

## On Indic Syllabic Category of KHAROSHTHI VIRAMA

Srinidhi A

Sridatta A

srinidhi.pinkpetals24@gmail.com sridatta.jamadagni@gmail.com

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### 1 Background

The current description on various Indic syllabic properties is as follows:

- **Virama**  
Only includes characters that can act both as visible killer viramas and consonant stackers. Separate property values exist for characters that can only act as pure killers or only as consonant stackers.
- **Pure killer**  
Killing of inherent vowel in consonant sequence, with no consonant stacking behavior.
- **Invisible stacker**  
Invisible consonant stacker virama.

### 2 Current Property of U+10A3F

U+10A3F KHAROSHTHI VIRAMA currently has Indic\_Syllabic\_Category=Invisible\_Stacker. However as per Core specification Virama in Kharoshthi can act as halanta (suppression of inherent vowel) and form consonant conjuncts. Therefore assigning the property as Invisible\_Stacker is inaccurate (from Chapter 14.2, page nos. 564-565 of Core specification).

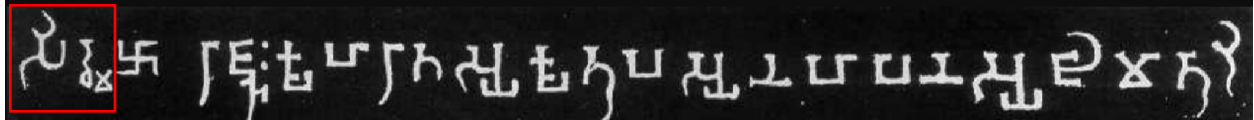
**Virama.** The virama is used to indicate the suppression of the inherent vowel. The glyph for U+10A3F KV KHAROSHTHI VIRAMA shown in the code charts is arbitrary and is not actually rendered directly; the dotted box around the glyph indicates that special rendering is required. When not followed by a consonant, the virama causes the preceding consonant to be written as subscript to the left of the letter preceding it. If followed by another consonant, the virama will trigger a combined form consisting of two or more consonants. The resulting form may also be subject to combinations with the previously noted combining diacritics.

The virama can follow only a consonant or a consonant modifier. It cannot follow a space, a vowel, a vowel modifier, a number, a punctuation sign, or another virama. Examples of the use of the Kharoshthi virama are given in *Table 14-6*.

Type	Example
Pure virama	dha + i + k + virama → dhik $\text{𑌔} + \text{𑌖} + \text{𑌕} + \text{𑌕v} \rightarrow \text{𑌔}$
Ligatures	ka + virama + ṣa → kṣa $\text{𑌕} + \text{𑌕v} + \text{𑌖} \rightarrow \text{𑌕}$
Consonants with special combining forms	sa + virama + ya → sya $\text{𑌖} + \text{𑌕v} + \text{𑌙} \rightarrow \text{𑌖}$
Consonants with full combined form	ka + virama + ta → kta $\text{𑌕} + \text{𑌕v} + \text{𑌔} \rightarrow \text{𑌕}$

The vowelless consonant is written smaller and lower than regular consonant as seen above

in the word dhik  $\text{𑌔}$ . Similar formations are also commonly seen in closely related Brahmi script. In this Sanskrit inscription in Brahmi from Nasik, 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, ma is written below to indicate vowelless consonant in the word siddham.



### 3 Recommendations

It is noted that the glyph shape used in Code chart is representative and arbitrary. Since, it is used for both suppression of inherent vowel and form consonant conjuncts, among the three properties Indic\_Syllabic\_Category=Virama appears to be suitable property. We request UTC to discuss and decide the appropriate Indic\_Syllabic\_Category for U+10A3F KHAROSHTHI VIRAMA.