

Request to change the glyph of 11008 BRAHMI LETTER II


Srinidhi A and Sridatta A
Tumakuru, India
srinidhi.pinkpetals24@gmail.com, sridatta.jamadagni@gmail.com
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This document requests to change the representative glyph of 11008 BRAHMI LETTER II.




 Current glyph	 Proposed glyph
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After examining books, inscriptions and scholarly texts it is concluded that the current glyph with four dots actually represents *iṃ*. The glyph of the BRAHMI LETTER II needs to be replaced with proposed glyph.

Note on current glyph -

Georg Bühler based on the Brahmi inscriptions of Nanaghat and Mathura predicted that four dots may indicate vowel II. His statement was based on resemblance of four dots with vowel I  which has three dots.¹

Others scholars have opined that the four dots should be read as *iṃ* in all the contexts. (See Figures 9-14)







	+		→	
i	+	Anusvara	→	iṃ

Description on proposed glyph-









This is the original and true glyph attested in Brahmi inscriptions. The glyph is not restricted to Tamil-Brahmi and is attested in other regions of South and Central Asia wherever Brahmi script was employed. It is the parent glyph of most of the Indic scripts. The following section summarizes the evolution and development of vowel II into various Brahmic scripts. (See Figures 4-6)

¹ See Plate II of Indian Paleography by Georg Bühler


North Indic scripts:

					
Brahmi during Kshatrapa dynasty	Bower manuscript	Khotanese	Sharada	Bhaiksuki	Siddham

South Indic scripts:

							
Southern Brahmi inscriptions	Tamil	Vatteluttu	Grantha	Malayalam	Sinhala	Kannada	Telugu

Summary

1. The current glyph does not indicate ī, the four dots has been read as iṃ by various scholars.
2. The earliest Brahmi evidences for II are from Tamil nadu, Sri Lanka and Haryana which use .
3. Forms of letter II in all early varieties of Brahmi and most modern scripts trace their origin to proposed glyph.

References

- Bhatia, Omprakash. *Nāgarī lipi kā udbhav aur vikās*. Surya Prakashan, Delhi, 1978.
- Bühler, Georg. *Indian Paleography, from about BC 350 to about AD 1300*. Vol 1. Bombay education society's Press, 1904.
- Sivaramamurti, C. *Indian epigraphy and South Indian scripts*. Vol. 3. No. 4. Government of Madras, 1948.
- Ojha, Gaurishankar Hirachand. *Bharatiya Prachina Lipimala*. New Delhi, 1959.
- Verma, Thakur Prasad. *Development of Script in Ancient Kamrupa*. Jorhat: Asam Sahitya Sabha, 1976.

Attestations

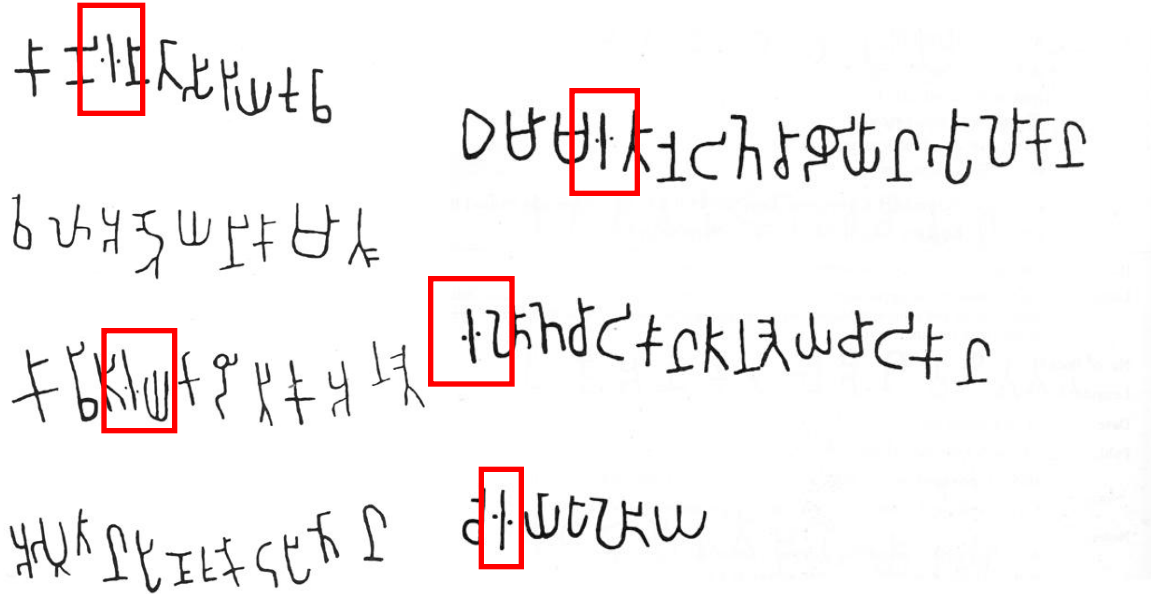


Figure 1. Occurrence of '।' in Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of Mangulam, Tamil Nadu.

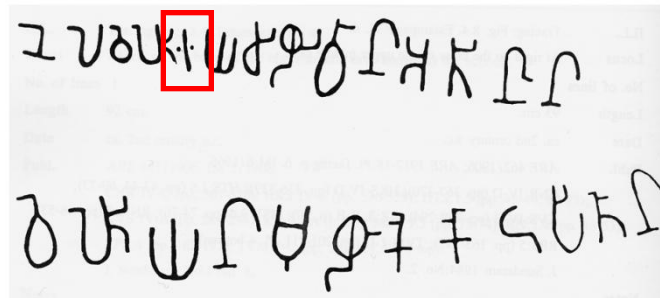


Figure 2. Use of '।' in Arittapatti Cave inscription, Tamil nadu

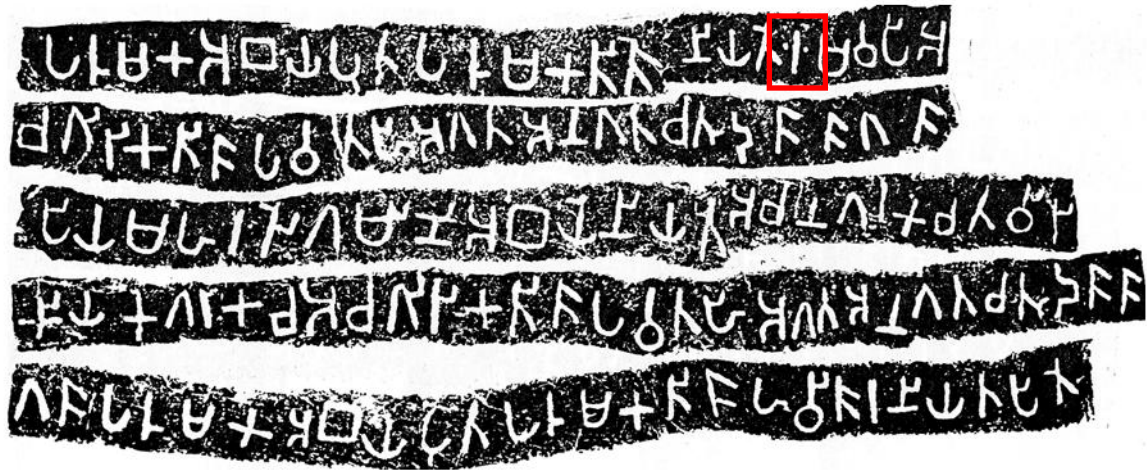


Figure 3. Use of $\cdot|\cdot$ in Prakrit inscription from Tonigala, Sri Lanka.

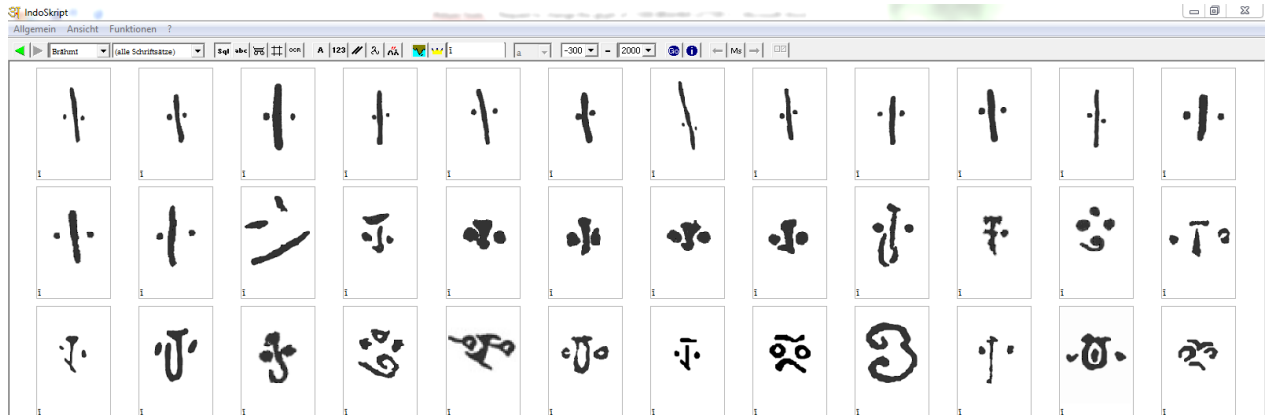


Figure 4. Forms in II in Tamil Brahmi and early derivatives of Brahmi, all of them are derived from $\cdot|\cdot$.
(From IndoSkript project)

I.—This letter (Fig. 23) in its earliest form is seen in the inscriptions of the Tamil caves of the 3rd century B.C. where it is a vertical stroke flanked by two dots. In the Kṣatrapa and Kuṣān alphabet of the 2nd century A.D. the vertical stroke has a small serif at the top and is curved to left at the lower end. This continues so in Gupta script two centuries later but in Pallava script of about the same time the vertical stroke is represented slanting from right to left with the dots above and below it.

The form of the letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions of the 6th century A.D., and the later development in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions a century later is just a modification of the Gupta type, the curve being replaced by just a thickening of the lower end. In letter of the 9th century A.D., this stroke separates into two parts one as a double arched serif above the dots and a hook below.

In Vākātaka script of the 5th century A.D., the box head appears as usual and the lower curve is emphasised by the formation of double line as in *ra*.

The later development in Cālukyan area is judged by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. where the end of the curve has joined the serif to form a stumpy tube-shape with the dots on either side.

In the Telugu area about this time the form is the same but in the next century the body of the letter is more ovoid as seen in the Eastern Cālukyan alphabet of the 10th century A.D. In the next century the serif as usual in other letter of the time takes a V shape and the two dots change into an arched stroke running across the belly of the letter and this continues thence forwards.

In the Tamil area the Grantha letter is composed of the dots on either side of two close parallel strokes joined by a serif at the top as in *ra*; and the Tamil letter is a single vertical stroke with the serif modified as in other letters of the alphabet and with strokes.

In Vatteluttu script the letter is almost the same as the Tamil one except that it slants from left to right.

Figure 5. Description of Brahmi letter II and its development in various scripts. (From Sivaramamurti, 1948 pg.63)

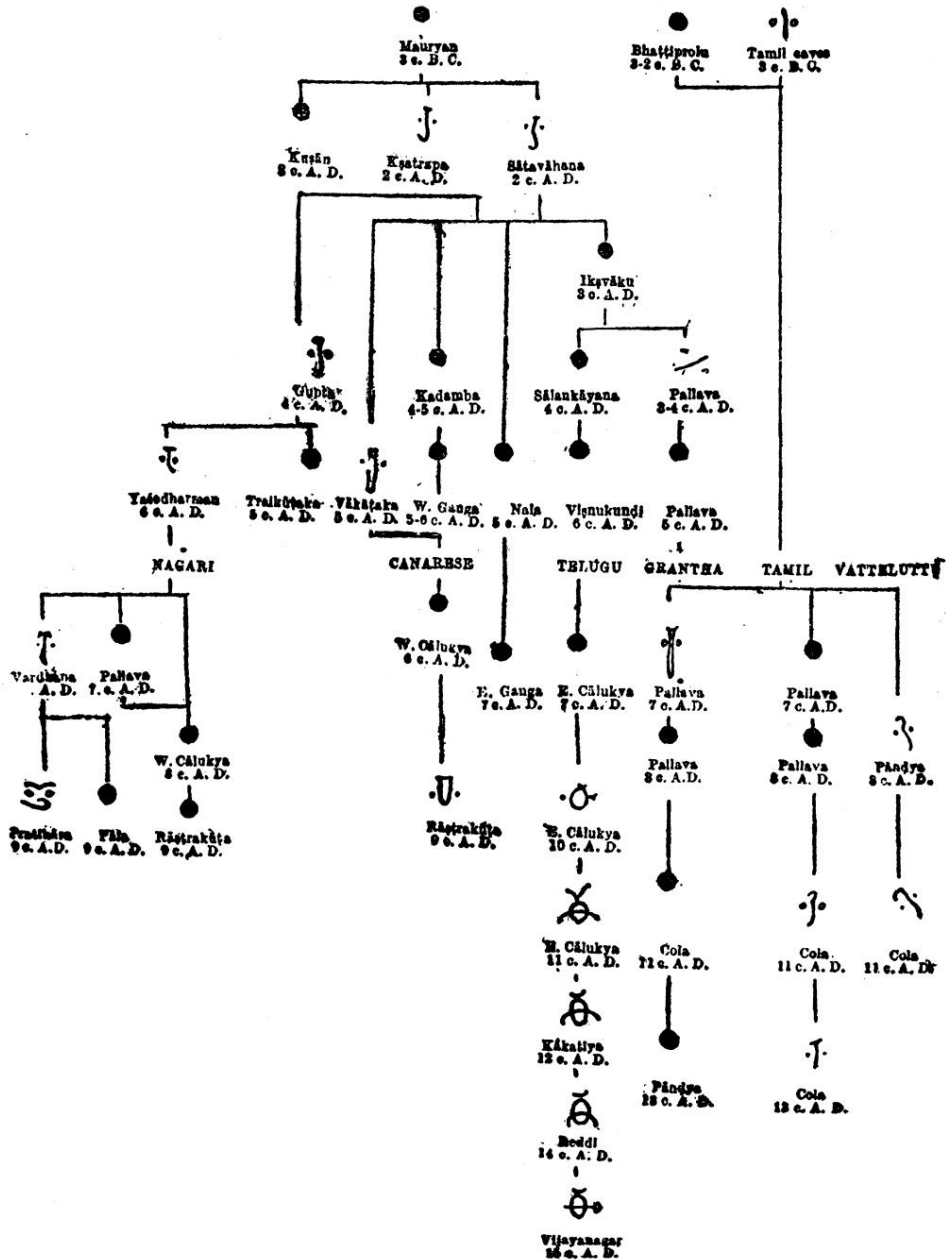


Fig. 23.

C.S. del.

Figure 6. Evolution Chart of letter (From Sivaramamurti, 1948 pg.64)



Figure 7. A Terracotta Art showing a [child learning Brahmi](#) alphabet from Sugh, Haryana. Presently preserved at National Museum, New Delhi. 300 BCE - 200 BCE

Figure 8. A closer view of the above figure showing letters from a to am. It also shows vowel II.



system. In Indian scripts a *vindu* has always denoted an *anusvāra* i.e. a nasal sound. However, in early Brāhmī script some earlier scholars have read four dots as long \bar{i} letter but in all the contexts this letter should be read as *im*. A dot, so far as I know, has never been used as a punctuation mark.

Figure 9. Opinion on glyph of BRAHMI LETTER II. (From Verma, 1976 pg. 74)

५:३:२ अन्य प्रयत्न : जेम्स प्रिसेप द्वारा प्रस्तुत ब्राह्मी-संकेत-सूची में 'ई' के मूल रूप की कमी थी। बूलर ने चार बिंदुओं (::) को 'ई' समझ लिया था। सिन्धु-लिपि के 'ई' के आधार पर उसे उचित मानने की भूल हो सकती है, किन्तु जहाँ-जहाँ इस संकेत को ब्राह्मी में पाया गया है, वहाँ उसे 'ई' न पढ़कर 'इ' पढ़ना ही उचित है।^{३४} बाद में गो० ही० ओझा ने 'ई' के सरल ब्राह्मी के रूप की कल्पना दूसरी से पाँचवीं शताब्दी ईस्वी के क्षत्रपों के सिक्कों पर मिले 'ई' के संकेत के आधार पर की।^{३५} किन्तु

Figure 10. Opinion of Dr Bhatia describing in Hindi that the four dots should be read as *im*. (From Bhatia, 1978 pg. 83)

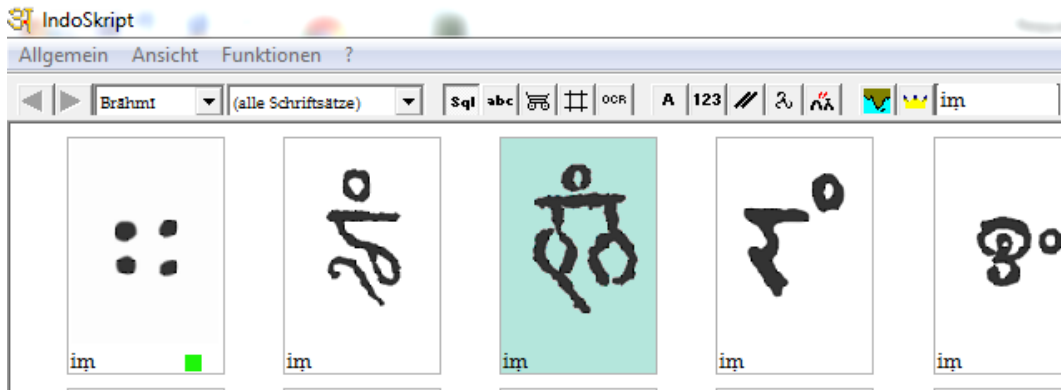


Figure 11. Excerpt from IndoSkript project where four dots is read as *im*.

नागार्जुनी गुफा.

नगना घाट के लेखों में

इं ल ष मू इं ख न च उ त प भ ल म ह धी
 १ २ ३ ४ ५ ६ ७ ८ ९ १० ११ १२ १३ १४ १५ १६ १७ १८ १९ २०

वी पु उ सु म धूं थं लं कं प्र अ क्क मं व्र
 २१ २२ २३ २४ २५ २६ २७ २८ २९ ३० ३१ ३२ ३३ ३४ ३५ ३६ ३७ ३८ ३९ ४०

मथुरा के ४ जैन लेखों में.

आं इं उ ख न द प फ म ब र र र र व व व ब
 १ २ ३ ४ ५ ६ ७ ८ ९ १० ११ १२ १३ १४ १५ १६ १७ १८ १९ २० २१ २२ २३ २४ २५ २६ २७ २८ २९ ३० ३१ ३२ ३३ ३४ ३५ ३६ ३७ ३८ ३९ ४० ४१ ४२ ४३ ४४ ४५ ४६ ४७ ४८ ४९ ५० ५१ ५२ ५३ ५४ ५५ ५६ ५७ ५८ ५९ ६० ६१ ६२ ६३ ६४ ६५ ६६ ६७ ६८ ६९ ७० ७१ ७२ ७३ ७४ ७५ ७६ ७७ ७८ ७९ ८० ८१ ८२ ८३ ८४ ८५ ८६ ८७ ८८ ८९ ९० ९१ ९२ ९३ ९४ ९५ ९६ ९७ ९८ ९९ १००

ह ल मा कि शि शि गो पो तो मो व द्र धं स्थ
 १०१ १०२ १०३ १०४ १०५ १०६ १०७ १०८ १०९ ११० १११ ११२ ११३ ११४ ११५ ११६ ११७ ११८ ११९ १२० १२१ १२२ १२३ १२४ १२५ १२६ १२७ १२८ १२९ १३० १३१ १३२ १३३ १३४ १३५ १३६ १३७ १३८ १३९ १४० १४१ १४२ १४३ १४४ १४५ १४६ १४७ १४८ १४९ १५० १५१ १५२ १५३ १५४ १५५ १५६ १५७ १५८ १५९ १६० १६१ १६२ १६३ १६४ १६५ १६६ १६७ १६८ १६९ १७० १७१ १७२ १७३ १७४ १७५ १७६ १७७ १७८ १७९ १८० १८१ १८२ १८३ १८४ १८५ १८६ १८७ १८८ १८९ १९० १९१ १९२ १९३ १९४ १९५ १९६ १९७ १९८ १९९ २००

Figure 12, 13. Akshara list of Nanaghat and Mathura inscriptions respectively where four dots is read as im. (From Ojha, 1959 Plate III, V)

नासिक.

बूडा.

इं उ जा ब मू मि द्रा न्ये. अ का रि लि लि वी पु दे क्क.
 १ २ ३ ४ ५ ६ ७ ८ ९ १० ११ १२ १३ १४ १५ १६ १७ १८ १९ २० २१ २२ २३ २४ २५ २६ २७ २८ २९ ३० ३१ ३२ ३३ ३४ ३५ ३६ ३७ ३८ ३९ ४० ४१ ४२ ४३ ४४ ४५ ४६ ४७ ४८ ४९ ५० ५१ ५२ ५३ ५४ ५५ ५६ ५७ ५८ ५९ ६० ६१ ६२ ६३ ६४ ६५ ६६ ६७ ६८ ६९ ७० ७१ ७२ ७३ ७४ ७५ ७६ ७७ ७८ ७९ ८० ८१ ८२ ८३ ८४ ८५ ८६ ८७ ८८ ८९ ९० ९१ ९२ ९३ ९४ ९५ ९६ ९७ ९८ ९९ १००

इं १ इहल ०४१ ०४२ ०४३ ०४४ ०४५ ०४६ ०४७ ०४८ ०४९ ०५० ०५१ ०५२ ०५३ ०५४ ०५५ ०५६ ०५७ ०५८ ०५९ ०६० ०६१ ०६२ ०६३ ०६४ ०६५ ०६६ ०६७ ०६८ ०६९ ०७० ०७१ ०७२ ०७३ ०७४ ०७५ ०७६ ०७७ ०७८ ०७९ ०८० ०८१ ०८२ ०८३ ०८४ ०८५ ०८६ ०८७ ०८८ ०८९ ०९० ०९१ ०९२ ०९३ ०९४ ०९५ ०९६ ०९७ ०९८ ०९९ १००

Figure 14. From Nasik inscription where :: is read as im as in the word ::इं इमद्राग्नि (From Ojha, 1959 Plate XI)