

In the process of making sure that all the Arabic supplementary glyphs in our font collection are drawn to the same base shapes as the basic set, Thomas Milo has identified four glyphs for which the representative glyph shown in our code tables is deficient.

These characters are for Koranic annotations and the shapes we have do not match their use in the Koran. Since he first drew some of these shapes, based on their names and their appearance in ISO/IEC 10646-1:1993, Tom has become involved in a project that actually deals with Koranic typesetting and has found that the actually intended shapes look quite different.

He writes:

To: "Asmus Freytag"
Subject: Re: UNICODE_ARABIC.ttf;UNICODE_ARABIC.vfb

Asmus,

Here's a link to the supplement of the 1924 Azhar Qur'an that is the original source of all the Koranic annotation marks in the Unicode. Their English names in Unicode are literal translations of the descriptions found in this text. I marked as many as I could with their Unicode number in the Arabic text.

In some cases Unicode presents a different glyph that is simply an acceptable alternative (e.g., 06E9). In some cases a single grapheme is split in two character codes for no reason: 06E2 and 06ED are contextual variants of a single grapheme (and so it is treated in this supplement).

In the case of 06DF, 06E0 and 06E1 Unicode got it all wrong. The shapes of 06DF, 06E0 have been misrepresented in an embarrassing way, inherited from ISO10646-1. The SMALL HIGH ROUNDED ZERO of 06DF is in fact the exact same shape as that of 0652 SUKUN, but nevertheless a different grapheme with a different meaning ("ignore skeleton letter" instead of "no vowel", so it needs its own code point), whereas 06E1 is just a contextual variant of the 0652 SUKUN that only occurs in Korans with this renovated spelling to maintain the contrastive opposition with 06DF SMALL HIGH ROUNDED ZERO vs. SMALL HIGH DOTLESS HEAD OF KHAH. The sukun-like character 06E0 is a special variant of 06DF and is printed with a number zero taken from Latin font, illustrating the amount of innovation and improvisation that was involved with the extra-traditional characters.

www.decoType.com/publications/Cairo_Monday-13_January_1919.pdf

It is therefore proposed to revise the shapes for 06DF, 06E0 and 06E1 to match the source he is referencing. In addition the shape “place of sajdah” of is reproduced in the document as



which is very different from the keyhole shape in our code charts for 06E9 ARABIC PLACE OF SAJDAH. According to discussion I had with Tom, he considers his source to be the authoritative source for these symbols; accordingly we would also change the representative glyph for this character.