Proposal to encode an Arabic qaf with dot below
Marijn van Putten (Leiden University) and Roozbeh Pournader (WhatsApp)
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Proposal

Encode the following character:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>codepoint</th>
<th>isolated</th>
<th>final</th>
<th>medial</th>
<th>initial</th>
<th>name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U+08B5</td>
<td>بٔ</td>
<td>مبٔ</td>
<td>نبٔ</td>
<td>فبٔ</td>
<td>ARABIC LETTER QAF WITH DOT BELOW AND NO DOTS ABOVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UnicodeData.txt properties would be:
08B5;ARABIC LETTER QAF WITH DOT BELOW AND NO DOTS ABOVE;Lo;0;AL;;;;;N;;;;;

The ArabicShaping.txt properties would be:
08B5; DOTLESS QAF WITH DOT BELOW; D; QAF

All other properties would be similar to U+0642 ARABIC LETTER QAF.

The letter is confusable with U+06A2 ARABIC LETTER FEH WITH DOT MOVED BELOW and U+08BB ARABIC LETTER AFRICAN FEH. It looks identical to them in initial and medial forms, while different in final and isolated forms.

Background

Modern Maghrebi print Qurans have a qāf with one dot above, “ق”, and a fā’ with one dot below, “ف”. These are currently encoded in the Unicode. But in ancient Quranic manuscripts we find the exact opposite distribution. While fā’ with dot above is already encoded, “ف”, the qāf with a single dot below is not encoded yet.

Here is an example of the qāf with dot below used medially in the word القرآن from Small 2013:
Among other places, Small 2013 mentions that Leemhuis 2006 "observes that in the first Islamic century this was a convention used in a few manuscripts from the Hijaz and Yemen and even in the Dome of the Rock Inscriptions."

Below we show a selection of the use of the qāf with a dot below in three different Quranic manuscript fragments, all located in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. The left-side images show a final or isolated qāf with a dot below, while the right-side images show a final or isolated fāʾ from the same manuscript for contrast.

Note that the dots are the thin diagonal lines, not the round filled circles. That’s how dots were typically written at the time period.

1. Arabe 334a

2. Arabe 330c
3. Arabe 335

\( \hat{H} \)اqq

\( \text{musrif} \) مصرف

\( \check{W} \)ااق

\( \check{a} \)اァファ

\( \check{\text{'ahafa}} \) أخف
Here’s a discussion of the letter in Blau 1966. It lacks the glyph to typeset it properly, thus using U+06A2 ﻹ ARABIC LETTER FEH WITH DOT MOVED BELOW instead:

25. Diacritical points: for the particular use of the diacritical points, cf. the introductions to the various texts, as Fleischer III, passim and Levin 14/51. Remarkable is the use of ﻹ and ﺱ to mark q and f respectively in some mss., of ﻹ and ﻹ in others. Shīn is sometimes marked by three points written in the same level, v. e.g. Fleischer III 396, note 1 and the facsimiles reproduced in SS 2 and SS 7, sometimes alternating with the ordinarily marked shīn (i.e. by one point at the top and two beneath it at the same level), as in Camb. Sin is sometimes marked by a diagonal stroke above it: ﻚ, v. e.g. S 508 72b, 1; 2; 3; 4. Tā marbūta is, as a rule, written without dots (cf. also § 8.9, note 64)2. In some mss., as in BM 5019, the diacritical points altogether are very scarce, in others again they are added quite regularly.

Finally, here are two examples from Ibn Sallam 866, the earliest Arabic paper manuscript at Leiden University Libraries. The same manuscript sometimes uses two dots above like the modern “ق”, but some other times uses the form proposed here. The examples show the letter initially and medially:

Bibliography