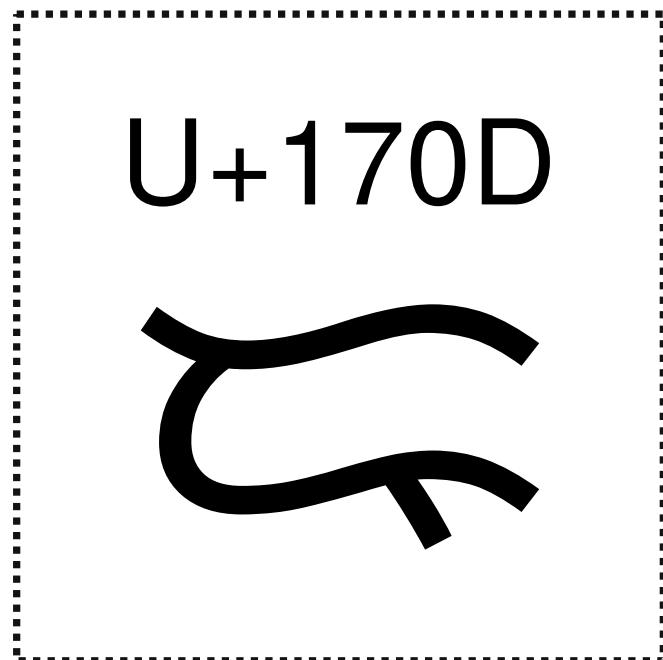


The *baybayin* “ra”—ꝝ

its origins and a plea for its formal recognition

Fredrick R. Brennan
<copypaste@kittens.ph>

July 18, 2019



Special thanks to:

Deborah Anderson, for her much needed expertise and review*

Renan Pagador, without whom this request would not have been possible

Jayson Villaruz, for his help in finding materials

Norman de los Santos, for his kind support of this proposal and expertise

*And finally, all the staff at Ateneo de Manila University's Rizal Library for graciously allowing me to
browse their Filipiniana archives*



See with what large letters I am writing to you with
my own hand! Galatians 6:11

*Script Encoding Initiative/Universal Scripts Project, UC Berkeley

Quick summary

If this proposal is accepted, the following characters will exist:

- U+170D ⚜ TAGALOG LETTER RA
- U+171F ⚝ TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA

Contents

Introduction	6
0.1 Linguistic details	6
Unicode considerations	8
0.2 Characters	8
0.3 A note on β 's name	9
0.4 Properties	9
0.4.1 Character remarks	9
0.5 Collation	10
History	11
0.6 The Zambales 'ra', β	11
0.6.1 Mariano Dario Canseco's <i>Palatitikan kayumanggi</i> (1966) . .	13
0.6.2 <i>Panitik Silangan</i> , September 1963	16
0.7 The modern 'ra', ጀ	17
0.7.1 The Bikol 'ra', ጀ	17
0.7.2 Rizaleo 'ra'— ጀ	19
Further evidence	22
0.8 Printed materials	22
0.8.1 Jeremiah Cordial's <i>The Seventh Moon</i> , 2018	22
0.8.2 Jean-Paul G. Potet's <i>Baybáyin: L'Alphabet Syllabique des Tagals</i> , 2012 (French edition)	23
0.8.3 <i>Kalem (Anak Bathala)</i> , №1, 2013, BHM Publishing, graphic novel	24
0.8.4 Kristian Kabuay's <i>Surat Magazine</i> , №1, December 2018 . .	25
0.8.5 Wikipedia	25
0.9 News articles	26
0.9.1 Reniel Pamplona's <i>Modernizing Baybayin</i> , Rappler, 2018 .	26
0.9.2 Jayson R. Mangalus' <i>Decoding Baybayin</i> , Manila Bulletin, 2017	27
0.10 Tattoos	28
0.10.1 <i>Maharlika</i> , $\text{ጀ} \sim \text{ጀ} \dot{\text{ጀ}} \dot{\text{ጀ}}$, October 2018	28
0.10.2 <i>Randy</i> , $\text{ጀ} \dot{\text{ጀ}} \dot{\text{ጀ}} \text{ጀ}$ [sic], May 2018	29

Contents

0.10.3	<i>de la Torre, ଦାତ୍ରେ, ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚ ୨୦୧୬</i>	29
0.11	Signs	30
0.11.1	<i>Sinagbayan</i> protest, June 12 2019	30
0.12	Art	31
0.12.1	Lloyd Zapanta, <i>Baybayin</i> logos, 2015–2017	31
0.12.2	Mural of Archie Oclos near Whang Od's Village, Kalinga	32
0.13	Fonts	33
0.13.1	Paul Morrow's <i>Doctrina Christiana</i>	33
0.13.2	Paul Morrow's <i>Bikol Mintz</i>	34
0.13.3	Norman de los Santos' fonts	35
0.13.4	Lloyd Zapantas' fonts	36
0.14	Software	37
0.14.1	JC John Sese Cuneta's <i>Paninap Unicode Keyboard Layouts</i> (2010)	37
0.14.2	Xavier Nègre's <i>Lexilogos</i>	38
0.14.3	Android apps	39

Introduction

Baybayin is the local name for what the Unicode Standard calls the Tagalog block of the Basic Multilingual Plane (BMP). Proposed in 1998 by Michael Everson, four scripts were encoded at once: Tagalog, Hanunó'o, Buhid and Tagbanwa.

At the time of encoding, only ancient documents were considered for the Tagalog script. As a result, the Tagalog ‘ra’ was not encoded.

However, as Hanunó'o and Buhid included a ‘ra’, and because all four scripts were encoded due to the same proposal, a spot was, in a splendid twist of fate, left open for a ‘ra’ in Tagalog as well; although it was seemingly never intended for the use the community gave it.

This spot, U+170D, has become a *de facto* standard among *baybayin* writers in the Philippines and the Filipino diaspora. Several modern fonts, including the one that appears on Philippine currency to write the word *Pilipino*, use U+170D as a ‘ra’. (See §0.13) Software, if it can output \approx , uses U+170D. (See §0.14) Documents online, if they include \approx , most often have it encoded as U+170D.

This proposal is at once an extensive study on the *baybayin* ‘ra’ and a plea for the Unicode consortium to recognize the *de facto* standard of the user community, and to legitimize U+170D as ‘ra’, because some large tech companies, such as Google, patron of the Noto fonts, refuse to encode characters that the Unicode Standard does not recognize, hindering the development of *baybayin* and the community in using its script.

0.1 Linguistic details

The letter ‘da’, \approx , in Old Tagalog was known as *dara*. In his thesis,¹ Joseph G. Lapallargas writes: “Contact with the Spanish and English and the consequent numerous borrowings have brought about some changes in the phonetic and phonemic structure of Tagalog. [...] If formerly there were no prevocalic clusters in Tagalog, now they are of frequent occurrence. If [d] and [r] were submembers of a single phoneme, now the two are separate phonemes.” \approx , ‘ra’, is required to write modern Tagalog or Filipino in the Tagalog (*baybayin*)

¹A study of the ancient Philippine syllabary with particular attention to its Tagalog version, Joseph G. Lapallargas, Ateneo de Manila University, 1974, Z 115.5 T2 E76

Introduction

script without introducing ambiguity into the text. This became apparent very early in the revival of the Tagalog script in the Philippines; the first known appearance of the Tagalog ‘ra’ (Zambales form) appears in print in 1922.

Some contemporary users of the script are okay with the ambiguity introduced by the lack of a \approx using \approx for Tagalog words and \mathfrak{r} for Spanish words. However, in my examination of the evidence, the majority of the contemporary *baybayin* user community prefers to use \approx , and even if some users find it distasteful and would prefer only to use the original seventeen *baybayin* letters, they are free to do so. After all, I am not trying to prescribe the use of \approx to anyone, but merely to describe that \approx is being used frequently and therefore needs a codepoint.

Unicode considerations

0.2 Characters

I propose two characters: one character to cover all the modern variants discussed in this paper, to be encoded at U+170D and named TAGALOG LETTER RA, and another, to be encoded at U+171F, TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA, to cover the archaic “Zambales” form of the letter.

The Zambales form of the \approx , β , is only found in historical texts and *could* be encoded as U+170D and selected in a font by using the OpenType feature hist, Historical Forms, as I’ve done in the OpenBaybayin font that I made to typeset this document. In *baybayin* text, β has exactly the same meaning as \approx , and I found no texts where both were in use except the one I’m writing. I received some feedback from the Script Ad Hoc committee that “It is graphically quite different from the RA you propose, though it has the same sound, so it should also be encoded.”

Therefore, out of respect to Script Ad Hoc, I also propose the Zambales β be encoded at U+171F and receive name TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA. In my discussions with users, it is of utmost importance to them that TAGALOG LETTER RA (\approx) be encoded, but many would also welcome TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA (β) to be able to transcribe historical texts in which it appears. The situation can be seen as analogous to that of LATIN SMALL LETTER LONG S (f) and LATIN SMALL LETTER S (s). Ultimately the decision is up to the Consortium.

The variants of the marked \approx form of the letter \approx are mere stylistic choices with equivalent meaning and can all be encoded in the same letter in the same way that Q, \mathbb{Q} , \mathfrak{Q} , \mathcal{Q} , and \mathscr{Q} can all be represented by LATIN CAPITAL LETTER Q, U+0051, with the style chosen being based on font. Indeed, as *baybayin* fonts are primarily made based on handwriting, it is unsurprising that there are so many variants; in the samples I observed, other letters had many variants as well; for example, at times \mathfrak{N} would have a straight center line instead of the standard squiggly one in the \mathfrak{N} used in this sentence.

I am aware of the following stylistic variants of the modern \approx :

1. Generic — \approx (§0.14.3; §0.8.4)
2. Generic, longer stroke — \approx (§0.9.1)

3. Rizaleo — \simeq (§0.7.2)
4. Bikol — \simeq (§0.7.1)
5. Applied to a cursive \simeq — \simeq (§0.10.1)
6. Double cursive loop — \simeq (§0.8.3)

This is not meant to be an exhaustive listing, there are definitely variants beyond those that I have listed; rather it is meant to be a list of the major stylistic variants I've seen in reviewing works written in the *baybayin* script.

Some of these, especially №6, are caused by attempting to write the *baybayin* script in a cursive form on pen and paper, which is not how it was traditionally written.

0.3 A note on β 's name

I had originally intended to propose that β receive the name TAGALOG LETTER ZAMBALES RA; as can be seen in the sources, whenever β is used, that's the name it's given, see §0.6. However, one of the subject matter experts who was sent this proposal, Mr. Kristian Kabuay, commented that he did not like that name as it puts too much emphasis on Spanish scholarship instead of the indigenous qualities of the Tagalog script. Therefore, as has been done for other scripts, I decided to propose that the name be TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA instead. This is a more neutral, and still correct, designation; "Zambales" can be in the notes. I prefer to defer to Mr. Kabuay, who has spent much of his life on scholarship and promotion of pre-Hispanic Philippine scripts, and recommend that the Consortium likewise defer.

0.4 Properties

The proposed General Category properties for the proposed characters are:

170D;TAGALOG LETTER RA;Lo;0;L;;;;;N;;;;;
171F;TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA;Lo;0;L;;;;;N;;;;;

0.4.1 Character remarks

So end users and font designers better understand this glyph and its use, I propose that TAGALOG LETTER RA receive the following character note in NamesList.txt:

- modern adaptation, not used to write Old Tagalog
→ Ⓜ U+171F TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA

I propose that TAGALOG LETTER ARCHAIC RA receive the following character note in NamesList.txt:

- modern adaptation, not used to write Old Tagalog
- historical (19th–20th century) form of TAGALOG LETTER RA
- also known as the “Zambales” ra
- Ⓜ U+170D TAGALOG LETTER RA

0.5 Collation

In the original proposal, Everson writes on pages three to four:

UTR#3 states: “The alphabetical order of Tagalog is known from Tagbanwa speakers and is described in folktales. This order is used in the accompanying charts. The two vowel signs are added at the end of the alphabet.” The names list in UTR#3, however, is (except for the vowel signs) given in Latin alphabetical order (*a, i, u, ba, da, ga, ha, ka, la, ma, na, nga, pa, sa, ta, wa, ya, -i, -u*). Daniels & Bright give another ordering, “based on the 16th-century Tagalog sequence” (*a, i, u, ha, pa, ka, sa, la, ra, ta, na, ba, ma, ga, da, ya, nga, wa*). This proposal gives the characters in the traditional Brahmic order (*a, i, u, ka, ga, nga, ta, da, na, pa, ba, ma, ya, ra, la, wa, sa, ha*), which is followed in many sources, including Santos 1994 and 1995.

This having been the standard for more than twenty years, I see no reason to change it; this Brahmic Unicode order is used by software such as the JavaScript input method Lexilogos (§0.14.2) and is the order that Norman de los Santos (§0.13.3) presents his fonts in. While some writers, such as Lloyd Zapantas (§0.13.4), use a Spanish-influenced collation,² there is no reason in my opinion to change the standard collation to match.

Therefore, I request for the collation to be as follows, matching Hanunó'o and Buhid:

υ > Ⓜ > Ⓝ

That is to say, υ comes before Ⓜ comes before Ⓝ. Assuming Ⓜ is encoded, Ⓜ should come after it, so:

Ⓜ > Ⓜ > Ⓝ

²That is to say, in order: ᗩ ᗪ ᗱ ᗢ – ᗪ ᗩ ᗪ ᗢ ᗪ ᗩ ᗪ (placement of ᗩ ᗢ may vary)

History

0.6 The Zambales 'ra', β

The first form of the *baybayin* 'ra' is the Zambales 'ra'. Its main source is the 1895 book *Estudio de los antiguos alfabetos Filipinos* by Cipriano Marcilla y Martin where it appears on page 23.

23

Núm. 7.

*Alfabeto de Zambales por un P. Agustino manuscrito
de 1601.*

ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ
a	y	y	o	u		
ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ
ba	ca	da	pa	ga	ha	la
ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ	ꝝ
ma	na	ra	sa	ta	i	n̄g

On page 34, its origin is explained thus (emphasis mine):

En la pág 23. y con el núm. 7 damos el alfabeto de Zambales escrito por un Agustino. En el archivo de S. Agustín hemos registrado este precioso documento del que por falta de medios no hemos podido sacar unfacsimile de las firmas que contiene. **Según la portada se escribió el 1601** y se lee en la última página en letra clara y escrita con tinta encarnada «Este arte hallé tirado en el pueblo de Bolinao, quando estuve allí el año de 1780. Fr. Agustín María.»

Translated quite literally:

On page 23, in figure №7, we reproduce the Zambales alphabet as written by an Agustinian [monk]. In the archive of San Agustin we've inspected to this precious document, which through lack of means we were unable to make a facsimile of its signatures. According to the cover page, it was written in 1601 by an Agustinian [monk], and on the last page one can read in letters written clearly in red ink: "I found this art in the town of Bolinao when I was there in the year 1780. Signed Fr. Agustin Maria."³

In the latter years of the Spanish Empire's presence in the Philippines, interest in restoring *baybayin*, which had been suppressed by the Spanish and now lay only in history books, returned. Indeed, some revolutionary flags contained the *baybayin* letter 'ka', ⚩, which stood for both *kalayaan* (freedom) and *katipunan* (the revolutionaries).³

In 1922, Ignacio Borbon Villamor took an interest in the restoration of the *baybayin* script, but quickly realized that the Tagalog language had changed too much due to Spanish influence, in his book, *La antigua escritura filipina*, he recommends using the Zambales 'ra':

— 12 —

Pero en el alfabeto de Zambales, tomado, según el P. Marcilla, de un manuscrito de 1601, encontramos la letra R así ⚩, de modo que, para escribir correctamente "América", pondríamos así: ⚩ ⚩ ⚩ ⚩.

Translated into English:

In the alphabet of Zambales, taken, according to P. Marcilla, from a 1601 manuscript, we find the letter R written as ⚩, so that, if we wish to correctly write "America", we would write it as ⚩ ⚩ ⚩ ⚩.

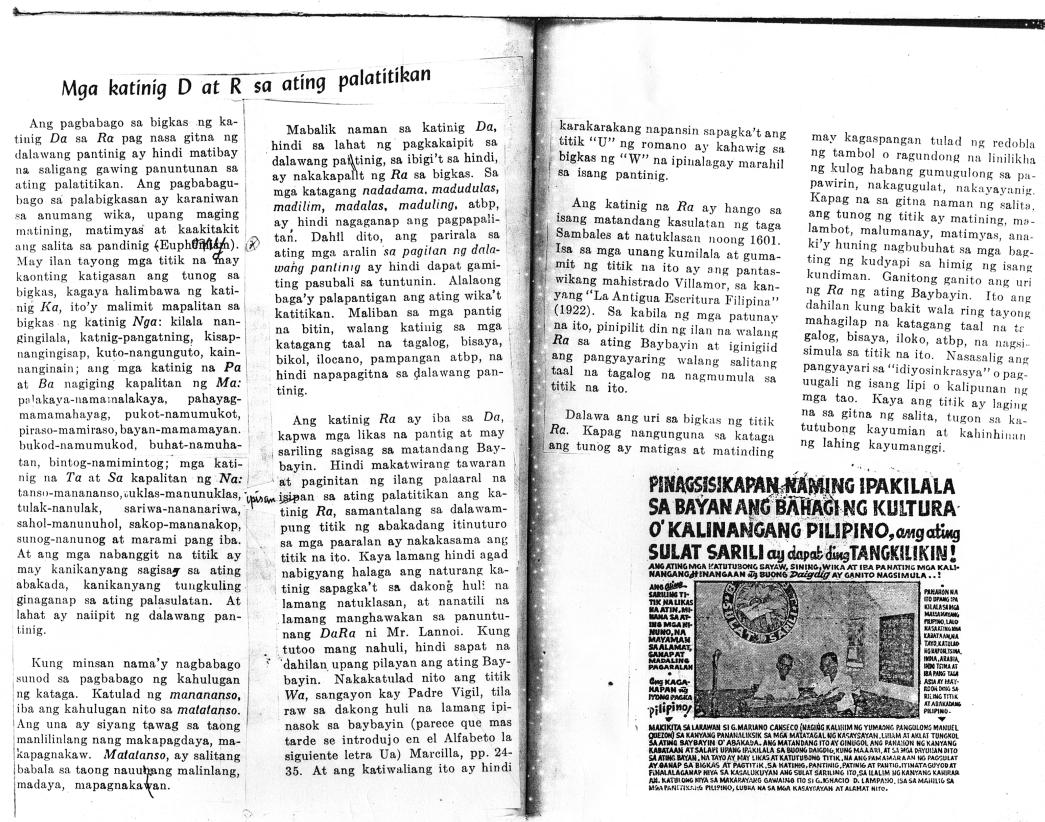
The community of *baybayin*/Tagalog script revivalists happily received this advice mid-century—most documents of the era which include 'ra' use the Zambales 'ra'. Many of these publications are hard to come by as they had limited production runs and before the internet were costly to produce, but I was able to find some in the Ateneo de Manila University's Rizal Library:

³Alvarez, S.V., 1992, Recalling the Revolution, Madison: Center for Southeast Asia Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, ISBN 1-881261-05-0, p. 105

0.6.1 Mariano Dario Canseco's *Palatitikan kayumanggi* (1966)

This book has sections in the regular Latin Tagalog script, as well as lengthy passages entirely in *baybayin*, proto-memes, a dictionary and essays about *baybayin*.

In the early part of the book, we can see the author refer to his chosen \approx as a "Zambales" \approx ,⁴ β , in the section *Mga katinig D at R sa ating palatitikan* (*The consonants D and R in our [native] orthography*):



Ang katinig na *Ra* ay hango sa isang matandang kasulatan ng taga Sambales at natuklasan noong 1601.

Translated:

The consonant *Ra* is adapted from an old manuscript from Zambales created in 1601.

⁴He uses the word *Sambales*, which is common, depending on the author, as Tagalog does not normally differentiate [s] and [z], and no native Tagalog words contain [z]. So, after the departure of the Spanish, many authors have chosen to "tagalize" place names; whether or not this is done entirely depends on the author.

Regarding the β itself, it can be seen clearly in the words $\text{V}\beta\dot{\beta}$ —*sarili*, $\text{K}\beta\beta\beta$ —*kurukuro* and $\text{V}\beta\beta$ —*araw*.

PAKATITIKANG KAYUMANGGI

পাকাতিকাং কায়ুমাঙ্গি

(ang tunay na sulat ng lahi)

BUNGAD: ANG MATANDANG BAYBAYIN
বুংগড় অঙ মান্দাঙ বেবেয়িন

TALATINIGANG PILIPINO-INGLES
তালাতিনিগাং পিলিপিনো-ইংলেস

na may salin sa titik baybayin
না মাই সলিন সা টিতিক বেবেয়িন

PANUTUHAN NG PAGSULAT SA
পানুতুহান এগ পাগসুলাত সা

SARILING MGA TITIK
সারিলিং মগা টিতিক

SULAT SARILI SA BISAYA AT IBANG WIKA
সুলাত সারিলি সা বিসায়া অত ইবাঙ বিকা

MAKALUMA AT MAKABAGO
মাকালুমা অত মাকাবাগো

Kurukuro ng dalawang dalubwika sa pagkakasulat ng
কুরুকুরু ন দালওৰু দালুবুকা সা পাগকাকাসুলাত ন

"ADA NA MANILA" — — ARAW NG MAYNILA.
আদা না মানিলা — — আরাও ন মায়নিলা

History

Below are images of dictionary entries in the book that show β

barnis	$\textcircled{w}\beta\bar{\beta}\beta$	varnis
baro	$\textcircled{w}\beta$	clothes, dress
basa	$\textcircled{w}\beta$	wet
basagin	$\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\bar{\beta}f$	to break
bata	$\textcircled{w}\beta$	child
batak	$\textcircled{w}\beta\bar{\beta}k$	pull
batas	$\textcircled{w}\beta\beta$	law
bayaran	$\textcircled{w}\beta\beta f$	to pay
baybay	$\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta$	to spell
baywang	$\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$	waist

In the edition in the archives of the Rizal Library, the following handwritten note can be found which uses β :

$\textcircled{s}\beta\beta\beta\beta$ β $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$

β $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta$ $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta$ $\textcircled{s}\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta$

• Hunyo 2, 1966

— $\beta\beta\beta\beta$ β $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$ $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$ $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$ $\textcircled{w}\beta\beta\beta\beta$ Hunyo 2, 1966

Handog ng may akda sa makatang Amado Hernandez. Hunyo 2, 1966

This is a gift from the author to the poet Amado Hernandez. June 2, 1966

0.6.2 *Panitik Silangan*, September 1963



EDITORIAL

编辑部

今天是中文的重阳节，也是中国传统的敬老节。在这个特殊的日子里，我们想起了那些为我们奉献一生的老人们。他们用他们的智慧和汗水，为我们创造了美好的生活。我们应该珍惜他们的付出，尊重他们的劳动，传承他们的精神。同时，我们也应该关注老年人的生活，关心他们的身心健康，让他们在晚年能够幸福、安康。

β can be seen in many words in this short-lived newsletter, for example, *ɛdɪtɔrɪəl*, *editoryal* and *nsɜːrliŋ*, *sariling*.

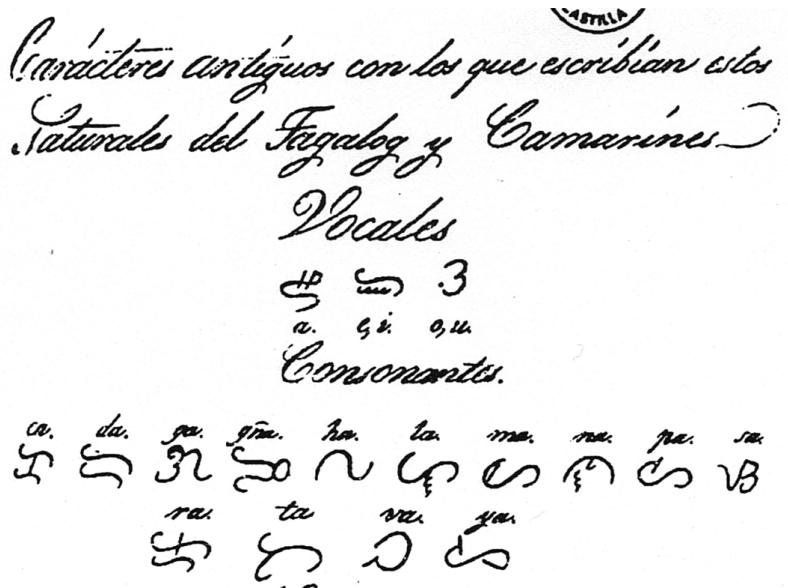
0.7 The modern 'ra', ↞

0.7.1 The Bikol 'ra', ↞

Bikol–English Dictionary, 1986

Besides the Zambales 'ra', there is another 'ra' with a long pedigree, the so-called "Bikol" 'ra'. This form of 'ra' is so similar to the modern form that it could be called a minor variant form; in the same way the tail of the letter Q moves about depending on the style of the writer, the marked form of the ↞ moves about, finding itself sometimes as ↞ and other times ↚, but for completeness I include it anyway.

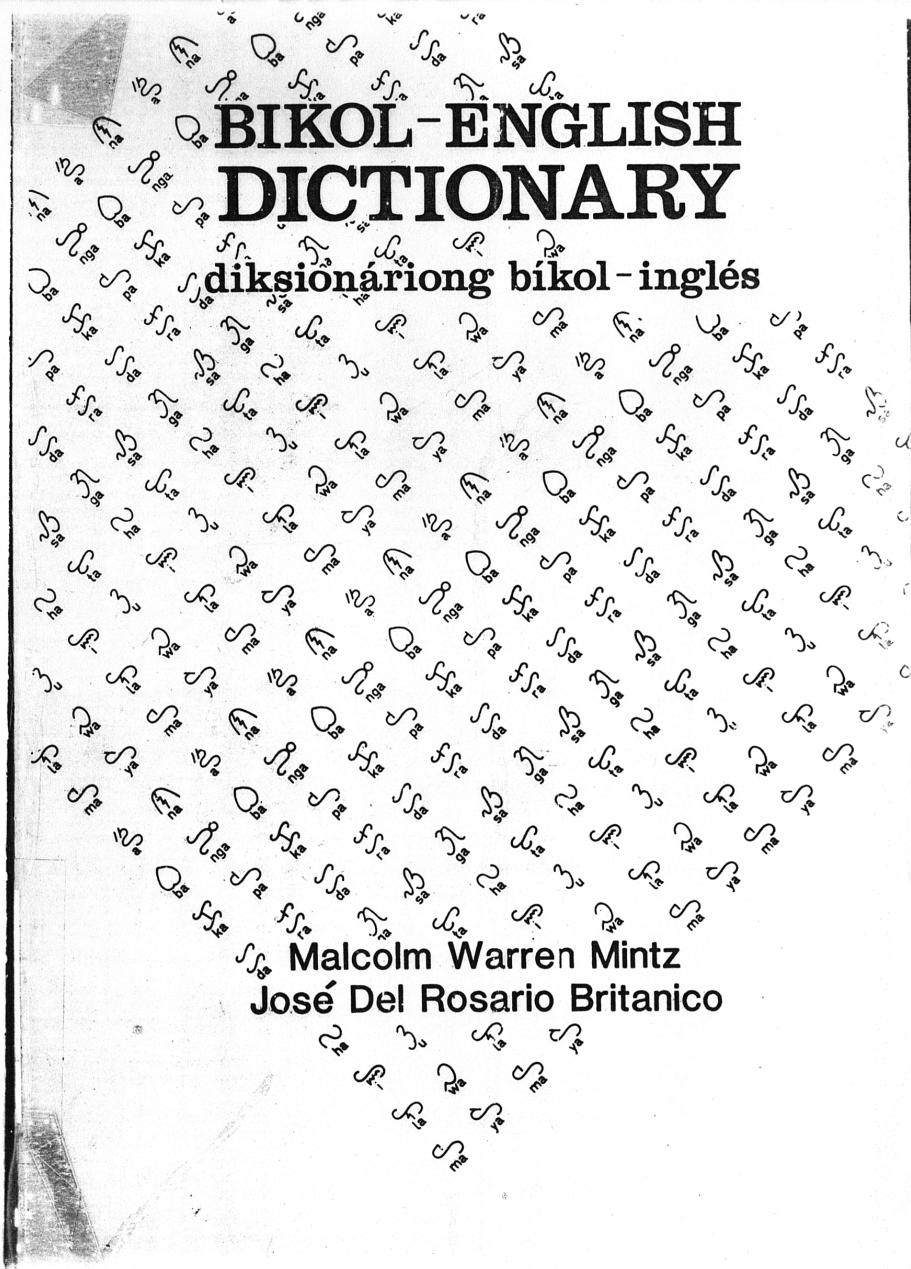
Despite being called by the word Bikol, which is an area of Luzon, the original chart which shows this form of the *baybayin* 'ra' doesn't mention Bikol at all, (although it should be noted that Camarines is in the Bicol region), and is found in an old Tagalog–English dictionary held by the Madrid National Library. It's marked *Carácteres antiguos con los que escribían estos naturales del Tagalog y Camarines*, "Ancient characters with which these natives of the Tagalogs and Camarines used to write".⁵ The version shown below is as reprinted in the 2004 edition of Malcolm Warren Mintz's *Bikol–English Dictionary*.



⁵The full text of the work can be seen at <http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000044798>

History

The 1986 edition of the *Bikol-English Dictionary* features a stylized Bikol *ta* on its cover.

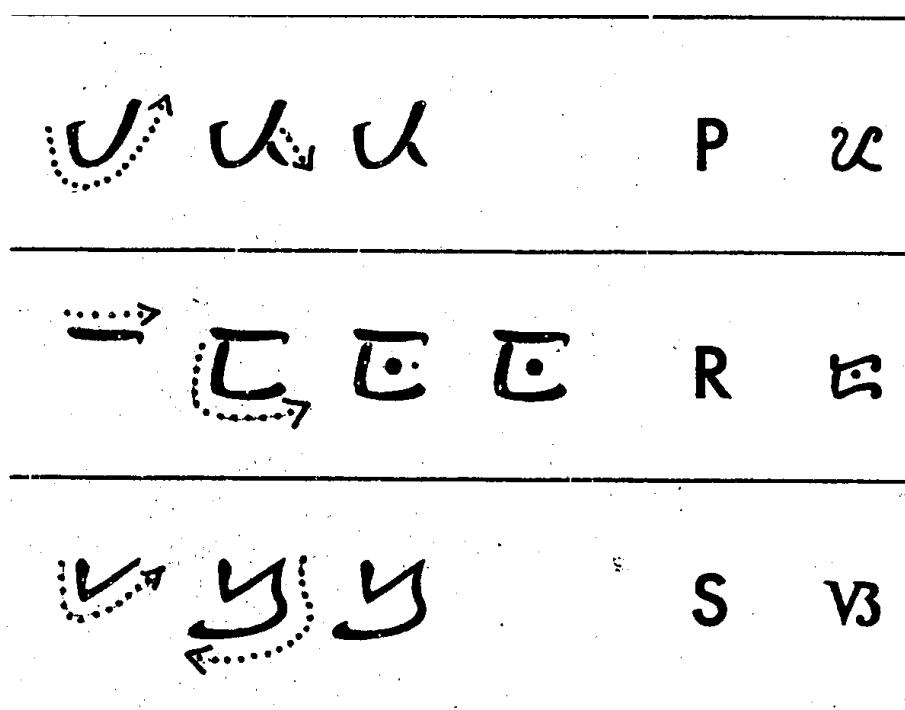


Computers and the internet brought the *baybayin* community closer together, making it much easier and cheaper to print *baybayin* materials.

0.7.2 *Rizaleo* ‘ra’—ꝝ

Marius V. Diaz’s *Aklat Sanayan ng Abakadang Rizaleo*, 1994

The first truly modern ‘ra’ appears in the book *Aklat Sanayan ng Abakadang Rizaleo* (Exercise Book for the Rizal Alphabet) by Marius V. Diaz. This work details a slightly stylized *baybayin* alphabet and shows off several Type 1 computer fonts⁶ made by Diaz to write (his slightly modified version of) *baybayin*.



⁶According to the book’s text, all the font styles shown in the book were available as Type 1 fonts in 1994, but due to the age of the work, the obsolescence of the format, and the existence of better Unicode fonts, the fonts no longer seem to be distributed online.

All the styles in the book are named after José Rizal, so the *ꝝ* can be clearly seen in all of them:⁷

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizalahi

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizalaya

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizalyanihan

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizaleo

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizaulo

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizanayan

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Rizinauna

ꝝꝝꝝꝝꝝ Riztaal

⁷Except in the words *Rizaulo* and *Rizanayan*, which are misprinted—the beginning *ꝝ* is missing.

Further evidence

The modern Baybayin ‘ra’, ⚜, is disseminated widely as of this writing in 2019. I will outline multiple lines of evidence for its existence and usage by the contemporary community as an argument for its encoding:

- Printed materials;
- News articles;
- Tattoos;
- Signs;
- Art;
- Fonts;
- Software.

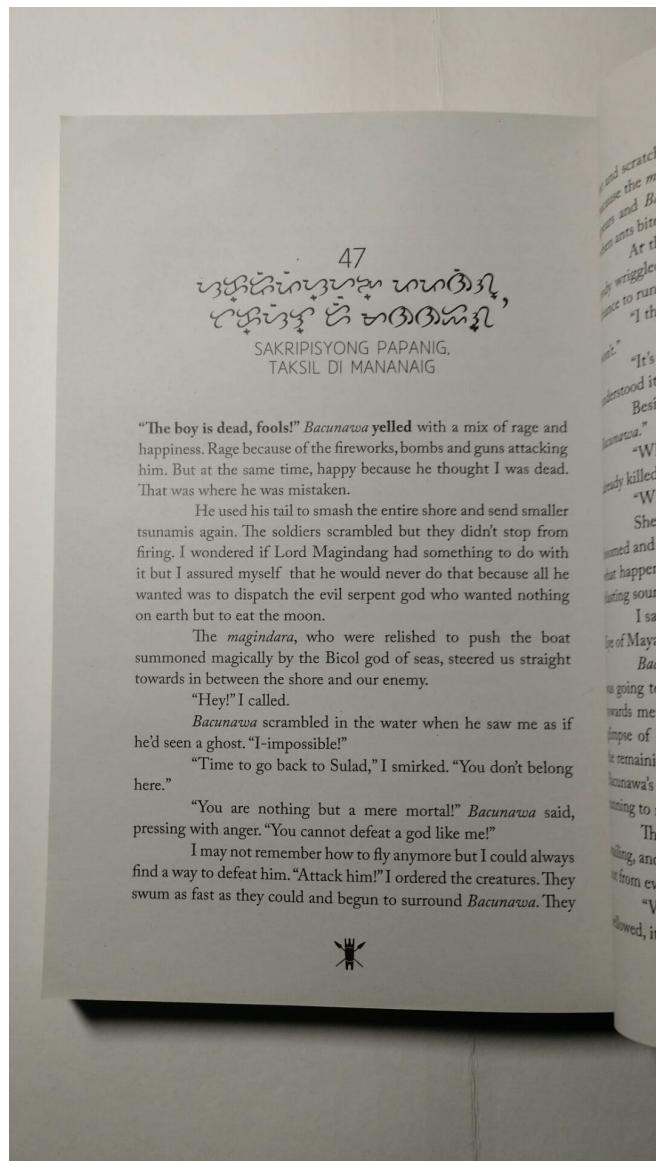
0.8 Printed materials

As the modern ‘ra’ is contemporary to the internet and the spread of Facebook in the Philippines, there is not as much printed material as may be expected. However, with the gracious help of the community, I was able to find a number of examples which will hopefully satisfy the Consortium.

0.8.1 Jeremiah Cordial’s *The Seventh Moon*, 2018

This fantasy novel, which has been given wide distribution in the Philippines by National Bookstore,⁸ has *baybayin* sayings on the heading of every chapter. In many of them, the modern ⚜ can be clearly seen. For example, chapter №47 has this saying attached:

⁸<https://www.nationalbookstore.com/the-seventh-moon-tp>, it is available nationwide in the largest Philippine bookseller for ₱250.



Transcribed: 13. Sakripisyong papanig, taksil di mananaig
Tagalog: Sakripisyong papanig, taksil di mananaig
English (loosely): One [should] favor sacrifice, so traitors don't prevail

0.8.2 Jean-Paul G. Potet's *Baybáyin: L'Alphabet Syllabique des Tagals*, 2012 (French edition)

The modern **ꝝ** can be found on page 181 in a rather unusual example. It is an English sentence written semi-phonetically in *baybayin*. **ꝝ** can be seen in the word **ꝝꝝ**, *are*.

❀❀//

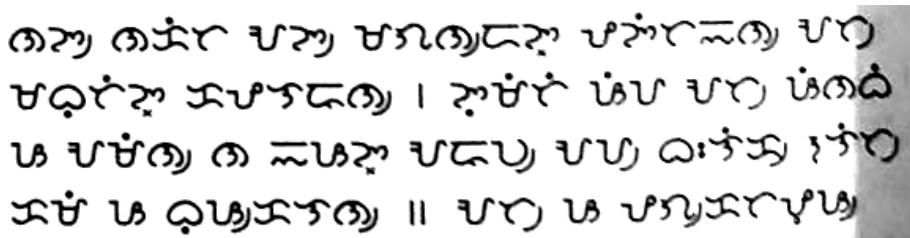
Tagalog: Hindi ko alam kung bakit tayo narito sa daigdig ng mga tao, kung bakit dito tayo pinadala ni Detinos. Ngunit habang narito tayo, maglalaro ako.

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.

0.8.4 Kristian Kabuay's *Surat Magazine*, №1, December 2018

The publication of this magazine was funded by a Kickstarter⁹ and was billed as "The first of its kind in over 50 years."

The magazine is multilingual, however there is a long section written in the Tagalog *baybayin* script which includes our friend, the letter , in numerous instances. I will transcribe a line found on page 58 just as an example.



Transcription: ॥ नांग नांग सुन्दर च विजया शंख रवि वर्ष च धूर्ण इवान्द्रे /
नांग नांग च विजया शंख रवि वर्ष च धूर्ण इवान्द्रे /
॥ नांग नांग च विजया शंख रवि वर्ष च धूर्ण इवान्द्रे /

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 ...

0.8.5 Wikipedia

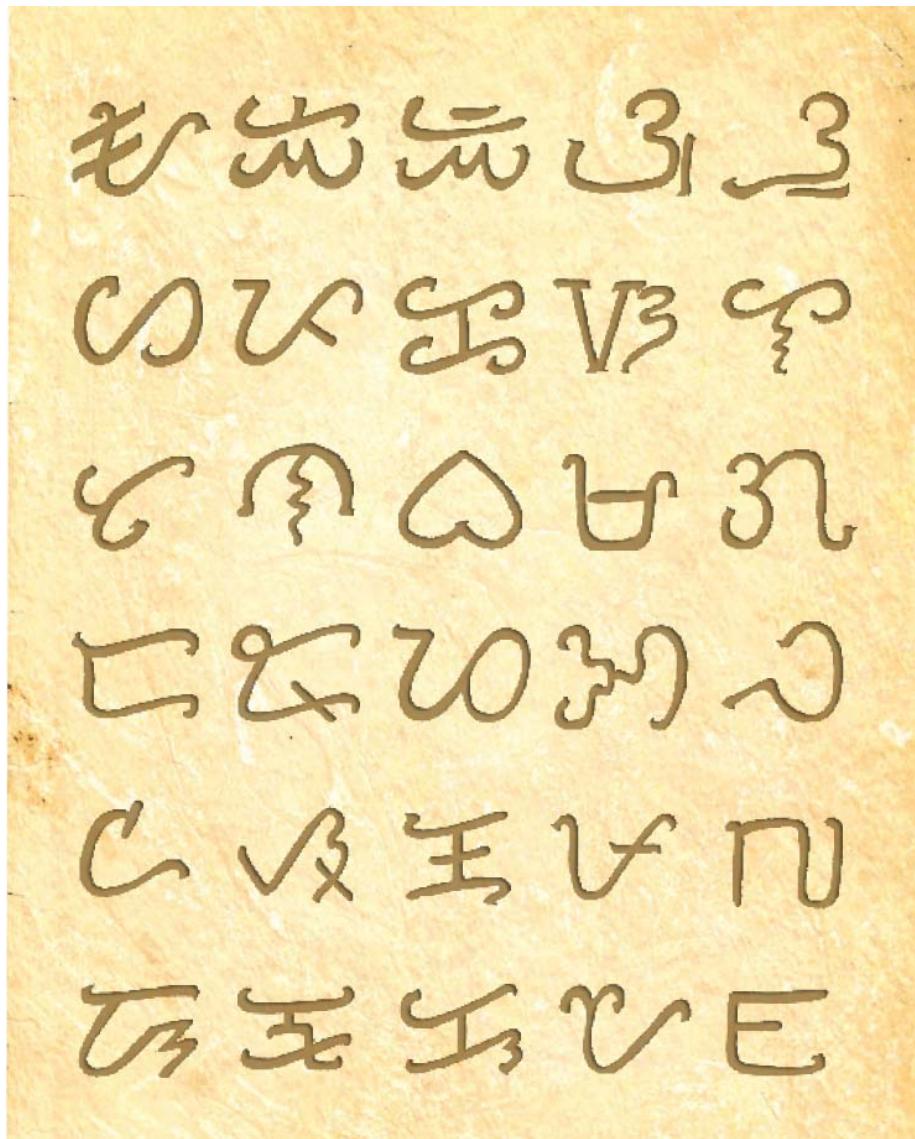
While perhaps not counted as printed material (despite routinely being printed,¹⁰ and distributed on CD¹¹; there's even a convenient "book creator" which you

⁹<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/baybayin/surat-1st-magazine-using-an-endangered-script-in-5-posts/2342594>—Kabuay rose \$3,136 and wrote of the magazine: *The inaugural Surat (to write) Magazine will be mainly written using indigenous writing systems in the Philippines in multiple languages covering topics from culture, art, poetry, food, fashion, travel, etc.*

¹⁰https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Print_Wikipedia

¹¹https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia_on_CD/DVD

0.9.2 Jayson R. Mangalus' *Decoding Baybayin*, Manila Bulletin, 2017



The *baybayin*  can be seen in the 2nd column and 4th row. The chart is a heavily modified *baybayin*, one of Jayson Villaruz's versions of the script,¹⁴ however being in a national newspaper lends more proof to the existence of  even among those stretching the script far beyond this modest proposal to encode only .

The article's text, a quick *baybayin* lesson, refers only to the rules for the traditional 17-character script, known in the community as *B17*, for *baybayin-17*;¹⁵ thus it states "Characters "r" and "d" are interchangeable."

¹⁴Jayson Villaruz's self-styled *Modern Baybayin* is to my knowledge the version of the script with the most glyphs. Having reviewed the evidence, it does not seem to have caught on as universally as the more modest proposal in this paper, just to encode .

¹⁵Often used to differentiate it from *B18*, or the original 17 *baybayin titik* (letters) plus . For examples of the community's use of these terms, see [here](#) or [here](#).

0.10 Tattoos

Plenty of tattoos including the \approx can be easily found on the web; how tragic it is indeed that in order to tell someone in an electronic format the message that was so dear to their heart they had to ink it on their body breaks the Unicode Standard by using the unassigned codepoint U+170D.

Three examples are shown below, others may be seen at the website of the “*Ang Muling Paglaganap ng Baybayin script ng Pilipinas*” (Reform of the Philippines’ *baybayin* script) at <<https://baybayinipalaganap.blogspot.com/2015/06/baybayin-script-sa-mga-tattoo.html>> and across Facebook and Twitter.

0.10.1 *Maharlika*, $\approx - \approx \dot{\approx} \approx$, October 2018



0.10.2 *Randy*, የኢትዮጵያ [sic], May 2018



0.10.3 *de la Torre*, ኢትዮጵያ, March 2016

Per <https://twitter.com/ariannarenae/status/708102179672825858>



0.11 Signs

0.11.1 *Sinagbayan* protest, June 12 2019

One interesting contemporary use of *baybayin* is in these anti-capitalist protest signs painted by *Sinagbayan*, “*Sining na Naglilingkod sa Bayan*” (Art in Service of the Community). The  can be seen in the word , meaning bureaucrat.¹⁶

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/sinagbayan.org>

¹⁶The inclusion of this sign should not be interpreted as advertisement, support or allegiance of the author to the mentioned group.



0.12 Art

0.12.1 Lloyd Zapanta, *Baybayin logos, 2015–2017*

In this art collection, Zapanta asks the question, “What if the Philippines is using its own native alphasyllabary...today?” through corporate branding, resulting in some really quite stunning logos, and plenty of ⚡ to go around.

For our purposes, I selected only the logos containing ⚡, the rest may be seen at: <https://www.behance.net/lloydzapanta>



From top: ជាន់ពុទ្ធសាស្ត្រ (Metrobank), ជាន់ពុទ្ធសាស្ត្រ (Royal), បោរីកុង ស៊ូ (Burger King), មេរាលុខ (Meralco)

0.12.2 Mural of Archie Oclos near Whang Od's Village, Kalinga

The គ can be seen on the right-hand side near the center of this mural in Kalinga, Cordillera Administrative Region, Luzon, Philippines.



Per <<https://baybayininipalaganap.blogspot.com/2019/03/baybayin-sa-sining.html>>, the photo above was taken by Mario Alvaro Limos.

0.13 Fonts

Since the encoding of the Tagalog block, but especially after, there have been a multitude of *baybayin* fonts online, with the most popular ones within the community being made, in historical order, by Paul Morrow and Norman de los Santos. All of the most popular fonts put a glyph in U+170D—against the standard, in an unencoded codepoint—usually ⚡, but in some fonts meant to be “traditional”, ⚡.

Large corporations have also contributed *baybayin* fonts, such as Google’s (Monotype’s) Noto Sans Tagalog, however due to its missing ⚡ this font is not normally used to create *baybayin* publications in modern Tagalog.

0.13.1 Paul Morrow’s *Doctrina Christiana*

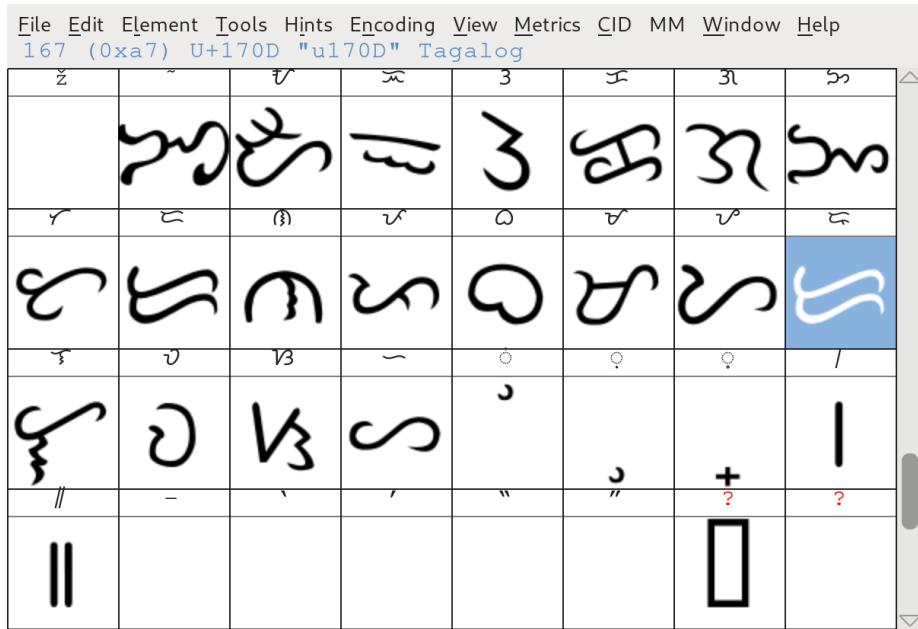
This font is meant to reproduce digitally the style in the first printed¹⁷ *baybayin* work, the *Doctrina Christiana* of 1593.

Despite—or, perhaps, because of—this pedigree, this font is quite popular for writing *baybayin*; the *baybayin* script which appears on Philippine currency and the Philippine passport uses this font.¹⁸

¹⁷Prior to the Spanish conquest, Philippine scripts were not written on paper, but rather leaves and/or bamboo depending on regional traditions; the Mangyan script in large part is still written the traditional way.

¹⁸Kabuay, Kristian, *The man behind the Baybayin on the new Peso bills*, December 16 2010, “The Baybayin community is quite excited with the new Peso bills just announced. [...] The moment I saw it, I knew it was one of Paul

This font puts a \approx at U+170D; the revision of the font shown below is the 2003 revision.

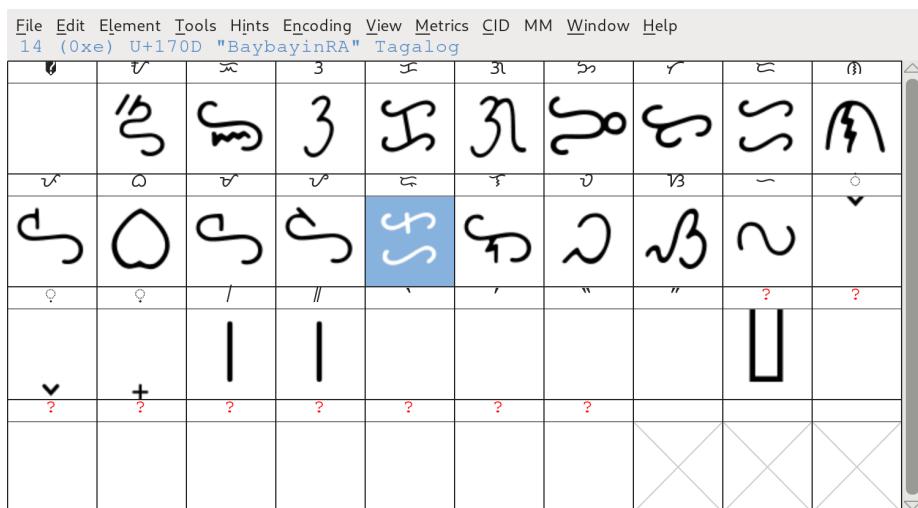


0.13.2 Paul Morrow's *Bikol Mintz*

This font is meant to reproduce the style on the cover of the *Bikol–English Dictionary*, see §0.7.1.

Although the pre-Hispanic cultures of the people of Bikol and Camarines were similar to those of the Tagalogs of Maynila, they were not the same, and their alphabets also differed. However, as can be seen, almost all of the glyphs are mutually intelligible, and this font is used to write text in the Tagalog language as well as in the Bikol language.

The Bikol 'ra' (§0.7.1) is placed at U+170D.



Morrow's fonts."

0.13.4 Lloyd Zapantas' fonts

Lloyd Zapantas offers Unicode fonts on Behance, all of which include ⚡.

From left to right:

Robotika, Chochin, Sarimanok, Bayani.



0.14 Software

As another line of evidence of the existence of \approx and its use by the community, we can look at software that supports it.

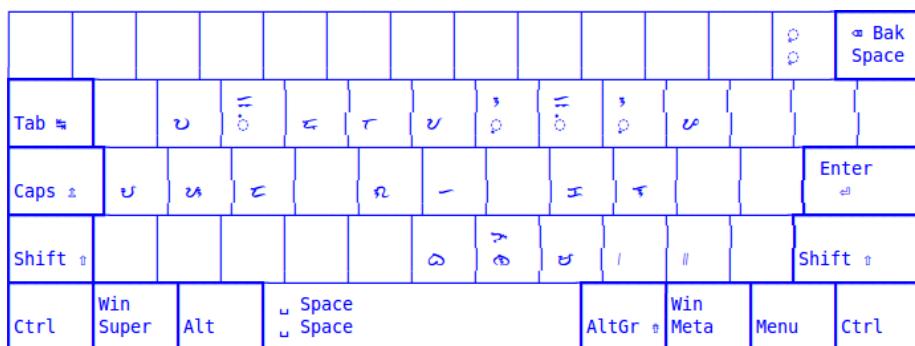
0.14.1 JC John Sese Cuneta's *Paninap Unicode Keyboard Layouts* (2010)

In 2010, JC John Sese Cuneta released *baybayin* keyboard layouts for Windows and Linux through his company, [techmagus™](#). According to Cuneta, the release of this project was a joint project of his company and the [Ubuntu Local Community for the Philippines](#).

The keyboard layout is implemented using X.Org's XKB. \approx is typed, predictably, by typing R, which XKB calls key <AD04>. A snippet of the code, lines 183 through 188, follows:

```
// D row; QWERTY row, left side
key <AD01> { [ VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol ] }; // 
key <AD02> { [ U170F, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol ] }; // ᜂ (Wa)
key <AD03> { [ U1712, U1701, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol ] }; // ᜃ (e/i) ≈ (E/I)
key <AD04> { [ U170D, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol ] }; // ≈ (Ra)
key <AD05> { [ U1706, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol, VoidSymbol ] }; // ᜅ (Ta)
```

Despite not being in Unicode, U+170D once again is being used for \approx .



0.14.2 Xavier Nègre's Lexilogos

Lexilogos is a JavaScript input method that either runs in most web browsers, either from Nègre's website, Lexilogos.com, or by downloading the related page, in this case baybayin.html.

The *baybayin* snippets in this paper, especially the longer ones, are courtesy of Lexilogos.

While originally (2009) Lexilogos did not support ₔ, according to the Wayback Machine,¹⁹ the letter ₔ was added some time between October 19, 2018 and May 5, 2019.



¹⁹<http://web.archive.org/web/20190505073424/https://www.lexilogos.com/keyboard/baybayin.htm>

0.14.3 Android apps

Craig Miralles's *Learn Baybayin*

Learn Baybayin is an Android application, which according to Google has been installed over ten thousand times.²⁰

The repertoire the app teaches includes ⚭.

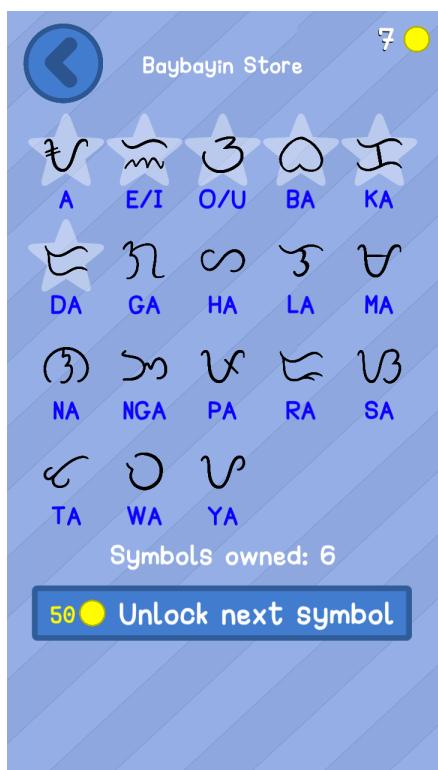


Team Three Bits' *Alamin Baybayin*

Alamin Baybayin is another Android application which aims to teach the user *baybayin*. The repertoire the app teaches includes ⚭.

²⁰<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=learn.baybayin>

Further evidence



ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 2
PROPOSAL SUMMARY FORM TO ACCOMPANY SUBMISSIONS
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE OF ISO/IEC 10646.¹

Please fill all the sections A, B and C below.

Please read Principles and Procedures Document (P & P) from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/principles.html> for guidelines and details before filling this form.

Please ensure you are using the latest Form from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/summaryform.html>.
See also <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/roadmaps.html> for latest Roadmaps.

A. Administrative

1. Title:	<i>A proposal to add TAGALOG LETTER RA as U+170D</i>	
2. Requester's name:	<i>Fredrick R. Brennan</i>	
3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution):	<i>Individual</i>	
4. Submission date:	<i>9 July 2019 (revised 18 July 2019)</i>	
5. Requester's reference (if applicable):		
6. Choose one of the following:		
This is a complete proposal:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
(or) More information will be provided later:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. Technical – General

1. Choose one of the following:		
a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters):		
Proposed name of script:		
b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block:		
Name of the existing block:	<i>Tagalog</i>	
2. Number of characters in proposal:	<i>1</i>	
3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):		
A-Contemporary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B-1-Specialized (small collection) <input type="checkbox"/> B-2-Specialized (large collection) <input type="checkbox"/>		
C-Major extinct <input type="checkbox"/> D-Attested extinct <input type="checkbox"/> E-Minor extinct <input type="checkbox"/>		
F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic <input type="checkbox"/> G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols <input type="checkbox"/>		
4. Is a repertoire including character names provided?		
a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document?	<i>Yes</i>	
b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?	<i>Yes</i>	
5. Fonts related:		
a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?	<i>Fredrick R. Brennan</i>	
b. Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.):	<i>Fredrick R. Brennan, copypaste@kittens.ph, font name is OpenBaybayin</i>	
6. References:		
a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?	<i>Yes</i>	
7. Special encoding issues:		
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)?	<i>Yes</i>	
<i>Collation is discussed in §0.4</i>		
8. Additional Information:		

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. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at <http://www.unicode.org> for such information on other scripts. Also see Unicode Character Database (<http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr44/>) and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

¹ Form number: N4502-F (Original 1994-10-14; Revised 1995-01, 1995-04, 1996-04, 1996-08, 1999-03, 2001-05, 2001-09, 2003-11, 2005-01, 2005-09, 2005-10, 2007-03, 2008-05, 2009-11, 2011-03, 2012-01)

C. Technical - Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES explain	
2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
If YES, with whom? <i>Norman de los Santos (subject matter expert), Kristian Kabuay (subject matter expert, University of the Philippines), "baybayin" Facebook group</i>	
If YES, available relevant documents: <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence (not attached, available on request)	
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Reference: <i>See introductory section</i>	
4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)	<input type="checkbox"/> Common
Reference: <i>N/A</i>	
5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
If YES, where? Reference: <i>See §0.7 and §§0.9-0.13</i>	
6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
If YES, is a rationale provided?	
If YES, reference: <i>The spot requested is already in de facto use, see §0.12</i>	
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to, or could be confused with, an existing character?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?	
If YES, reference: <i>Just like the other codepoints in the block, U+1712, U+1713 and U+1714 can combine with my proposed character</i>	
Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
If YES, reference: <i>"Quick summary" section</i>	
12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)	
<hr/> <hr/>	
13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility characters?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, are the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic characters identified?	
If YES, reference:	