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Dear George:

The last time I wrote to it was in regard to the Ashurbanipal Library Computer Conference. This time I am writing to you in regard to The First Forum on Syriac Computing. How small is the world of Syriac and computers.

Perhaps you may remember Sargon Hasso, whom you met at the Ashurbanipal Library Computer Conference. He and I co-authored the Syriac Unicode standard, and have submitted this standard to the Unicode Consortium. Unicode will in turn submit this standard to the International Standards Organization (ISO) for ratification. I wish to present a paper at SyrCOM about this important development. Unicode has become the de facto standard for the next generation of computers and computing. It is supported by a wide variety of operating systems and computer vendors. When the Syriac Unicode standard is approved, Syriac scholars will be able to electronically exchange documents, scientific papers, and electronic forms of manuscripts (which opens a vast, new realm of electronic processing of Syriac text) with complete compatibility.

Enclosed you will find an abstract for the paper I wish to present. Please give it your utmost consideration.

Yours in Assyrianism

Peter Jasim



The Syriac Unicode Standard
















by

Peter Jasim
Sargon Hasso

abstract

The American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), a standard encoding of the letters, digits, and symbols of the English language, will soon be replaced by the Unicode Standard. ASCII is a one byte coding scheme, which provides enough space for 256 codes, hence it cannot encode languages with more than 256 letters, digits, and symbols. Various multibyte encoding schemes have been proposed, but it is the Unicode Standard that has emerged, principally because of its simplicity, orthogonality, and its comprehensive scope. Unicode encodes all of the major and minor languages of the world, including Syriac, in a two byte character set. This paper presents the Syriac Unicode Standard which has been submitted to the Unicode Consortium, and which is awaiting ratification by the International Standards Organization. A brief overview of the philosophy and design of the Unicode Standard is presented, the unification process which lead to the Syriac Standard is discussed, and the Syriac Standard is presented. The Syriac Standard unifies the Western ("Jacobite") and Eastern ("Nestorian") character sets, and also supports Mandaic. With the Syriac Unicode Standard, any document produced between 0 A.D. and 1995 A.D. can be represented.

SEQUENCE	GLYPH	DEFINITION
S+0000	¶	SYRIAC QUOTATION SIGN = <i>sahrane</i>
S+0001	⋈	SYRIAC ABBREVIATOR SIGN
S+0002	⋄	SYRIAC END OF PARAGRAPH SIGN
S+0003	.	SYRIAC PAUSAL ACCENT PASUQA = <i>period</i>
S+0004	,	SYRIAC PAUSAL ACCENT ZAUGA = <i>comma</i>
S+0005	⸌	SYRIAC INTERROGATIVE SIGN
S+0006	⸀	SYRIAC PLURAL SIGN SYAME
S+0007	⸁	SYRIAC DIACRITICAL POINT RUKAKHA
S+0008	⸂	SYRIAC DIACRITICAL SIGN MAJLIANA
S+0009	⸃	SYRIAC DIACRITICAL LARGE POINT OVER A LETTER
S+000A	⸄	SYRIAC DIACRITICAL LARGE POINT BELOW A LETTER
S+000B	⸅	SYRIAC DIACRITICAL POINT QUSHAYA
S+000C	⸆	SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN ZQAPA
S+000D	⸇	SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN PTAKHA
S+000E	⸈	SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN ZLAME PSHIQE

S+000F		SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN ZLAME QASHYE
S+0010		SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN RWAKHA
S+0011		SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN RWASA
S+0012		SYRIAC VOWEL SIGN KHWASA
S+0013		SYRIAC ACCENT MASHLIANA
S+0014		SYRIAC ACCENT MHAGYANA
S+0015		SYRIAC ACCENT MARHTANA
S+0016		SYRIAC LETTER ALAP
S+0017		SYRIAC LETTER BET
S+0018		SYRIAC LETTER GAMAL
S+0019		SYRIAC LETTER DALADH
S+001A		SYRIAC LETTER HE
S+001B		SYRIAC LETTER WAW
S+001C		SYRIAC LETTER ZAIN
S+001D		SYRIAC LETTER HET

S+001E	ܦ	SYRIAC LETTER TET
S+001F	ܦ	SYRIAC LETTER YUDH
S+0020	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER KAP
S+0021	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER LAMADH
S+0022	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER MIM
S+0023	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER NUN
S+0024	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER SEMKAT
S+0025	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER 'E
S+0026	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER PE
S+0027	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER SADE
S+0028	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER QOP
S+0029	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER RESH
S+002A	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER SHEEN
S+002B	ܩ	SYRIAC LETTER TAW