "Proposal to Encode Chinese Characters Used for Transliterating Slavonic" (L2/13-009)

Background

At the February 2013 UTC (#134), the "Proposal to Encode Chinese Characters Used for Transliterating Slavonic" (L2/13-009) was briefly discussed. The committee felt the characters should be included into UAX #45, but they should not be encoded in a separate block.

A question was raised about their urgency of the characters, since they might be eligible to be part of the "Urgently Needed Characters" list. Yuri Shardt, one of the authors, responded to the question as to the characters' urgency as follows:

"Since we have already digitised a substantial number of documents using these characters, it would be useful if we could use a standard encoding now for the characters rather than waiting five or more years to accomplish this, for example, 8 works of Archimandrite Gurias have already been digitised (http://orthodox.cn/saints/gurykarpov_en.htm) and more are expected to be digitised in the coming years. Furthermore, the stability of databases (for example dictionaries) for storing these unique characters would be improved if we could have a stable code point for the proposed characters."

Current Status

John Jenkins has vetted all 19 characters contained in the proposal and added them to UAX #45. John believes the characters would fit the definition of "urgently needed," based on the description above.

Options for UTC to Discuss and Decide

The following options should be discussed and a decision made in order to get the characters processed by IRG as quickly as possible

1. Revise the current UNC list to be able to include all 19 characters. (The current list will not allow all 19 to be included, since the limit is 30 characters.)

Pros: This approach would allow the 19 characters to be processed more quickly.

Cons: A few characters on the current list will be postponed, since they will be moved to a new UNC request, which wouldn't be reviewed by IRG until the November IRG meeting. This approach may be viewed as taking advantage of the UNC process.

Actions: UTC to authorize revision of UNC list with all 19 characters, and request a new UNC list be started with those characters that were moved off the current list. Debbie or John/Ken L. will forward script proposal to IRG.

2. Maintain the current UNC list of characters, which will be forwarded to the IRG meeting in May, and start a new UNC list, including all 19 then.

Pros: No characters on the current UNC list will be removed and put on a later UNC list.

Cons: The 19 characters won't be reviewed by IRG until the November 2013 meeting. This approach may be viewed as taking advantage of the UNC process.

Action: UTC to authorize a new UNC list, containing the 19 characters. Debbie or John/Ken L. will forward the script proposal to IRG.

3. Request WG2 at its June meeting in Vilnius to amend the IRG Principles and Procedures document, allowing WG2 to forward a set of Urgently Needed Characters.

Pros: This approach may be viewed more favorably, and not considered to be abusing the process.

Cons: Would require approval by WG2. The characters wouldn't be reviewed until after WG2, hence they would be reviewed first at the IRG November 2013 meeting.

Action: John would add the 19 characters to the U-source with a special prefix, thereby providing an official source to the characters. John (and/or Debbie or Ken L.) will write a document for WG2 requesting a change in IRG's Principles and Procedures document with appropriate rationale, and make sure the topic is on the WG2 agenda. Debbie or John/Ken L. will forward the script proposal to WG2.

4. Submit the document to IRG for consideration into Extension G (when it opens).

Pros: Will not affect UNC process.

Cons: Will significantly delay approval of characters by IRG [by several years].

Actions: Debbie or John/Ken L. will forward proposal to IRG.