

Doc Type: Working Group Document
Title: Shaping behaviour of six Syriac letters for Sogdian and Persian
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Status: Expert Contribution
Date: 2002-11-04

N2422 proposed six Syriac letters for inclusion in the UCS. These were accepted at the WG2 meeting in Dublin 2002. Additional information was requested regarding the shaping behaviour of these letters in the three styles of Syriac.

Typographically, these letters are of some interest. In N2422, the shapes of the letters were described as follows:

 SYRIAC LETTER PERSIAN BHETH: same as  BETH with an oblique stroke added at the top left.

 SYRIAC LETTER PERSIAN GHAMAL: same as  GAMAL with a hook added at the top left.

 SYRIAC LETTER PERSIAN DHALATH: same as  DALATH with two points below instead of one.

 SYRIAC LETTER SOGDIAN ZHAIN: based on the  “I”-shaped ZAIN, converted into a “V”-shape.

 SYRIAC LETTER SOGDIAN KHAPH: same as [initial]  KAPH with a hook added at the top left.

 SYRIAC LETTER SOGDIAN FE: same as  PE with an extension at the top left.

The form and shaping behaviour of the Persian BHETH, GHAMAL, and DHALATH is just the same as the letters they are based upon. The Sogdian letters present more interesting variation however. ZHAIN has a longer descender and its two wings need a bit more of an angle than does ZAIN in order for them to meet in an attractive V. In traditional fonts, KAPH exhibits a wider variety of forms, but these do not appear for KHAPH in Sogdian manuscripts.

	X _n	X _r	X _m	X _l	
Estrangelo					KAPH
Serto					KAPH
Eastern					KAPH

Although Sogdian FE is a modification of PE, typographically (and in accordance with scribal tradition) it is more appropriate to base the letterforms on a hybrid mixing an extended Syriac E with a ring on the right with the base characteristics of Syriac KAPH.

The shaping behaviour of the new Sogdian letters is summarized in the table below.

<i>Style</i>	X _n	X _r	X _m	X _l	<i>Name</i>
<i>Estrangelo</i>					BHETH
					GHAMAL
					DHALATH
					ZHAIN
					KHAPH
<i>Serto</i>					BHETH
					GHAMAL
					DHALATH
					ZHAIN
					KHAPH
<i>Eastern</i>					BHETH
					GHAMAL
					DHALATH
					ZHAIN
					KHAPH
					FE