

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set  
International Organization for Standardization  
Organisation Internationale de Normalisation  
Международная организация по стандартизации

**Doc Type: Working Group Document****Title:** Proposal to encode the Osmanya script in Plane 1 of the UCS**Source:** Michael Everson**Status:** Expert Contribution**Action:** For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2**Date:** 1999-01-25

## A. Administrative

**1. Title**

Proposal to encode the Osmanya script in Plane 1 of the UCS.

**2. Requester's name**

Michael Everson, EGT (WG2 member for Ireland).

**3. Requester type**

Expert contribution.

**4. Submission date**

1999-01-25.

**5. Requester's reference****6a. Completion**

This is a complete proposal.

**6b. More information to be provided?**

No.

## B. Technical – General

**1a. New script? Name?**

Yes. Osmanya.

**1b. Addition of characters to existing block? Name?**

No.

**2. Number of characters**

27.

**3. Proposed category**

Category B.1.

**4. Proposed level of implementation and rationale**

As a simple left-to-right alphabetic script, Osmanya requires Level 1.

**5a. Character names included in proposal?**

Yes.

**5b. Character names in accordance with guidelines?**

Yes.

**5c. Character shapes reviewable?**

Yes (see below).

**6a. Who will provide computerized font?**

Michael Everson.

**6b. Font currently available?**

Yes.

### **6c. Font format?**

TrueType.

### **7a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts, etc.) provided?**

Yes. See the bibliography below.

### **7b. Are published examples (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of use of proposed characters attached?**

Yes, see below.

### **8. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing?**

Yes; see Unicode properties below.

## **C. Technical – Justification**

### **1. Contact with the user community?**

No.

### **2. Information on the user community?**

Probably only the scholarly and library communities, since the script was abandoned in 1973 in favour of Latin orthography for Somali.

### **3a. The context of use for the proposed characters?**

Used to write Somali, especially from 1961–1973 (when Osmanya enjoyed official sanction); Osmanya was devised in 1920–22.

### **3b. Reference**

See bibliography below.

### **4a. Proposed characters in current use?**

Yes.

### **4b. Where?**

By scholars and librarians; there could possibly still be some native use.

### **5a. Characters should be encoded entirely in BMP?**

No.

### **5b. Rationale**

Accordance with the Roadmap.

### **6. Should characters be kept in a continuous range?**

Yes.

### **7a. Can the characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?**

No.

### **7b. Where?**

### **7c. Reference**

### **8a. Can any of the characters be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?**

No.

### **8b. Where?**

### **8c. Reference**

### **9a. Combining characters or use of composite sequences included?**

No.

### **9b. List of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images provided?**

No.

### **10. Characters with any special properties such as control function, etc. included?**

No.

## **E. Proposal**

The Osmanya script, called in Somali *far Soomaali* ‘Somali writing’ or *Ismanya*, was devised in 1920–1922 by Cismaan Yuusuf Keenadiid to represent the Somali language. It replaced an attempt by



12:212–13.

Diringer, David. 1996 (1947). *The alphabet: a key to the history of mankind*.  
 Munshiram Manoharlal. ISBN 81-215-0748-0

Gaur, Albertine. 1992. *A history of writing*. London: British Library. ISBN 0-7123-0270-0

Gregersen, Edgar A. 1977. *Language in Africa: an introductory survey*. New York: Gordon and Breach. ISBN 0-677-04380-5

Maino, Mario. 1951. "L'alfabeta 'Osmania' in Somalia", in *Rassegna di Studi Etopici* 10:108–21.

Nakanishi, Akira. 1990. *Writing systems of the world: alphabets, syllabaries, pictograms*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle. ISBN 0-8048-1654-9

## Annex A

Sample from Nakanishi 1990.

OSN GLQT NZZ  
 99 SS 99X7650Z  
 99952L NZZ 99  
 SS OL9Z

Transcription:

OSN GLQT NZZ 99 SS 99X7650Z 99952L NZZ 99 SS OL9Z  
 dal dheyr low gu aa guwrsado shishaye low gu aa deio

Sample from Gaur 1990.

GLQT NZZ 99 SS 99X7650Z 99952L

Transcription:

GLQT NZZ 99 SS 99X7650Z 99952L  
 dheyr low gu aa guwrsadw shay

This text is suspect; it appears to be derived from the sample in Nakanishi 1990.

To the right is shown Cerulli and Maino's alphabets as given in Gregersen 1977.

	Cerulli 1932	Maino 1951
?	U	u
b	3	3
t	o	1
j	l	2
h	H	h
x	S	h
d	Δ	0
r	∇	∇
s	2	2
j	2	2
d	2	2
g	2	2
q	2	2
f	2	2
q	2	2
k	2	2
l	U	2
m	5	5
n	2	2
w	2	2
h	2	2
y	2	2
i	2	2
u	2	2
o	2	2
a	2	2
e	2	2
	y, ii	2
	w, uu	2
	oo	2
	aa	2
	ee	2

TABLE XXX - Row 20: OSMANYA

	200	201
0	Ბ	Გ
1	Დ	Ე
2	Ვ	Ზ
3	Თ	Ი
4	Კ	Ლ
5	Მ	Ნ
6	Ო	Პ
7	Ჟ	Რ
8	Ს	Ტ
9	Უ	Ფ
A	Ქ	Ღ
B	Ყ	Შ
C	Ჩ	Ც
D	Ძ	
E	Წ	
F	Ჭ	

G = 00  
P = 01

