

To: Unicode Technical Committee and ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2
Title: Report on the Garay script 2017
From: Charles Riley
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On July 27, 2017, I arrived at the house of El Hadj Assane Faye in the Derklé neighborhood of Dakar in the early afternoon. I met him there with at least four of his children, including Thierno Faye and Aissatou Faye, and a grandson, Mamadou Diaw. Diaw and Aissatou Faye live in France and speak English as well as French and Wolof. I was able to introduce to them Michael Everson's latest proposal (N4709 = [L2/16-069](#)) for encoding the Garay script, noting that it was unofficial and still had to be finalized before full consideration in committee.

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We discussed the role of one character in particular, ^{10D70} : whether it functioned strictly as a standalone vowel or had more of an 'alef'-like role. It turns out it is a character that has a dual function, and may provide in some contexts a supporting role. Michael Everson and Ken Whistler have raised more questions as to transcription, distinctness of vowels, and harmonic series. It would take correspondence with or through Diaw to address those details in turn, but we were able to establish that the character in question takes on more than one value.

A preliminary font covering the Garay glyph repertoire and mapped to the Private Use Area was developed by Jason Glavy and has been sent to Diaw. Diaw was also asked if there had been any known changes to the usage of the script over time or between users, and he responded that "there was no change or modification".

The script is still taught informally; the group is thought to have grown from 200 to perhaps as many as a thousand. The 200 figure dates from the 1960's. There is a full translation of the Koran in Garay where a complete photocopy was first made in 2015

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Image of Assane Faye and his original translation into Garay of the Koran (and photocopy)



Image of Chuck Riley, Assane Faye (right), and Boubacar Diallo (rear).