

To: Unicode Technical Committee

L2/12-188

From: Deborah Anderson (SEI, UC Berkeley) and Peter Constable (Microsoft)

Title: Naming error for U+0709 SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED RIGHT

Date: 8 May 2012

Document L2/12-050 noted the apparent discrepancy between the name and the glyph shape of U+0709 SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED RIGHT.

The current (6.1) code chart for Syriac shows the following:

- 0706 : SYRIAC COLON SKEWED LEFT
  - marks a dependent clause
- 0707 : SYRIAC COLON SKEWED RIGHT
  - marks the end of a subdivision of the apodosis, or latter part of a Biblical verse
- 0708 : SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT
  - marks a minor phrase division
- 0709 : SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED RIGHT
  - marks the end of a real or rhetorical question

George Kiraz has confirmed that the glyph shape is correct, but the code point's name is *not* correct. In order to rectify the situation, an annotation should be added explaining that the correct glyph has a skewed-left orientation, in spite of the name.

*Below is information collected by Peter Constable that documents the history of the encoding of this character.*

From: Peter Constable

Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2012 10:40 PM

To: 'George Kiraz'; Deborah W. Anderson

Cc: Paul Nelson (OFFICE INTL)

Subject: RE: Question on Syriac character U+0709

I'll start the historical review by mentioning that the glyphs in the code charts for Unicode 6.1 match those in the charts for Unicode 3.0, which was the version in which Syriac was first added.

The proposal doc in the UTC document register is L2/98-050, from March 1998. But the script was approved at the UTC meeting in February 1998. The minutes mention "a revised proposal, incorporating the errata..." – I gather that L2/98-050, dated after the UTC meeting, is that revised proposal. I can't find any info indicating what the "errata" were, so don't know if that pertains to 0709 and its glyph in any way.

Now, L2/98-050 has a code chart (page 22) with these glyphs:

|   |     |      |
|---|-----|------|
| 6 | Ⲁ   | 0706 |
| 7 | Ⲁ̇  | 0707 |
| 8 | Ⲁ̈  | 0708 |
| 9 | Ⲁ̇̈ | 0709 |

These match what is in the charts for Unicode 6.1. However, the proposal doc used a different character name for 0709, SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED **LEFT**, which is consistent with the glyph. And it also shows a sample that matches the current glyph for 0709:

|     |        |                                      |                   |
|-----|--------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Ⲁ   | U+0706 | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED LEFT             | Ⲁ̈ⲁⲂⲃⲄⲅ<br>Juckel |
| Ⲁ̇  | U+0707 | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED RIGHT            | Ⲁ̇ⲁⲂⲃⲄⲅ<br>BFBS   |
| Ⲁ̈  | U+0708 | SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT | Ⲁ̈ⲁⲂⲃⲄⲅ<br>BFBS   |
| Ⲁ̇̈ | U+0709 | SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT   | Ⲁ̇̈ⲁⲂⲃⲄⲅ<br>BFBS  |

After the script was accepted for encoding by UTC, the next step was to have it presented to the ISO working group, WG2, to get it added to an amendment of ISO 10646. The WG2 document register lists N1718 as a proposal to encode Syriac; there's no electronic copy, but based on the source and date, it looks like this should be identical to L2/98-050. The WG2 meeting was in March 1998, in Redmond, and the minutes ([n1704](#)) record approving Syriac as proposed in N1718.

The WG2 doc for the first draft of the amendment to include Syriac (PDAM 27) is N1781—again, no electronic copy in the WG2 register. But there is a copy in the sub-committee register: SC2 N3107. And as I'd expect, it has glyphs that match what's in L2/98-050:

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | Ⲁ   | 006 |
| 7 | Ⲁ̇  | 007 |
| 8 | Ⲁ̈  | 008 |
| 9 | Ⲁ̇̈ | 009 |

But for some reason, the character name for 0709 is different than what was in L2/98-050:

|     |    |                                       |
|-----|----|---------------------------------------|
| 006 | 06 | SYRIAC HORIZONTAL COLON               |
| 007 | 07 | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED LEFT              |
| 008 | 08 | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED RIGHT             |
| 009 | 09 | SYRIAC COLON SUPRALINEAR SKEWED LEFT  |
| 010 | 0A | SYRIAC COLON SUPRALINEAR SKEWED RIGHT |
| 011 | 0B | SYRIAC COLON SUBLINEAR SKEWED LEFT    |
| 012 | 0C | SYRIAC COLON SUBLINEAR SKEWED RIGHT   |
| 013 | 0D | SYRIAC CONTRACTION                    |

US comments in the ballot on the PDAM 27 draft pointed this out and requested a change:

3. Other than the character name changes noted in the Editor's note, four character names do not match the working draft. These should be corrected to:  
 U+0708 SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT  
 U+0709 SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT  
 U+0738 SYRIAC DOTTED ZLAMA HORIZONTAL  
 U+0739 SYRIAC DOTTED ZLAMA ANGULAR

This comment was accepted in the disposition of comments, and so the name should have been changed in the next draft, FPDAM 27. But surprisingly, the FPDAM draft still has an incorrect name (the order of words was changed, but "right" was not corrected to "left"):

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FPDAM for ISO/IEC 10646-1: 1993/Amd. 27: 1999 (E)

TABLE 238 - Row 07: SYRIAC

| dec | hex | Name                                  | dec | hex | Name |
|-----|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| 000 | 00  | SYRIAC END OF PARAGRAPH               |     |     |      |
| 001 | 01  | SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR FULL STOP          |     |     |      |
| 002 | 02  | SYRIAC SUBLINEAR FULL STOP            |     |     |      |
| 003 | 03  | SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON              |     |     |      |
| 004 | 04  | SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON                |     |     |      |
| 005 | 05  | SYRIAC HORIZONTAL COLON               |     |     |      |
| 006 | 06  | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED LEFT              |     |     |      |
| 007 | 07  | SYRIAC COLON SKEWED RIGHT             |     |     |      |
| 008 | 08  | SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT  |     |     |      |
| 009 | 09  | SYRIAC SUPRALINEAR COLON SKEWED RIGHT |     |     |      |
| 010 | 0A  | SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED LEFT    |     |     |      |
| 011 | 0B  | SYRIAC SUBLINEAR COLON SKEWED RIGHT   |     |     |      |
| 012 | 0C  | SYRIAC CONTRACTION                    |     |     |      |

When the FPDAM draft was balloted, there were no comments. As a result, it went to the final draft (FDAM) and publication with that name.

So, the glyph has remained constant from the revised proposal after the February 1998 UTC meeting, L2/98-050, up to the current version of the code chart. But the name changed from having "LEFT" in L2/98-050 to having "RIGHT" in the PDAM draft of 10646, and I find no record indicating that that was intentional; and that never got changed.