Please reclassify the Philippine *pamudpod*

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$$\begin{pmatrix} ᜑᜒᜊ᜔ᜇᜒ ᜇᜓᜎᜒᜐᜒᜆᜓ \\ \text{Psiĥedelisto} \\ フレッド・ブレンナン \\ \mathit{copypaste}✉\mathit{kittens.ph} \end{pmatrix}$$

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Acknowledgements

0.1 Quick summary

If this proposal is accepted, the following change will be made:

- ᜴, U+1734, Hᴀɴᴜɴᴏᴏ Sɪɢɴ Pᴀᴍᴜᴅᴘᴏᴅ, will receive character name alias Pʜɪʟɪᴘᴘɪɴᴇ Pᴜɴᴄᴛᴜᴀᴛɪᴏɴ Pᴀᴍᴜᴅᴘᴏᴅ, and be moved from the script Hano to the script Zyyy to match other Philippine punctuation like ∥, U+1736, the Pʜɪʟɪᴘᴘɪɴᴇ Dᴏᴜʙʟᴇ Pᴜɴᴄᴛᴜᴀᴛɪᴏɴ.

I also argue that U+1734 should be reclassified as Po—Punctuation, Other—but this is not critical for solving the user community's woes.

0.2 Why?

0.2.1 Why a *pamudpod* makes sense in *baybayin*

The *pamudpod* is a *virama*. *Baybayin*, the local name for what The Unicode Standard calls the Tagalog script, though, already has a *virama* encoded—◌, U+1714, Tagalog Sign Virama, known in Tagalog as the *krus kudlit*.

So, why another *virama*? Well, first of all, it's being used, as I'll demonstrate, but the use of the *pamudpod* makes sense and is being enthusiastically adopted by a large portion of the *baybayin*-using community; several subject matter experts use it in their work, such as Norman de los Santos and Kristian Kabuay.

As far as I can tell, these are some of the reasons a *pamudpod* is preferred is preferred by many over the currently encoded *krus kudlit*:

- A reason to revive *baybayin* is to celebrate Filipino culture and the Tagalog language. The Spanish *krus kudlit*, however, is a symbol of colonization and Spanish administration of the country. Indeed, the very shape of the *krus kudlit* was meant to "civilize" the ancient Tagalogs: it is a cross, and this is not an accident; it was meant by its creator to symbolize Christianity. Even Christians, as most Filipinos are,[1] can find this colonial history problematic. The priest who first used it in 1620, Francisco Lopez, was perhaps unaware that native alternatives existed; or, seeing his chance to introduce a new letter to a "heathen" alphabet, chose a cross. The first book he printed with it, the *Doctrina Christiana*, was based on the teachings of Cardinal Roberto Bellarmine, one of Galileo's inquisitors.[2]

- While some fonts attempt to mask the symbolism of the *krus kudlit* by rendering it as an X, as ◌, and some fonts such as Noto Sans Tagalog v3+ indeed contain both selectable via OpenType features, in the case of that font, Stylistic Alternates (`salt`), it is impossible to convey such a shape reliably in plaintext. Furthermore, Unicode would never encode the X-shaped *krus kudlit* as a separate character, as it is so similar in function and semantics to the regular *krus kudlit*.

- The inventor of the *krus kudlit* disparaged the *baybayin* script (emphasis mine):[3]
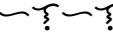
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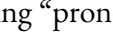
1.   Roman Catholics aren't seen as Christian by all denominations, but such squabbles are not the point of this paper.
2.   Morrow, Paul (2002). Baybayin—The Ancient Script of the Philippines. 14 July 2010 ed.
3.   Scott, William Henry (1994). *Barangay: Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society*. Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press—via Internet Archive. Quoting and translating from Spanish an 1895 reprint of López, Francisco (1621). *Libro a naisurátan ámin ti bagás ti Doctrina Christiana nga naisúrat iti libro ti Cardenal a agnagan Belarmino* p. LXII.

> " [T]he reason for putting the text of the Doctrina in Tagalog type...has been to begin the *correction of the said Tagalog script, which, as it is, is so defective and confused* (because of not having any method until now for expressing final consonants—I mean, those without vowels) that the most learned reader has to stop and ponder over many words to decide on the pronunciation which the writer intended. "

This disparagement was enthusiastically repeated by Spanish scholars right up until the end of the Spanish presence in the Philippines.[4]

- From a mere design perspective, in most common fonts the *krus kudlit* is very difficult to distinguish from the regular *kudlit*. While in the beginning the cross shape was elongated,[5] most fonts now render it as a mere plus sign, perhaps partially to combat the aforementioned perceived ills. Consider, if you would, ᜁ and ᜁ. Which one is the Philippine desert *halo-halo*, and which *halhal*, meaning "prone to laughing for no reason"? Certainly ᜁ is much easier to distinguish in small print.

0.2.2 The *pamudpod* is, indeed, native

Some would say that really the *pamudpod* is no better as it was "invented" by a Dutchman, Antoon Postma, who married into the Mangyan people and studied their language, Hanuno'o, during his life. Indeed, this argument was even tried against Postma's Mangyan Cultural Center[6] by an organization who claimed "*Surat Mangyan* (Hanuno'o) was changed to suit an anthropologist's vision".[7]

Even if this were true, it is certainly better to use a symbol originated in the independent Philippines which the Mangyan people voluntarily accepted rather than one which was forced upon the Tagalogs by a colonial dictatorship. However, it is not true; as the Mangyan Cultural Center notes...[8]

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4. Cipriano Marcilla y Martín (1895). *Estudio de los antiguos alfabetos filipinos*. Manila—via Internet Archive. pp. 10, 57
5. Ibid. p. 20. "ᜁ"
6. Postma is now deceased, but he founded the organization in 2000.
7. It seems that the organization who argued it, "Tsinelas Republic", recanted their statement; their Facebook page no longer links to it, and the page itself returns an error. Internet Archive doesn't have it; all that remains is the Mangyan Cultural Center's response.
8. Ibid.

> Thank you so much Fr. Ferdinand Bajao for taking the time to explain so well Postma's greatest contribution in preserving and keeping alive the rich Mangyan cultural heritage— the extensive documentation of the Mangyan script, and not to mention the over 20,000 *ambahan* he documented and [which are] now preserved [in] the Library of Congress in D.C. In fact, the vowel killer which is called *pamudpod* in the *Surat Mangyan* is not his invention. [It] was introduced in other writing systems as early as the 17th or 18th century for the Tagalog Baybayin. It was also used in the 900 AD Laguna Copperplate Inscription, the oldest Philippine document, which was discovered after Postma introduced the *pamudpod*. Even in the Tagbanwa script, a vowel killer was also introduced. Postma believed that the use of the *pamudpod* is necessary to keep the script alive and the Mangyans approved this for instruction purposes. Postma did not alter the original script.

Indeed, a *virama* with an awfully similar shape to the *pamudpod* can be seen in the mentioned inscription:[9]
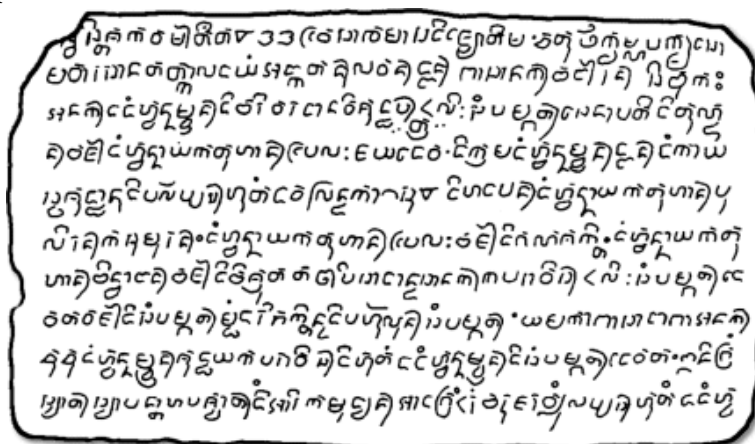
A quick comparison of Morrow's Latin transcription of the Laguna Copperplate Inscription with the inscription itself shows that the *pamudpod* serves the purpose of a *virama* here too.

Where then did this misunderstanding come from? It is indeed true that Postma introduced the *pamudpod* to the Mangyan people as part of his efforts to revitalize the Hanuno'o script. However, always the scholar, Postma was careful to borrow a construct from already existing Philippine scripts —not just simply draw a cross and call it a day.

0.2.3 Why the *baybayin* community needs, once again, the Consortium's intervention

Of course, it is bad on its own that a character has a misleading name which does not reflect its use in

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9.   This version via Paul Morrow.

real life. And it is bad on its own that a character so routinely used in *baybayin* (Tagalog)[10] is marked as belonging to the Hanuno'o script.

I see how this mistake happened, of course. Most other languages, especially those like Devanagari and Bengali from which the word *virama* originates, cannot share a *virama*. The very idea is absurd; they don't see the *virama* as punctuation, as Philippine script practitioners do.

And of course, due to systemic bias found in all tech, it's mostly white Europeans and Americans engaging with the Unicode Consortium. And to top it all off, before my last Tagalog proposal, L2/19-258R, a proposal had not been made since Michael Everson's L2/99-014. Obviously, fewer Filipinos were online then, fewer books were available (especially online), and so on.

However, due to the fact that some browsers[11] rely on Unicode's script determinations in ways I think are undue,[12] the urgency is increased as we cannot simply work around the issue with clever OpenType tables. To explain...
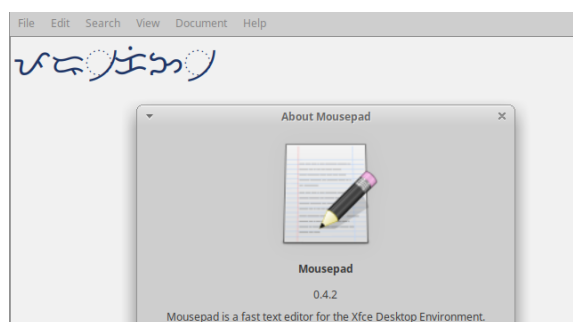
Consider the sequence:

ᜇᜇᜎᜃᜒᜅ

That is: Pᴀ Rᴀ Pᴀᴍᴜᴅᴘᴏᴅ Kᴀ Kᴜᴅʟɪᴛ_I Nɢᴀ Pᴀᴍᴜᴅᴘᴏᴅ.

Assuming Unicode 14.0 is out and contains ᜇ (Rᴀ),[13] the scripts are divided thus, with Tagalog in blue and Hanuno'o in red:

ᜇᜇᜎᜃᜒᜅ

No problem, right? We see that SɪLᴱ is handling it fine. Alas, this is mere good fortune; behold Mousepad:

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10.   To the point where *pamudpod* appear multiple times in the first sentence of Wikipedia's *baybayin* article, and have done so for years.

11.   *cough* Chrome! *cough*

12.   Perhaps an issue for the legendary Text Shaping Working Group?

13.   Since in reality it isn't, I have a whole universe of fun problems involving the ᜇ in my fonts. See Noto Sans Tagalog v3 documentation, pp. 14–15, for starters...

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OpenType shaping expert Khaled Hosny puts it succinctly: there's no standard way to chop glyphs into HarfBuzz (or whatever shaper) runs, a process known as "script itemization".[14]

So, even if a font contains the needed OpenType Layout instructions, if the shaper refuses to ever put the glyphs in the same run, these instructions are worthless. Chrome therefore sees the *pamudpod* as the start of the run, and tries to be "helpful" by inserting a ◌, resulting in this derpy output:

ᜆᜫᜩᜬᜳᜮᜯ

The result is particularly broken because for some reason the *pamudpod* is considered by Unicode as a combining character; this makes little sense for *baybayin*, and in my fonts, I don't implement the *pamudpod* with anchors and `mark`, but rather treat it as a punctuation mark that crosses its left bearing. In other scripts, I understand that the *virama* can ligate, and cause other transformations in the shapes of characters; this is not true for either Hanuno'o or *baybayin*, where it is static and has no effect on the shapes of the letters before or after it, and its shape does not change depending on where it is, nor does its attachment location.

Of course, it can be said that application-level bugs are not the Consortium's problem, in which case I fall back on my trusty argument of correctness for why it needs to change! 🐃

It's simply not correct to say that the *pamudpod* is only used in Hanuno'o...

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14.   Hosny, Khaled. Noto CJK Issue №172.

0.3 Evidence of *pamudpod* in use in modern *baybayin*

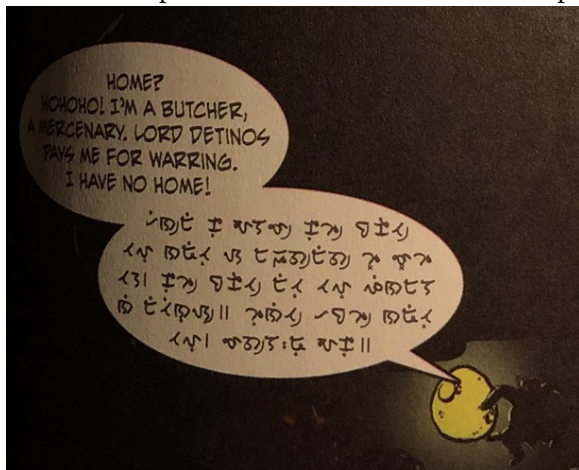Note: Many of these sources are identical to the ones I used for L2/19-258R.

0.3.1 Kalem (Anak Bathala), №1, 2013, BHM Publishing, graphic novel

Pamudpod are everywhere in this book, including on the cover in the names of the authors:

Transcribed: ᜦᜱᜱ᜔ᜪᜫ ⋆ ᜦᜪᜥᜱᜱ

And in the speech bubbles when characters speak:

Transcribed: ᜲᜅᜱᜱ ᜦ ᜦᜱᜱᜬᜬ ᜦᜱᜳ ᜨᜱᜱᜬ ᜱᜳ ᜩᜱᜱᜱ ᜥᜱ ᜧᜱᜳᜱᜱᜳᜳ ᜳᜳ ᜦᜳ ᜱᜱᜳ| ᜦᜱᜳ ᜨᜱᜱᜬ ᜱᜱ ᜱᜳ ᜧᜩᜱᜬ ᜥ ᜱᜱᜱᜱᜳᜳ|| ᜳᜥᜱᜬ ᜲᜨᜳ ᜩᜱᜱᜱ ᜱᜱᜱ ᜦᜳᜱᜱᜱ ᜦᜱᜱ||

 Tagalog: Hindi ko alam kung bakit tayo narito sa daigdig ng mga tao, kungbakit dito tayo pinadala ni Detinos. Ngunit habang narito tayo, maglalaro ako.

 English: I don't know why we're here on this Earth of the humans, or why Detinos brought us here. But as long as we're here, I'll play around.
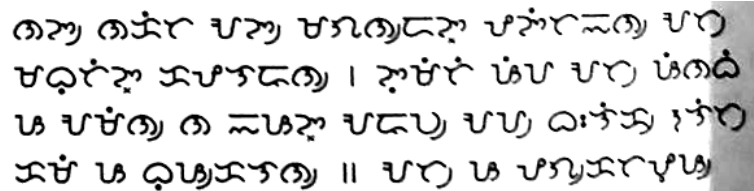
0.3.2 Kristian Kabuay's *Surat Magazine*, №1, December 2018

The publication of this magazine was funded by a Kickstarter[15] and was billed as "The first of it's kind

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in over 50 years."

The magazine is multilingual, however there is a long section written in the Tagalog *baybayin* script which uses a *pamudpod* everywhere a *virama* is called for. I will transcribe a line found on page 58 just as an example:

ᜈᜅ᜔ ᜈᜃᜒᜆ ᜀᜅ᜔ ᜋᜄᜈ᜔ᜇᜅ᜔ ᜉᜅᜒᜆᜁᜈ᜔ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜋᜊᜓᜆᜒᜅ᜔ ᜃᜉᜎᜇᜈ᜔ ᜵ ᜅᜓᜋᜒᜆᜒ ᜐ᜔ᜌ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜐᜒᜈᜊᜒ ᜐ ᜀᜋᜒᜈ᜔ ᜈ ᜁᜐᜅ᜔ ᜀᜇᜏ᜔ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜊᜊᜎᜒᜃ᜔ ᜂᜎᜒᜆ᜔ ᜃᜋᜒ ᜐ ᜊᜒᜐ᜔ᜃᜎᜈ᜔ ᜶ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜐ ᜉᜄ᜔ᜃᜆᜉᜓᜐ᜔

Transcription: ᜈᜅ᜔ ᜈᜃᜒᜆ ᜀᜅ᜔ ᜋᜄᜈ᜔ᜇᜅ᜔ ᜉᜅᜒᜆᜁᜈ᜔ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜋᜊᜓᜆᜒᜅ᜔ ᜃᜉᜎᜇᜈ᜔ ᜵ ᜅᜓᜋᜒᜆᜒ ᜐ᜔ᜌ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜐᜒᜈᜊᜒ ᜐ ᜀᜋᜒᜈ᜔ ᜈ ᜁᜐᜅ᜔ ᜀᜇᜏ᜔ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜊᜊᜎᜒᜃ᜔ ᜂᜎᜒᜆ᜔ ᜃᜋᜒ ᜐ ᜊᜒᜐ᜔ᜃᜎᜈ᜔ ᜶ ᜀᜆ᜔ ᜐ ᜉᜄ᜔ᜃᜆᜉᜓᜐ᜔

Tagalog: Nang nakita ang magandang pangitain at mabuting kapalaran, ngumiti siya at sinabi sa amin na isang araw at babalik ulit kami sa Biskalan. At sa pagkatapos...

English: When she saw a beautiful vision and a good fortune, she smiled and said to us that one day we would again return to Biskalan. After that...

0.3.3 Wikipedia

For years, *pamudpod* have been in use in Wikipedia's *baybayin* article, and they are described as an alternate *virama*.

As of , it is most prominently used in the lead sentence, as:

> **Baybayin** (Tagalog pronunciation: [baɪ̯ˈbaːjɪn], ᜊᜊᜌᜒᜈ᜔, virama-krus-kudlit: ᜊᜌ᜔ᜊᜌᜒᜈ᜔, virama-pamudpod: ᜊᜌ᜴ᜊᜌᜒᜈ᜴ ; also known as **alibata**) is an old writing system that was used in the Philippines.

Despite saying this, there is a whole section of examples of § "Modern usage" of the *baybayin* script, including on insignia of government agencies and the Philippine passport.