Discussion

Unicode Character Properties

At the outset, I have to say that I will only discuss the most commonly used form of Tifinagh (i.e. neo-Tifinagh) and will talk about the confusion regarding certain characters.

The main reason I have focused on the last four columns in Mr. Everson's chart (N1757) is the fact that the most commonly used form of Tifinagh is the last column, which is "Afus Deg Wfus." Also I would like to note that the characters in other columns **(i.e., those under the "Ancient Berber" and "Tifinagh" headings)** aren't used in modern Tamazight, they are just historical information that you only see in history books.

The first column **in this section, "Neo-Tif. Tamazgha 1996,"** is used by an Amazigh scholar in France, Salem Chaker, but has little or no use in the community at all.

The other **two?** columns **in the Neo-Tifinagh section** are either--as we will find out-- merely poor font design decisions or a misunderstanding of the Amazigh characters. And in the case of Mr. Everson's chart there are some characters that need further discussion (some are more obvious than others).

Similar Characters

First I will present a chart with similar characters with little or no difference in the use within the Amazigh Berber community today.

•	Aghra	Same	Same
∧	Yed	Same	Same
Ε	Yedd	Same	Same
ⵝ	Yezz	Same	Same
Ⲧ	Yej[1]	Same	Same
‖	Yell	Same	Same
Ⲅ	Yem	Same	Same
Ι	Yen	Same	Same
ⳤ	Yesh	Same	Same
ⵛ	Ye	Same	Same

ⵊⵈ	Yef	Same	Everson

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[1] - the character is named by Mr. Everson as (Yezh) where it is a (Yej).

Yef: I am surprised to see that Mr. Everson provides Yef in his chart as a different character, whereas the chart distributed by the Afus Deg Wfus organization uses the same character (see below).

V	V	.VO.O	2	d	d
E	E	.E:	é	ḍ	dh
÷	⸖	⸖ɛ	e	e	e
ⵉⵛ	ⵉⵛ	.ⵉⵛ	f	f	f
X̄	X̄	.X̄:O	g	g	g
ⵗ	ⵗ	ⵗⵛ.	*	g	g
Ƨ	Ƨ	÷Ƨ	o	ǧ	dj

But I understand that Tifawt "A Moroccan Amazigh Magazine" uses it in the way Mr. Everson's example shows (see the mast-head below).

But the magazine designers in the same issue published this chart on the back page.

a	١		•	•⵰⵰:‖
b	ﺑ		ⵀ	Σⵀ•ⵞ
c	ﺵ		Ɛ	:ƐƐ÷‖
d	ﺩ		∧	•∧O•O
d	ﺽ		E	•Ө÷ⵛⵛΣE
e	‐		÷	XΣ‖÷‖Σ
f	ﻑ		ⵉⵛ	X•ⵉⵛ:‖•ӨX
g	ﺝ		X̄	ₘX̄∧:∧
h	ﺡ		ⵋ	ₒⵋⵞ‖ₒƐ
gh	ﻍ		ⵖ	ₒⵖₒ‖Σⵛ
h	ﻩ		Ø	ₒØ∧∧:‖
i	‐		Σ	Σ⵰ⵛ
j	ﺝ		ⵜ	ₒⵞ:ⵛΣ‖
k	ﻙ		ⵔ	ₒӨⵔⵔₒ
l	ﻝ		‖	ₒӨₒ‖ⵛₒ∧

You could see clearly the use of the F letter as it has been used by other Amazigh fonts.

Also in an article on page 22 of the same magazine issue note:

. ⵎⵡⵡⵉ, . ⵞⵥ- ⵏⵏⵏⵥ ⵝ:ⵎⵋ ⵝ.ⵞⵡ.,
ⵝⵝ:ⵝⵉ .ⵙⵙ. ⵥⵎⵦ.ⵞ.ⵏ ⵉⵏⵏ.ⵞⵉ;
ⵎ.ⵉⵥ ⵝⵋⵙ.ⵎ .ⵎ.ⵔⵔ:⁵ ⵏⵔⵡⵡⵥⵉ
ⵝⵏ. ⵍ .ⵞⵉ ⵝ.ⵙ.:
« ˙ⵡ- .ⵞⵥⵏ.ⵙ! ⁶ ⵙ:ⵏ.ⵝ! ».

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¹ .ⵎⵎ.ⵙ: ⵜ:ⵝⵝⵧⵎⵜ.
² .ⵙⵜⵉⵙⵥ: ⵞ ⵎ.ⵉⵥ ⵝⵝ.ⵉⵜ ⵥⵉⵞ:ⵏ:ⵙⵜⵉ.
³ .ⵞ.ⵙ: ⵜⵥⵞⵥⵙ. ⵉ ⵥⵏⵙ.ⵉ.
⁴ ⵙⵞ.ⵏⵏⵜ .ⵙⵜⵉ: :ⵝ.ⵉ· ⵜⵜ ⵉ.ⵙ ⵜⵜⵞ.ⵏⵏⵜ.
⁵ .ⵎ.ⵔⵔ:: .ⵎ:ⵔ.
⁶ .ⵞⵥⵏ.ⵙ: .ⵝⵜⵙⵋ.ⵎ, .ⵞⵜⵏⵏⵔ.ⵙ.

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So you can see clearly how there is no difference in the use of the letter F.

:	yu	Same	Everson

Yu: This is another character that is the same all across Neo-Tifinagh characters but I see Mr. Everson identifies it as different character. It's really not different.
Look at the (Yew) character (�) **(Note: Everson calls this Yaw in the chart.)** Everson has mixed up the two in the same column.
This last one, (�), is a modern addition to Tifinagh, the (Yu) is agreed upon by all the Tifinagh users. Look at Mr. Everson's chart and compare the (Yu) and the modern (Yew).

+	yet	Same	Same
ⵝ	yeth	Same	Everson

Yet and Yeth: These are two different characters, the first one is a standard Amazigh consonant, the second one is regional (i.e. not an original Berber consonant). It is only used by two dialects, Kabylia in Algeria and Rifian in Morocco.

This mast-head is from a newspaper from the Moroccan region of Rif where they replace the character (Yet) with the character (Yeth). However, when it comes to the standard chart of the Amazigh characters, they use the standard charctar (Yet).

Look at the chart of characters provided by the same newspaper, issue 05 1998, page 11:

Mr. Everson inserted **(Yeth)** in the first and second neo-Tifinagh columns under the letter (Yet) where they should instead be (Yeth). The confusion is brought up in the chart of Mr. Salem Chaker, a Kabylian, whose dialect is one of the two that replaces (Yet) with (Yeth).

The same but!

There is also a group of characters that are the same all across **the "Neo-Tifinagh" columns** but there is some confusion in their appearance due to the initial source from which they were taken (i.e. from archaeological sites).

⊙	yes	Same	Arch
○	yer	Same	Arch
⊕	yeb	Same	Arch - **Direction**
ⵟ	yeg	Same	**Direction**

Yes, Yer, Yeb: These three characters share the same issue of occurring sometimes in a circle and other times in a square shape. The reason for these variations is due to the nature of wall carving techniques, where it was easier to use the character in a square shape than a circle, and sometimes—especially in the modern days—the shape is dictated by font design reasons.

Yeb, Yeg: The direction it of the letter (Yeb) is due to the writing direction of the Tifinagh script. Some scribes copied them from the direction they were in without consideration of the rotation. I can say with great confidence that the character **(Yeb)** is standardized by the Afus Deg Wfus Neo-Tifinagh character today all across North Africa.

The letter (Yeg) faces the same issue of direction as the letter (Yeb).

Replaced Characters

Ж	Yezh [2]	⧣	Acadamic

Yezh: Berber scholars replaced the character shape that looks like international standard character number sign **(#)** with the more commonly used and accepted character (Ж) (Yezh).

Note: The character Mr. Everson used as a (Yezh) character does not exist in the "Afus Deg Wfus" chart (see attachments).

∅	Yah	⋮	Common Use

Yah: This character has been introduced as a replacement for the character (yeh) shaped (⁞). Amazigh scholars saw it would be more suitable to use this character instead of the four dotted one for obvious reasons, such as character flow and similarity.

Later on the new character was adopted and used throughout North Africa.

⊔	Yaw	:	Academic

Yaw: For academic reasons Amazigh scholars introduced the character (⊔) to distinguish it from the letter (:). The differences in the shapes are great, but the most commonly used shape today is the shape (⊔), introduced by Afus Deg Wfus.

Ⴤ	Yegh	⋮	Common Use

Yegh: This character has replaced the primitive shape of three dotted character (⋮) used by Berbers earlier because of the shape. It was later adopted by the majority of Amazigh (Berber community).

Ⴊ	Yeq	⋯	Common Use

Yeq: This character has replaced the primitive shape of three dotted character (⋯) used by Berbers earlier because of its shape. It was later adopted by most Amazigh (Berber community).

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[2] Mr. Everson named it (Yez) whereas it should be named (Yezh).

ⴽ	Yek	n/a	Common Use

Yek: This character has replaced the shape of two facing arrows character (n/a) used by the Berbers earlier because of its shape. It was later adopted by most Amazigh.

Ʃ	Yi	⁝	Common Use

Yi: This vowel is very important and used almost in every sentence though ancient Tifinagh did not have it. It has been introduced by Amazigh scholars in two shapes, the three-dotted one (⁝) and the (Ʃ), which is the most commonly used one. The latter form (Ʃ) is used for good reason: it looks more like a character than a mark of punctuation.

Newly introduced characters

The usage of any shape in this group of characters was introduced by the community from the early days of the Berber language reform. The ones that have been used the most are:

⋋	Yeh.	New	Common Use

Yeh: This character is not really an original Berber character but we use it because of the Arabic names in use, so its shape is dictated by its history as much as its usage. It is frequently used by Afus Deg Wfus.

Ɛ̵	Yett	New	Common Use

Ytt: In the old days, Tifinagh writers used to write this sound the same way they would write the character (+), but because of the great confusion between the two characters, Berber scholars have introduced this newer one. Mr. Everson gives two shapes, but the one that really caught on within the community and used all across North Africa is the Afus Deg Wfuse shape, Ɛ.

Ⴖ	Yey	New	Common Use

Yey: This is a good case of the misinterpretation of Tifinagh character by some users in the community. Look at the character (Yey) and (yi) in Mr. Everson's chart and you will notice that the two characters are similar in design, except in the case of Mr. Salem Chaker's example, where he used it as the letter Yey instead of Yi, the way the majority of the community did. **(Note: In Everson's chart, "Yey" is "Ily".)**

⊘	Yess	New	Common Use

Yess: This character was introduced later on by Berber scholars as a character separate from the character (⊙), Yes. By the shape you could tell it does belong to the same group. Some believe this character should not have been introduced in the first place, their reasoning is that the consonant (⊘) is merely a morphological change of the same character. Having said all that, this character is commonly used by the Berber community.

| Ж	Yakh	New	Common Use

Yekh: This is a newly introduced character to replace the four dotted (∷) character, which was confused with the letter (⵴) Yeu.

V	Yedh	New	Common Use

Yedh: Newly introduced character to compensate for the harsh (Yed). In the old days they used (yed) and pronounced it (Yedh) with a combination of some letters.

˙˙˙˙^	Akafu	New	Common Use

This accent is a newly introduced character to Tifinagh. In the old Tifinagh, Amazighen used it as a repeated character but with its introduction by Afus Deg Wfus, it been used as an accent on top of every character. (Look at afus Deg fus every character with shift).
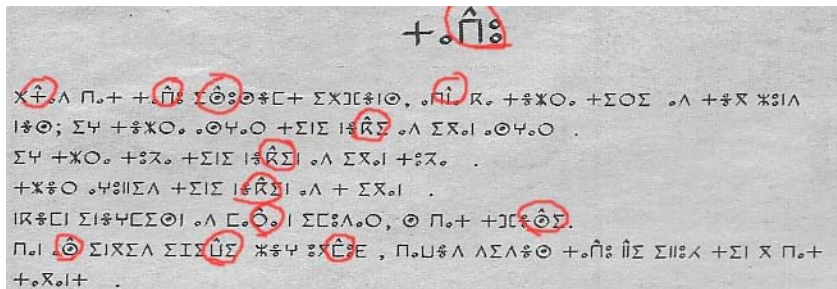
Regional characters

Ⱶ	Yep	Regional	Regional Use

Yep: This character is used in some regions, such as Ghdames in Libya

Δ	Yev	Regional	Regional Use

Yev: Kabylia is where this character is used.

ⵥ	Ygkh	Regional	Regional Use

Ygkh: Similar to the German Kh, this character is used in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco and the south of Algeria. **(Note: In Everson's chart, "Ygkh" is "Yej".)**

ⵣ	Yo	New	Common Use

Yo: You hardly see this character used anywhere. It is more like an addition to accommodate some Arabic names and words.

ⴹ	Yech	Regional	

Yetch: Used mainly in Kabylia, some scholars think there is no reason for this character, since we can use two combined characters.

Glyphs

All the ancient Amazigh glyphs are not used in the modern Tifinagh with the exception of the regional letter (Yetch).