


Request to change the glyphs of Brahmi vowel signs Vocalic R and Vocalic RR

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1 Introduction

This document requests to change the representative glyphs of 1103E BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R and 1103F BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC RR. These two characters are currently depicted in the Code chart as follows:

1103E  BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R
1103F  BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC RR

2 Proposed glyphs

1103E BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R- 

1103F BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC RR- 

3 Background

The Document N3491 (L2/07-342) “Proposal for the Encoding of Brāhmī in Plane 1 of ISO/IEC 10646” by Stefan Baums and Andrew Glass stated that Vocalic R and its vowel sign are later additions to Brahmi to represent Sanskrit.

However the vowel signs of Vocalic R and Vocalic RR are found in Sanskrit and Sanskritised Prakrit inscriptions from first century CE in Brahmi script. The current glyphs are based on evolved forms of northern variety around fourth century CE.

In Northern variety the vowel sign of ṛ became more curved and later reversed its direction towards right. The evolution of the vowel sign in northern variety of Brahmi is explained below in the letter ‘kr̥’ (1st-5th century CE).



The southern Indian scripts retained leftward direction and curve became more graceful and broadened. (See figure 6)

It is further noted that all vowel signs in Ashokan Brahmi are composed of horizontal and vertical lines. In similar way, the proposed glyphs are also composed of horizontal lines having commonality with other vowel signs.

It is requested to change the glyph of these two characters to match their earliest attestations, which are predecessor of these vowel signs in both northern and southern scripts.

5 References

Kannaiyan ,V. *Scripts in and Around India*. Commissioner of Museums, Government Museum, 1960.

Ojha, Gaurishankar Hirachand. *Bharatiya Prachina Lipimala*. New Delhi. 1959

Sivaramamurti, C. *Indian epigraphy and South Indian scripts*. Vol. 3. No. 4. Government of Madras, 1948.

Vogel, J. Ph. *Two Brahmi and Kharoshthi Rock-Inscriptions in the Kangra Valley*. *Epigraphia Indica* 7.1902-03: 116-19.

6 Attestations



Figure 1. An inscription from Kanhiara, Himachal Pradesh showing the Vowel Sign Vocalic R in word 'Kṛṣṇa' dated 90 CE (from Vogel 1902-03).



Figure 2. A chart showing varieties of early BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R (from the IndoSkript project).

लिपिपत्र सातवां.

शक उपवदात और उसको स्वौ दक्षमिवा के नाशिक के पू लेखों से.

(ई स. की दूसरी शताब्दी).

अ आ इ उ उ ऋ ओ क ख ख ख ग घ ङ च छ ज
 𑀅 𑀆 𑀇 𑀈 𑀉 𑀊 𑀋 𑀌 𑀍 𑀎 𑀏 𑀐 𑀑 𑀒 𑀓 𑀔 𑀕 𑀖 𑀗
 ञ ट ठ ड ढ ण त न य द ढ ध न प फ व भ
 𑀘 𑀙 𑀚 𑀛 𑀜 𑀝 𑀞 𑀟 𑀠 𑀡 𑀢 𑀣 𑀤 𑀥 𑀦 𑀧
 म स य ष र र ल ल ल व व श ष म स ष ष
 𑀨 𑀩 𑀪 𑀫 𑀬 𑀭 𑀮 𑀯 𑀰 𑀱 𑀲 𑀳 𑀴 𑀵 𑀶 𑀷
 ङ स् जा जा टा टा मा ति थि रि लि दी नो कु ख डं नू
 𑀸 𑀹 𑀺 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿
 मू मू 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿 𑀻 𑀼 𑀽 𑀾 𑀿
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𑀅𑀆𑀇𑀈𑀉𑀊𑀋𑀌𑀍𑀎𑀏𑀐𑀑𑀒𑀓𑀔𑀕𑀖𑀗𑀘
 𑀙𑀚𑀛𑀜𑀝𑀞𑀟𑀠𑀡𑀢𑀣𑀤𑀥𑀦𑀧𑀨𑀩𑀪𑀫𑀬𑀭𑀮𑀯𑀰
 𑀱𑀲𑀳𑀴𑀵𑀶𑀷𑀸𑀹𑀺𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿
 𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿
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 𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿
 𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿𑀻𑀼𑀽𑀾𑀿

Figure 3. A Sanskrit inscription from Nashik showing BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R dated first-second century CE (from Ojha 1959).

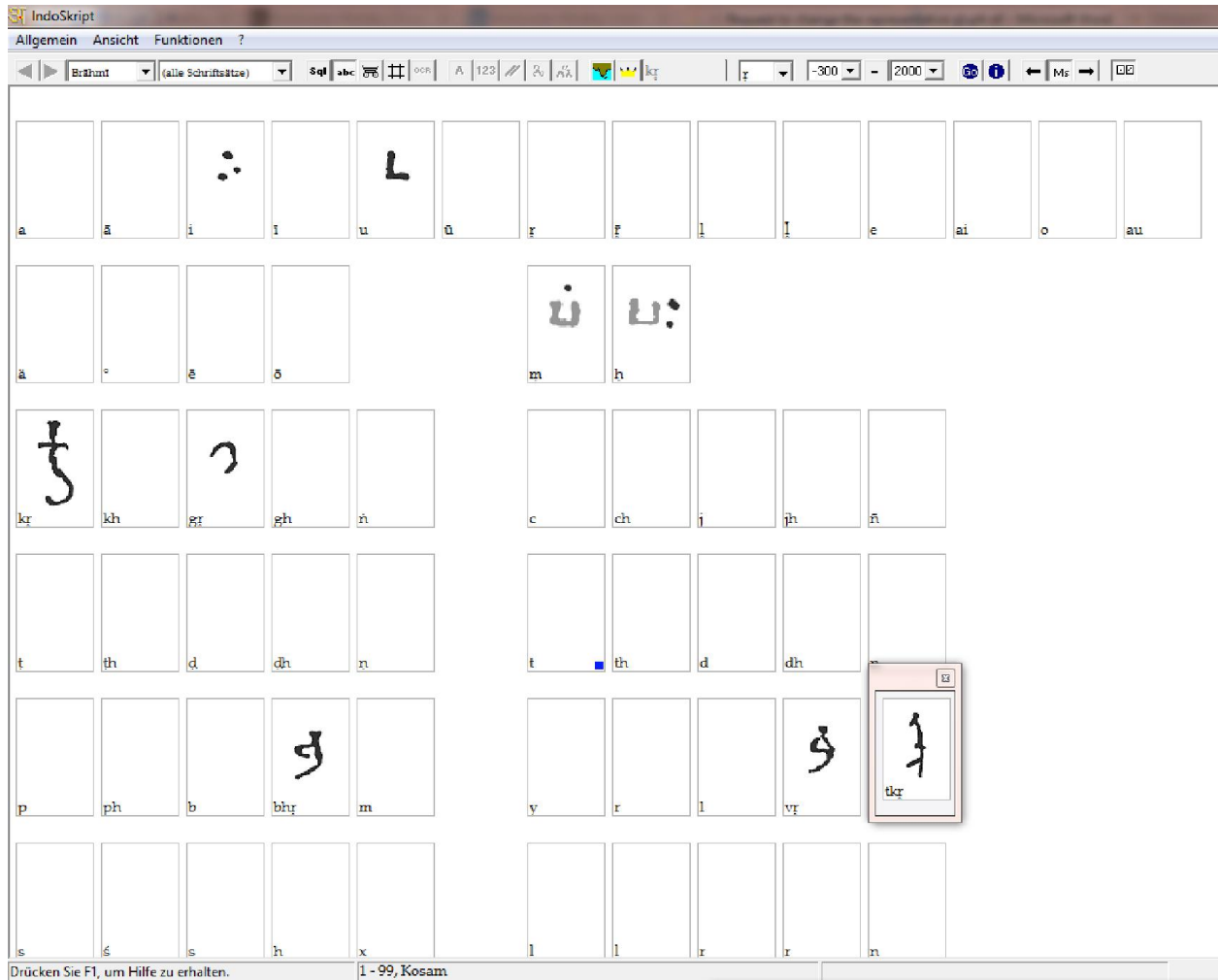


Figure 4. A chart from the “Kosam Yupa inscription” in Sanskrit language of first century CE, showing BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R (from the IndoSkript project).



Figure 5. A chart showing early varieties of BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC RR (from the IndoSkript project).

∪	𑀓𑀣	Maurian 3 c. B. C.
∪	𑀓𑀣	Ksatrapa 2 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓	Pallava 2-4 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Gupta 4 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Yasodharman 6 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Harsavardhana 7 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓	Paramāra 11 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣	Sena 12 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Vākāṭaka 5 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓	Pallava 5 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣	W. Cālukya 6 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣	E. Cālukya 10 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Kākatiya 12 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Reddi 13 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Pallava 7 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣𑀤	Pallava 8 c. A. D.
∪	𑀓𑀣	Cola 11 c. A. D.


FIG. 29.

O.S. del.

Figure 6. Development of VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R in North and South Indian scripts from Brahmi.(from Sivaramamurti 1948: 78).

English	Brahmi	Tamil Grantha		Tamil	Telugu	Canarese	Malayalam	Hindi
ka	𑀓	𑀕	𑀓	க	క	ಕ	ക	क
ká	𑀔	𑀕𑀲	𑀲	கா	కా	ಕಾ	കാ	का
ki	𑀕	𑀕𑀺	𑀺	கி	కి	ಕಿ	കി	कि
ki	𑀕𑀺	𑀕𑀻		கி	కి	ಕಿ	കി	कि
ku	𑀕𑀸	𑀕𑀸	𑀸	கு	కు	ಕು	കു	कु
kú	𑀕𑀸	𑀕𑀻	𑀻	கூ	కూ	ಕೂ	കൂ	कू
kṛi		𑀕𑀻			కృ	ಕೃ	കൃ	कृ
kṛi	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻			కృ	కృ	കൃ	कृ
ke			𑀲	கெ	కె	ಕೆ	കെ	
ké	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻		கே	కే	ಕೇ	കേ	के
kai	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻	𑀲	கை	కై	ಕೈ	കൈ	के
ko			𑀲	கொ	కొ	ಕೊ	കൊ	
kó	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻		கோ	కొ	ಕೋ	കോ	को
kau	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻		கௌ	కౌ	ಕೌ	കൗ	कौ
kaṃ	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻			కం	ಕಂ	കം	कं
kaḥ	𑀕𑀻	𑀕𑀻			కః	ಕః	കഃ	कः

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Figure 7. BRAHMI VOWEL SIGN VOCALIC R with the glyph  (from Kanniyar 1960: 8).