


Request to change the glyph of 11008 BRAHMI LETTER II

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This document requests to change the representative glyph of 11008 BRAHMI LETTER II.

	
Current glyph	Proposed glyph

After examining 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 letter II. (See Fig. 15,20) His statement was based on resemblance of four dots with letter I :: which has three dots. The form :: occurs in Nanaghat, Mathura, Bodhgaya and Nasik Inscriptions. In all these inscriptions, the sign occurs in the word *imdra*(=*indra*) or its Prakrit form *imda*(=*inda*) where it isn't appropriate to read as *īdra* or *īda* (See Figures 10-20).







Others scholars have opined that the four dots should be read as *iṃ* in all the contexts.

::	+	·	→	::
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 where Brahmi script was employed. It is the parent glyph of most of the Indic scripts. The following section summarizes the evolution and development of letter II into various Brahmic scripts. (See Figures 5-7)

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 ī are from Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka and Haryana which use ·|·.
3. Forms of ī in all the early varieties of Brahmi and most modern scripts trace their origin to proposed glyph.

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Attestations

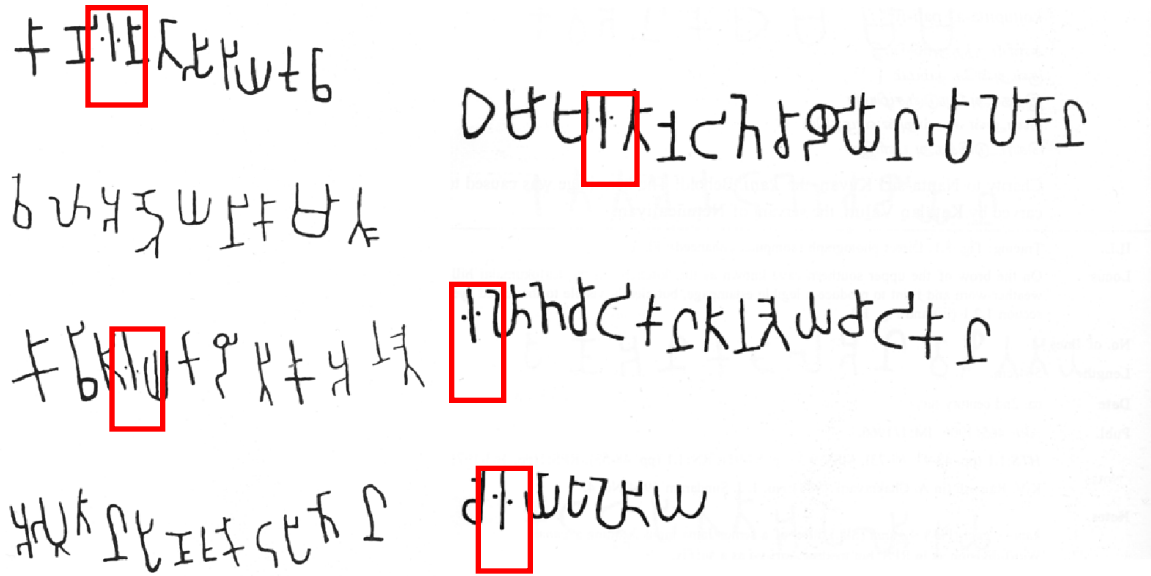


Figure 1. Occurrence of 𑌕 in Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of Mangulam, Tamil Nadu (From IndoSkript project).

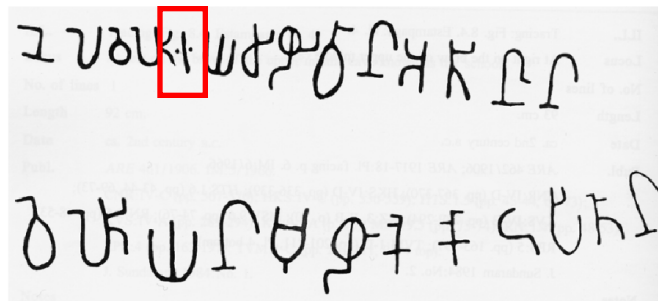


Figure 2. Use of 𑌕 in Arittapatti Cave inscription, Tamil Nadu (From IndoSkript project).

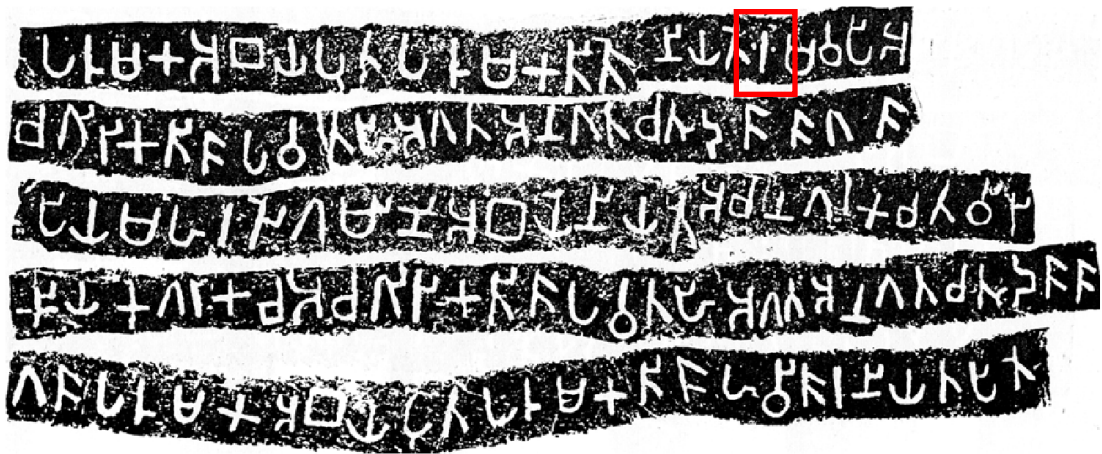


Figure 3. Use of ·| in Prakrit inscription from Tonigala, Sri Lanka (From IndoSkript project).



Figure 4. Use of ī in the coin of Īśvaradatta of Western Kshatrapas as in the word *īśvaradattasa* (From <http://coinindia.com/galleries-isvaradatta.html>).

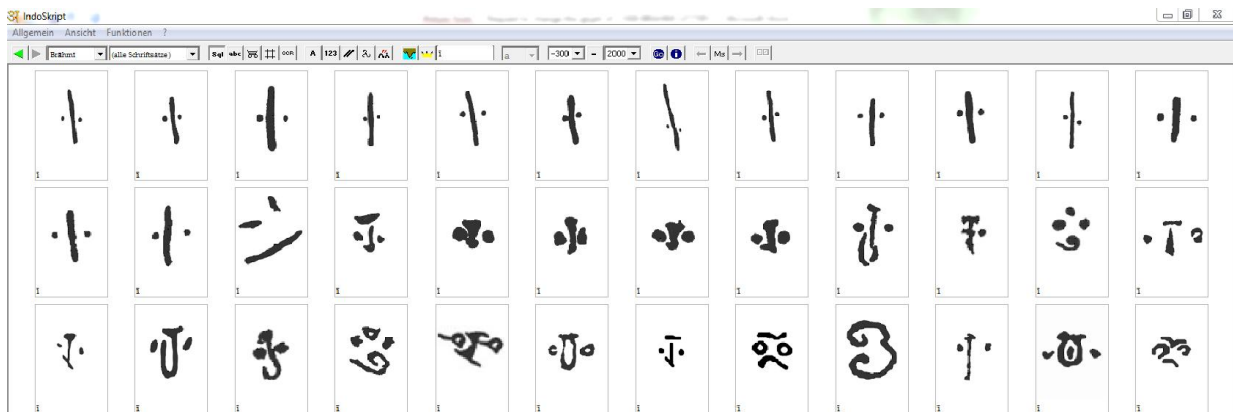


Figure 5. Forms in II in Tamil Brahmi and early derivatives of Brahmi, all of them are derived from ·| (From IndoSkript project).

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

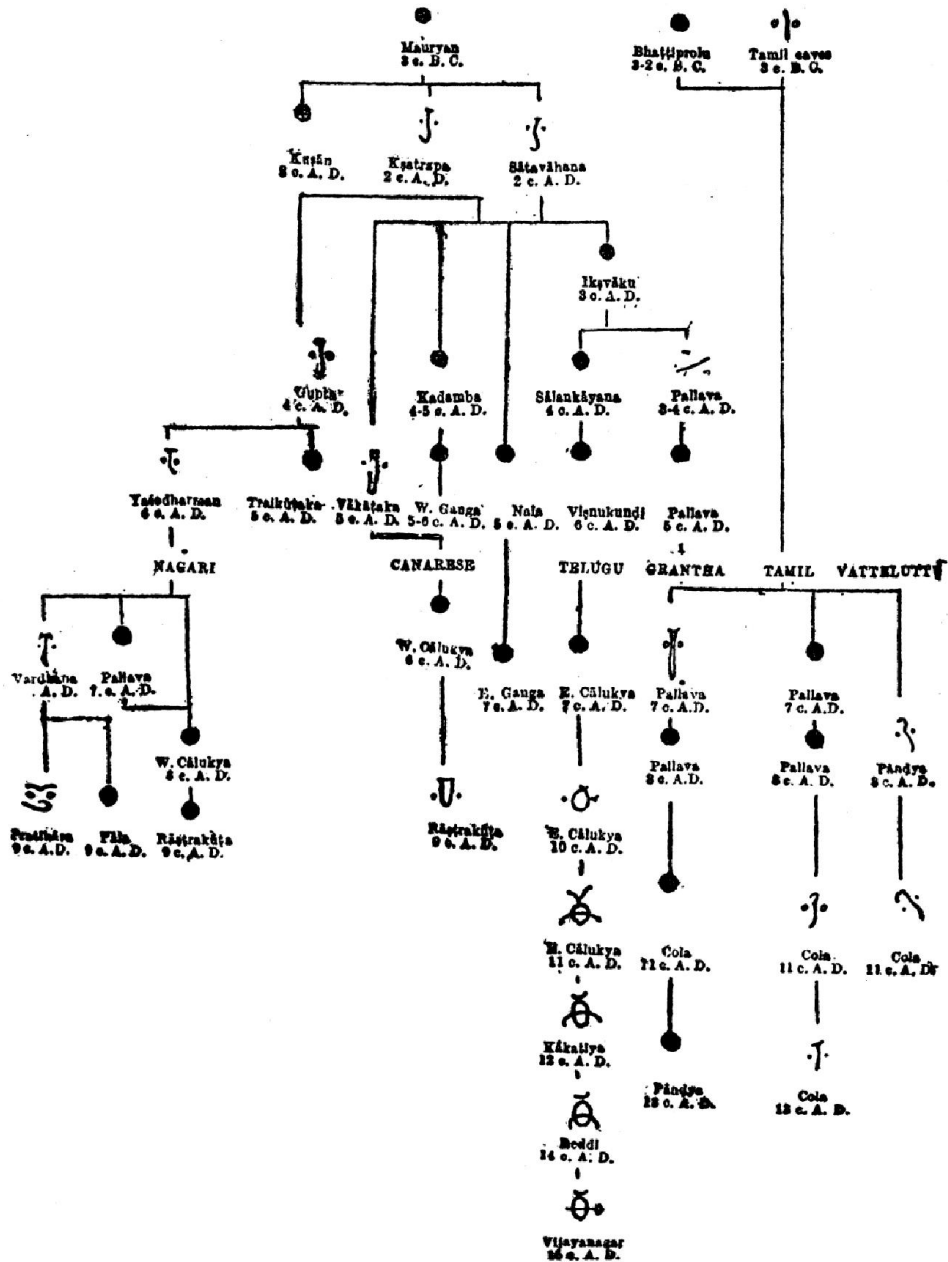


Fig. 23.

C.S. del.

Figure 7. Evolution Chart of the letter i (From Sivaramamurti, 1948 pg.64).



Figure 8. A Terracotta Art showing a [child learning Brahmi](#) alphabet from Sugh, Haryana. Presently preserved at National Museum, New Delhi. 300 BCE - 200 BCE

Figure 9. A closer view of the above figure showing letters from a to am. It also shows letter II.



नानाघाट के लेख में 'इं' :: बनाया है जिसमें तीन बिंदी तो 'इ' की हैं और चौथी अनुस्वार की है. 'थो' में 'ओ' की मात्रा की दोनों तरफ़ की आड़ी लकीरों को जोड़ कर एक ही लकीर बना दी है

१०. डॉ. बूत्लर ने इस चिह्न :: को 'ई' माना है (बू; इं; पे; पृ. ३४) और कोई कोई यूरोपियन विद्वान् इसे बूत्लर के कथना-नुसार ही पढ़ते हैं (पं. इं; जि. ८, पृ. ६०) परंतु वास्तव में यह 'इं' ही है. 'इ' की तीन बिंदियों के साथ अनुस्वार की चौथी बिंदी लगने ही ऐसा रूप बनता है और चार बिंदी होने से ही उनको समान रेखा में लिखा है. अब तक केवल निम्न लिखित ५ लेखों में ही यह चिह्न मिला है जहां सर्वत्र 'इं' पढ़ना ही युक्त है—

नानाघाट के लेख में—'नमो इंदस (आ. स. वे. इं; जि ५, प्लेट ५१, पंक्ति पहिली). बुद्धगया के २ लेखों में—'इंदागिभिन्न. स' (क; म. बो; प्लेट १०; संख्या ६-१०). मथुरा के लेख में—'गोतिपुत्रस इंद्रपा[ल...]' (पं. इं; जि. २, पृ. २०१ के पास का प्लेट, लेख संख्या ६). नासिक के लेख में—'धर्मदेवपुत्रस इंद्राग्निदत्तस' (पं. इं; जि. ८, पृ. ६०).

इन पाँचों लेखों में यह चिह्न 'इंद्र' शब्द के प्राकृत रूप 'इंद' में प्रयुक्त हुआ है जहां 'इंद' पढ़ना ठीक नहीं हो सकता. नानाघाट के लेख का कर्ता जहां प्राकृत में अनुस्वार की आवश्यकता नहीं थी वहां भी अनुस्वार लगाता है (नमो संकंसन-वासुदेवानं चतुर्नं च लोकपालानं) तो वह 'इंद्र' के प्राकृत रूप को 'इंद' न लिख कर 'इंद' लिखे यह संभव ही नहीं.

Figure 10. Pandit GH Ojha attesting :: should be read as 'im̐' with details from inscriptions (From Ojha, 1959 pg. 51).

A free translation is provided below

'im̐' ::¹⁰ is engraved in the inscription of Nanaghat in which the three dots belong to 'i' and the fourth dot is of Anusvara. [...]

10. Dr. Bühler has regarded this sign :: as 'I' and some European scholars read this sign according to statement of Bühler only. However, in reality this is 'im̐' only. This sign is formed by three dots of 'i' along with the fourth dot of *anusvāra* and are written symmetrically due to presence of four dots. As of now, the sign is found in multiple inscriptions... In these inscriptions the sign occurs in the word *indra*'s Prakrit form *im̐da* where it isn't appropriate to read as *īda*. The scribe of Nanaghat inscription inserts anusvara in the Prakrit text even when it isn't required (*namo saṃkamsana-vāsudevānaṃ...catumnaṃ cam lokapālānaṃ*) then there it is not possible that '*īda*' is written rather than the Prakrit form of '*im̐dra*'-'*im̐da*'.

74 DEVELOPMENT OF SCRIPT IN ANCIENT KAMARUPA

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

Figure 11. 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 'इं' 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 12. Opinion of Dr Bhatia describing in Hindi that the four dots should be read as im (From Bhatia, 1978 pg. 83).

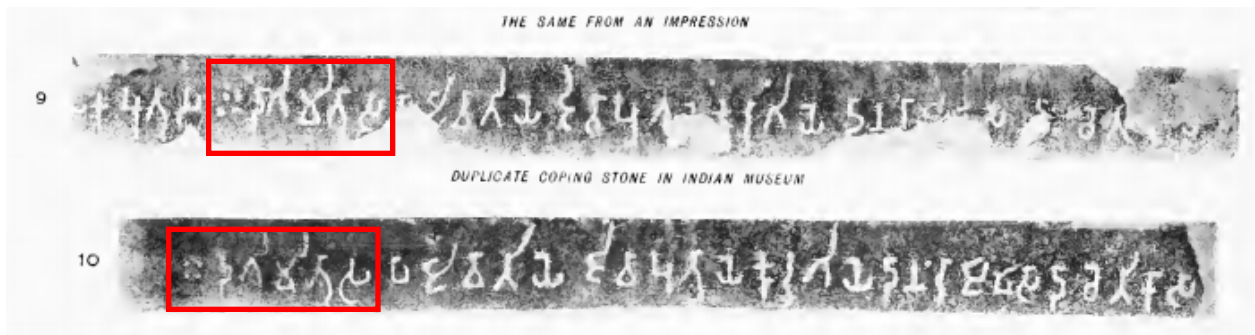


Figure 13. Use of :: in the Bodh-gaya Inscription as in *imdāgimitrāsa* (From Cunningham, 1892 Plate 10).

मथुरा के ४ जैन लेखों में.

आं	इं	उ	ख	त	द	प	फ	म	ष	र	र	र	र	व	व	व	ष
𑀅	𑀆	𑀇	𑀈	𑀉	𑀊	𑀋	𑀌	𑀍	𑀎	𑀏	𑀐	𑀑	𑀒	𑀓	𑀔	𑀕	𑀖
ह	ळ	मा	क्रि	शि	शि	गो	पो	तो	मां	च	द्र	धं	स्थ				
𑀗	𑀘	𑀙	𑀚	𑀛	𑀜	𑀝	𑀞	𑀟	𑀠	𑀡	𑀢	𑀣	𑀤	𑀥	𑀦	𑀧	𑀨

Figure 14. Akshara list of Mathura inscriptions where four dots is read as im (From Ojha, 1959 Plate V).

No. 9: Archaic.



Scale 7-8th

No. IX.²⁶

- L. 1. मा अरहतपुजा [धि]²⁷
- 2. गोतीपुत्रस ईद्रपा[ल] — —²⁸

TRANSLATION.

An image of for the worship of the Arhats of Īdrapāla (*Idrapāla*),²⁹ the son of the Gotī (*Gauptī* mother).

Figure. 15, 16 Use of :: in one of the Mathura inscriptions along with its transcript. Here Bühler has read :: as ī. However, as other scholars have indicated the word containing :: should be properly read as *imdrapā[la]*... and *īdra* doesn't provide any meaning here (From Bühler, 1894 No 9, p 201).

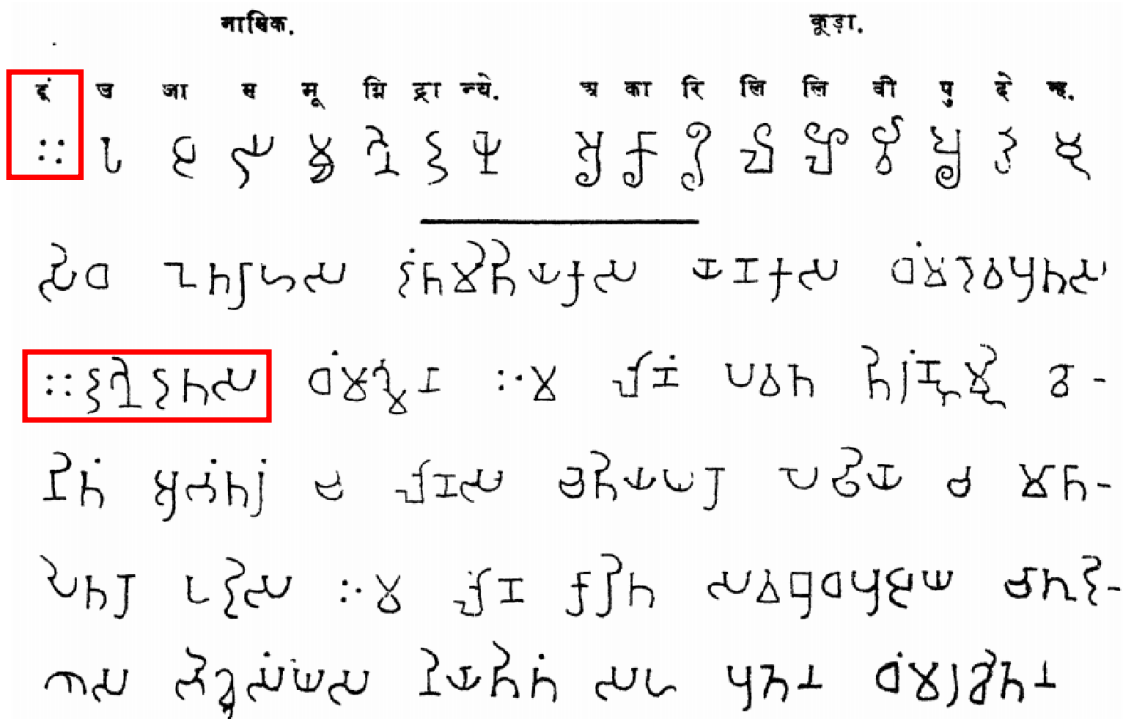


Figure 17. From Nasik inscription where :: is read as im as in the word ::ऽऱेऽहल *imdrāgnidatasa* (From Ojha, 1959 Plate XI).

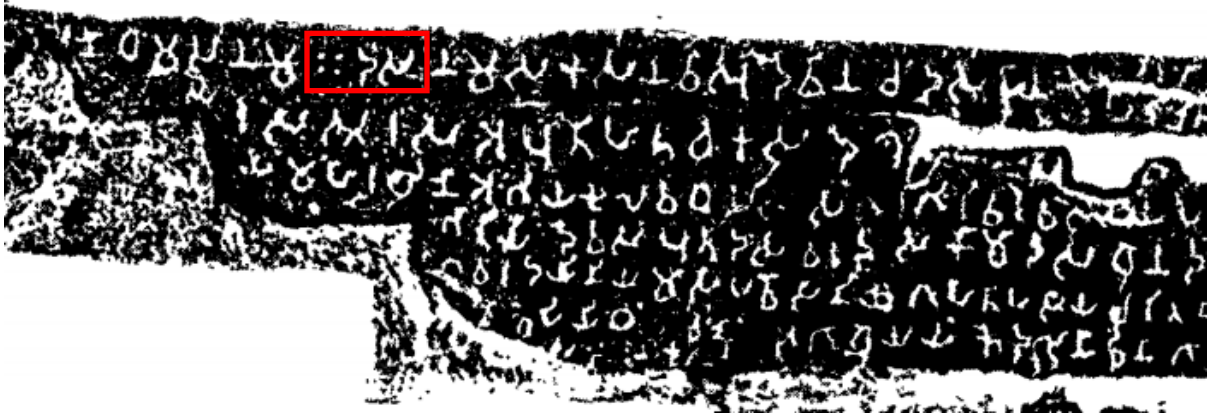


Figure 18. Use of :: in the Nanaghat Inscription as in ::ऩ८ १४ *im̐dasa namo* (Sanskrit *chāyā –indrāya namah*) (From Sircar, 1965 Plate XXXIII-1) .

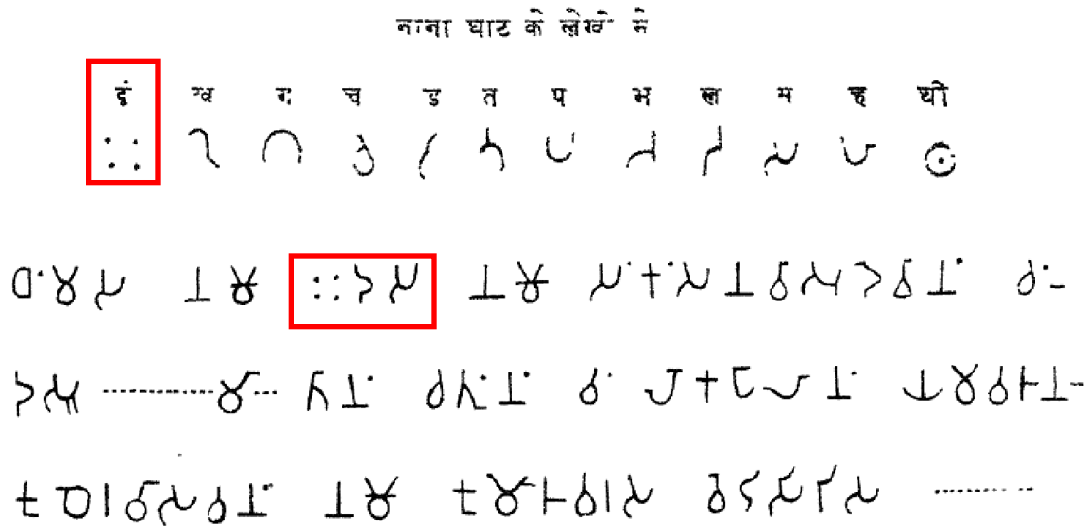


Figure 19. Akshara list of Nanaghat inscription where four dots is read as *im̐*. (From Ojha, 1959 Plate III)

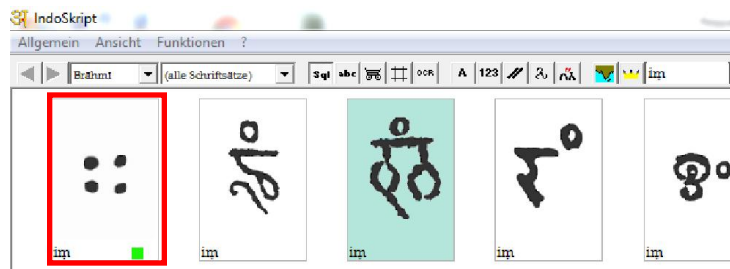


Figure 20. Excerpt from IndoSkript project where four dots is read as *im̐* in the Nanaghat inscription.¹

¹ Bühler had read ::ऩ८ as *īdasa* in "The Nānāghāt Inscriptions." *Archaeological Survey of Western India* vol V.1883: 59-74.