Title: Introducing the Bhujinmol Script
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1 Introduction

This document provides a brief description of the historical Bhujinmol script, discusses encoding requirements, and provides a few specimens. The script was used between the 12–17 centuries CE in the region that now encompasses parts of Nepal and northern parts of the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in India. It is attested in a limited number of manuscripts and inscriptions. It is currently known as ‘Bhujinmol’ (भुᳲजंमोल bhujiṃmol), a term from the Newar language meaning “fly-headed”, which refers to the shape of the headstroke used in the script.

2 Structure

Bhujinmol is an alphasyllabic script based upon the Brahmi model and is written from left-to-right. It is structurally similar to the Newar script that has been proposed for encoding (N4184 L2/12-003). As in the Newar script, certain vowel signs are written using contextual forms when they combine with certain consonant letters. These contextual forms modify the head-strokes of consonants. The behavior of these vowel signs is identical to the ‘wavy-headed’ forms used in the Newar script and they occur with the same set of consonants in both scripts.

3 Character Repertoire

The character repertoire of Bhujinmol corresponds to that of the Newar script. Bhujinmol appears graphically distinct from the ‘prachalit’ or ‘current’ Newar script on account of its headstroke: the headstrokes of Newar letters are flat, while the Bhujinmol letters have curved or hooked headstrokes. A comparison of glyphs reveals a nearly identical structure for the letterforms of the two scripts. Distinctive letters in Bhujinmol are VOWEL LETTER VOCALIC L, VOWEL LETTER VOCALIC LL, NNA, DHA, PHA, SHA. Also distinctive are the representations of the consonant conjuncts kṣa and jīta. See figures 7–10 for comparisons.

4 Considerations for Encoding

The method of representing Bhujinmol in the UCS depends upon whether it is to be considered a stylistic variant of the Newar script or an independent script.

Bhujinmol may be considered one of seven documented styles of the Newar script. All of the stylistic variants are structurally and graphically related. They are distinguished primarily by the shape of their headstrokes and they are named according to the Newar terms for these shapes., with all names ending in -mol “head”. The ’Prachalit’ form of the Newar script is itself based upon the ‘Pachumol’ or “flat-headed” style. If Bhujinmol
Introducing the Bhujinmol Script

Anshuman Pandey

is to be considered a ‘style’ of script, then it may be unified with the Newar script. Unification offers users
the benefit of using a single script block for both the ‘Bhujinmol’ and ‘Prachalit’ styles of Newar. The same
text may be displayed in either of these styles through font selection.

On the other hand, Bhujinmol may be considered a separate script for purposes of encoding if there is a need
to represent it distinctively in plain text. The case is similar to other scripts that are classified as a ‘style’
of another. Given that there are several records written in Bhujinmol, it may be necessary to represent the
script in plain text.

5 References

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Introducing the Bhujmol Script

Anshuman Pandey

Figure 1: Folios of the Devīmāhātmya written in Bhujmol.
Figure 2: A chart of the Bhujinmol script (from Shakyavansha 1974: 45).
Figure 3: Examples of Bhujinmol conjuncts (from Shakyavansha 1974: 46).
Figure 4: Examples of Bhujinmol consonants and conjuncts with contextual forms of vowel signs (from Shakyavansha 1974: 47).
Figure 5: Transcription of an inscription in Bhujinmol (from Shakyavansha 1974: 48).
Figure 6: A chart of the Bhujinmol script (from Shakyavansha 1985: 22–23).
Figure 7: Comparison of letters आ to खा of Newar, Ranjana, Bhujinmol, etc. (from Government of Nepal 1962).
Figure 8: Comparison of letters GA to DDHA of Newar, Ranjana, Bhujimol, etc. (from Government of Nepal 1962).
Figure 9: Comparison of letters न्ना to शा of Newar, Ranjana, Bhujinmol, etc. (from Government of Nepal 1962).
Figure 10: Comparison of letters Ha and some ligatures of Newar, Ranjana, Bhujinmol, etc. (from Government of Nepal 1962).
Figure 11: Comparison of digits of Newar, Ranjana, Bhujinmol, etc. (from Government of Nepal 1962).
Introducing the Bhujinmol Script

Anshuman Pandey

Figure 12: Vowel and consonant letters of Bhujinmol ('Bandžin-Mola') compared with the Kaithi ('Kaiti-Nagari') and Ranjana ('Randža') scripts (from Faulmann 1880: 136).

In Nepal, where Buddhism is the prevailing religion, the Bhujinmol script is used in some areas. It is similar to the Kaithi and Ranjana scripts but with some unique features. The script is written from left to right and is used for both religious and daily purposes.

The vowels and consonants of the Bhujinmol script are compared with the Kaithi and Ranjana scripts in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Kaithi</th>
<th>Ranjana</th>
<th>Bhujinmol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The consonant letters are also compared in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Kaithi</th>
<th>Ranjana</th>
<th>Bhujinmol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The script is characterized by its unique angular formations and the presence of a small hook on some letters, which is absent in the Kaithi and Ranjana scripts. This feature aids in the easy differentiation of letters, especially in cursive writing.

The Bhujinmol script is an example of the rich cultural heritage of Nepal and its vibrant script tradition.