

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

**Doc Type: Working Group Document****Title:** Revised proposal to encode the Osmanya script in the SMP of the UCS**Source:** Michael Everson**Status:** Expert Contribution**Action:** For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2**Date:** 2001-06-12**Replaces:** N1948 (1999-01-25)**A. Administrative****1. Title**

Revised proposal to encode the Osmanya script in the SMP of the UCS.

**2. Requester's name**

Michael Everson, (WG2 member for Ireland).

**3. Requester type**

Expert contribution.

**4. Submission date**

2001-06-12.

**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**

40.

**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?**

Yes, with Osman Abdihalim Osman Yusuf Keenadiid, grandson of Osman Yusuf Keenadiid, the inventor of the script.

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

Mostly the scholarly and library communities, since the script was abandoned in 1973 in favour of Latin orthography for Somali. But there is some ordinary use as well.

**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 1920–1922.

**3b. Reference**

See bibliography below.

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

Yes.

**4b. Where?**

By scholars and librarians; there is still 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.

## D. Proposal

The Osmanya script, called in Somali **ህፍረት ጽሑፍ** *far Soomaali* ‘Somali writing’ or **ህፍረት ጽሑፍ** *Cismaanya*, was devised in 1920–1922 by **ህፍረት ጽሑፍ ህፃናዊ ክብሩ** (Cismaan Yuusuf Keenadiid) to represent the Somali language. It replaced an attempt by Sheikh Uweys of the Confraternity Qadiriyyah (died 1909) to devise an Arabic-based orthography for Somali. It has in turn been replaced by the Latin orthography of Muuse Xaaji Ismaaciil Galaal (1914–1980). In 1961 both the Latin and Osmanya scripts were adopted for use in Somalia, but in 1969 there was a coup, with one of its stated aims the resolution of the debate over the country’s writing system. Latin orthography was adopted finally in 1973. Gregersen said in 1977 that some 20,000 or more people use Osmanya in private correspondance and in bookkeeping and that several books and a fortnightly journal **የኮሮሎ** *Horseed* (‘*Vanguard*’) was published, all “cyclostyped” which I take to be equivalent to “cyclostyled” and to mean ‘mimeographed’.

## Structure

Osmanya is a simple alphabetic script, read from left to right in horizontal lines running from top to bottom. It has 22 consonants and 8 vowels. Unique long vowels are written for AA, EE, and OO; long UU and II are written with the consonants WAW and YA.

## Ordering and names

Alphabetical ordering follows the order of the Arabic alphabet, and is given here as specified by Osman Abdihalim Yuusuf Osman Keenadiid. This ordering is similar to the ordering given in Diringer 1996 and reported in Gregerson 1977 for Cerulli 1932 and Maino 1951. The names are as given by Osman. Glyphs are taken from *Afkeenna iyo fartysa* (‘our language and it’s handwriting’) 1971, which was supplied to me by Osman.

Code positions proposed in the table are based on the Roadmap to tthe SMP.

## Unicode Character Properties

Spacing letters, category “Lo”, bidi category “L” (strong left to right)

0001 0480 - 0001 049D

Spacing digits, category “\_”, bidi category “L” (strong left to right)

0001 04A0 - 0001 04A9

## Bibliography

- [s.n.]. 1971. **ህፍረት ጽሑፍ ህፃናዊ ክብሩ ህፍረት ጽሑፍ: ህፃናዊ ክብሩ ህፃናዊ ክብሩ ህፃናዊ ክብሩ**. *MS557: ስጦታዊ ህፃናዊ ጽሑፍ ህፃናዊ ክብሩ*. Xamar: [Afkeenna iyo fartiisa: buug koowaad (‘Our language and its handwriting: book one’). Xamar: Goosanka afka iyo suugaanta Soomaalida.]
- Cerulli, Enrico. 1932. “Tentativo indigeno di formare un alfabeto somalo”, in *Oriente Moderno* 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’alfabeto ‘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

In N1948 I have samples from Nakanishi 1990, Gaur 1990, and Gregerson 1977. At the end of this document, I attach a selection of pages from *Afkeenna iyo fartiisa*.

Row 104: OSMANYA

	1048	1049	104A
0	ø	ŋ	o
1	ɥ	ɓ	ʃ
2	ɔ	ɓ	ɛ
3	l	ɥ	ɸ
4	ɱ	ɔ	ø
5	ɸ	ɛ	ɛ
6	o	s	y
7	ɹ	l	j
8	ɓ	ɓ	c
9	ɔ	ɥ	u
A	ɔ	ɹ	
B	ɥ	ɓ	
C	ɸ	ɱ	
D	ɥ	ɱ	
E	ɸ		
F	ɥ		

G = 00  
P = 01

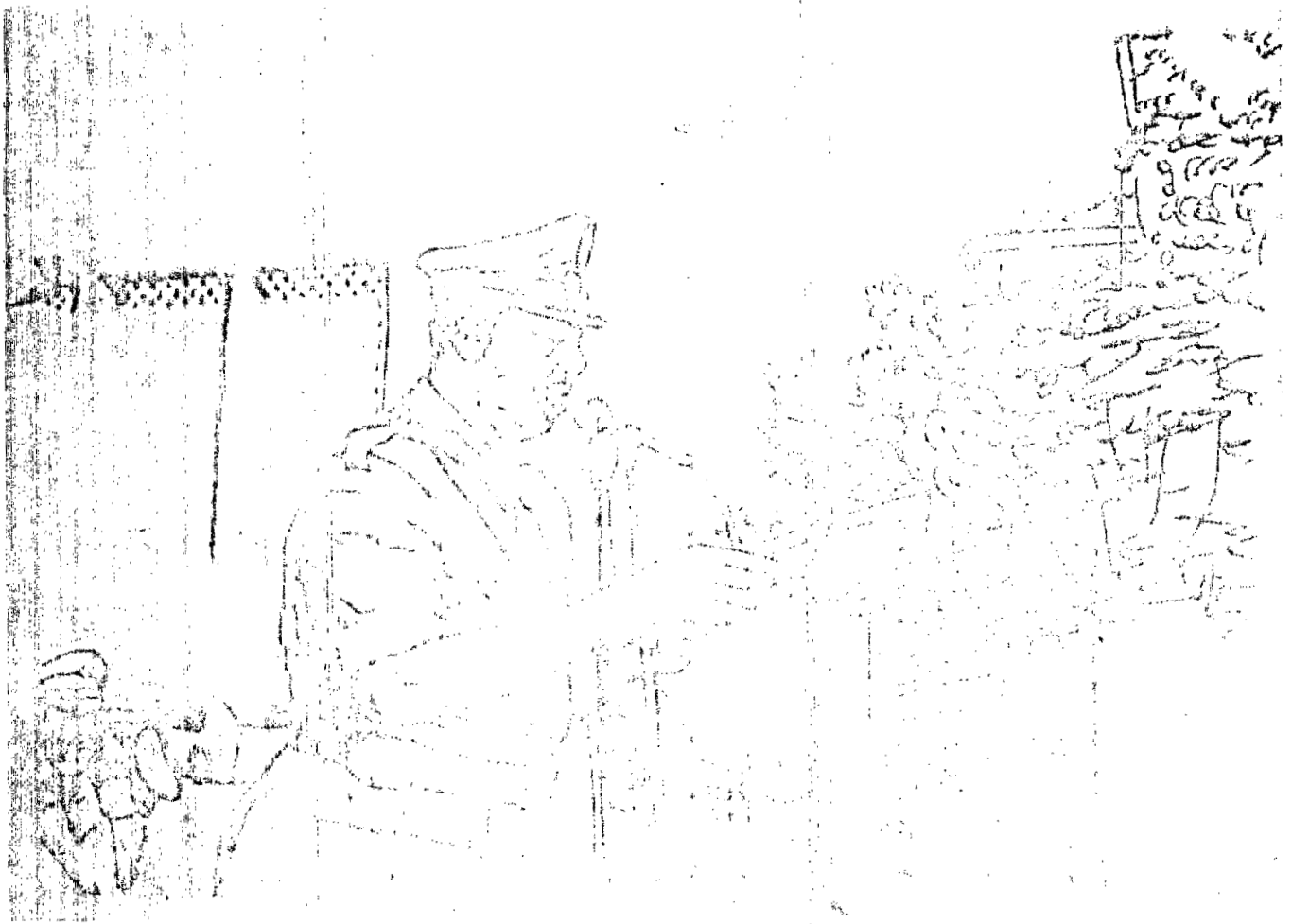




1988, 55920400 55MS560 89890 45776

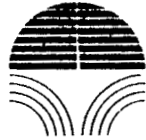
in OSOYS 844949258585

*Jaalle, ammaanduule Maxamed Siyaad Barre oo dadka guubaabinahaya*  
*'Chief of staff Maxamed Siyaad Barre speaking to the people'*

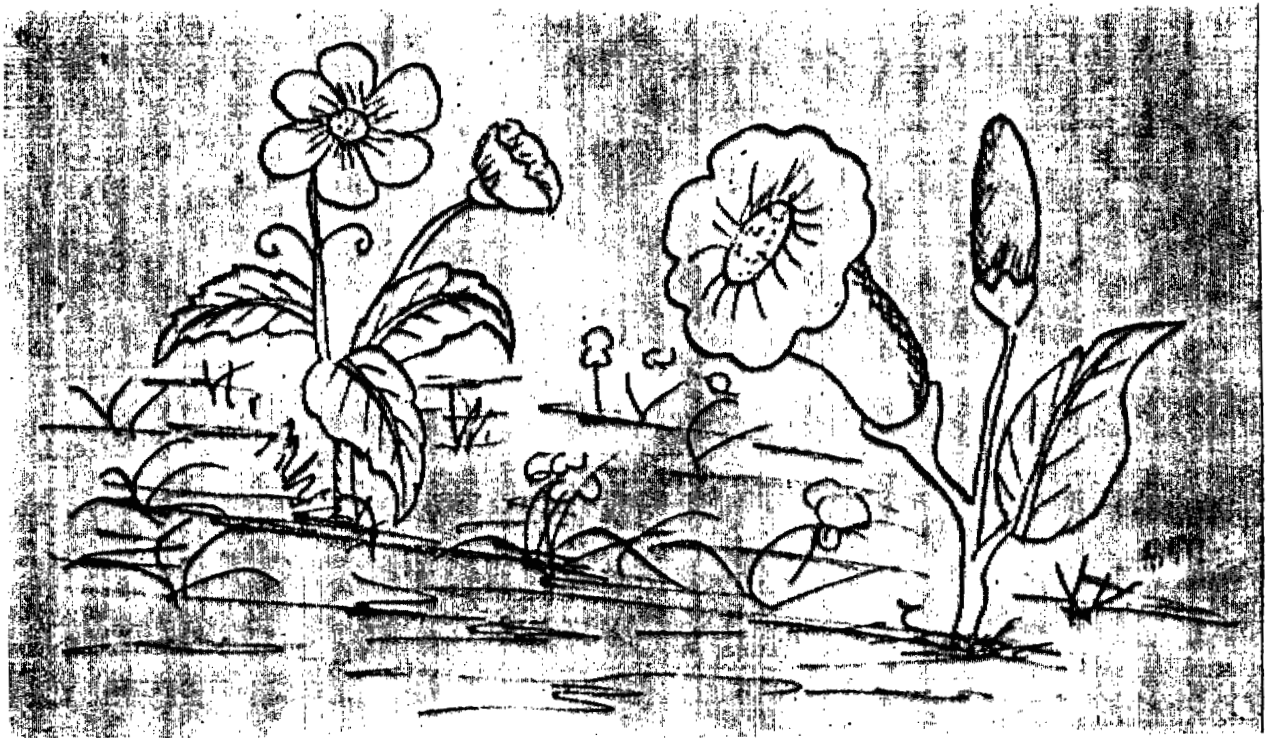


ճ ճ ճ ճ ճ

ճԿՏՄ ճՆ ճ ճճԿՆՆ ԿճԶՕճՆ  
ճճԿԿԿ ճԿՏՄ ճՆՏՄ



ճԿՏՄՏ ճ ՆՆ . ճճԿՆՆՏ ԿճԴ  
ճճՕՕՏՏՏ ԿՆԶ . ՕճԿԿՏ ԿճՆՆՆ .



ճԿՏՄ

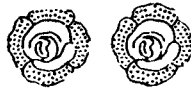


- 8 -



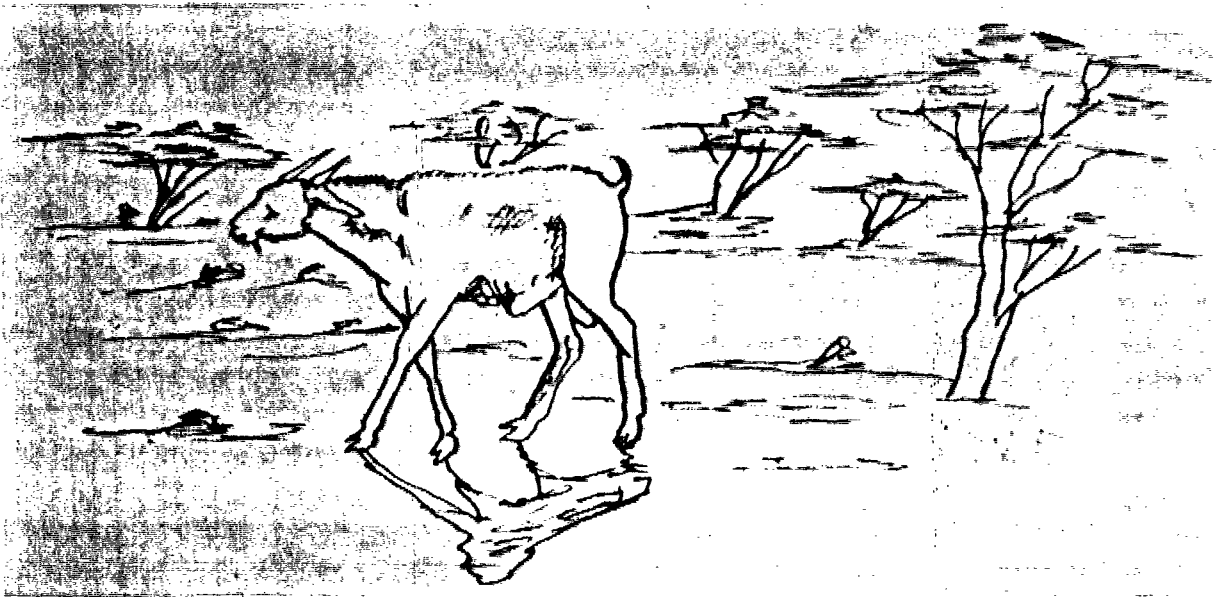
ከ ከ ከ ከ ከ

ከ 0 5 8    ጸ ከ 7 ከ 8 ከ    ከ 0 ከ 0    ከ 2 4 ከ 0



ከ 7 8 9    8 5 7 .    ከ 0 5 8    ጸ ከ 0 5 2 .

ሄ 5 0 6 9    ጸ ከ 7 ከ 8 ከ . ከ 2 4 ከ 0    9 8 ከ    ጸ 0 ከ 0 .



ከ 7 8 9



- 58 -

7 7 7 7 7

7Sፄ 7Sፄፄ ሃገ ሄS7Sፄ. 7ሠ7

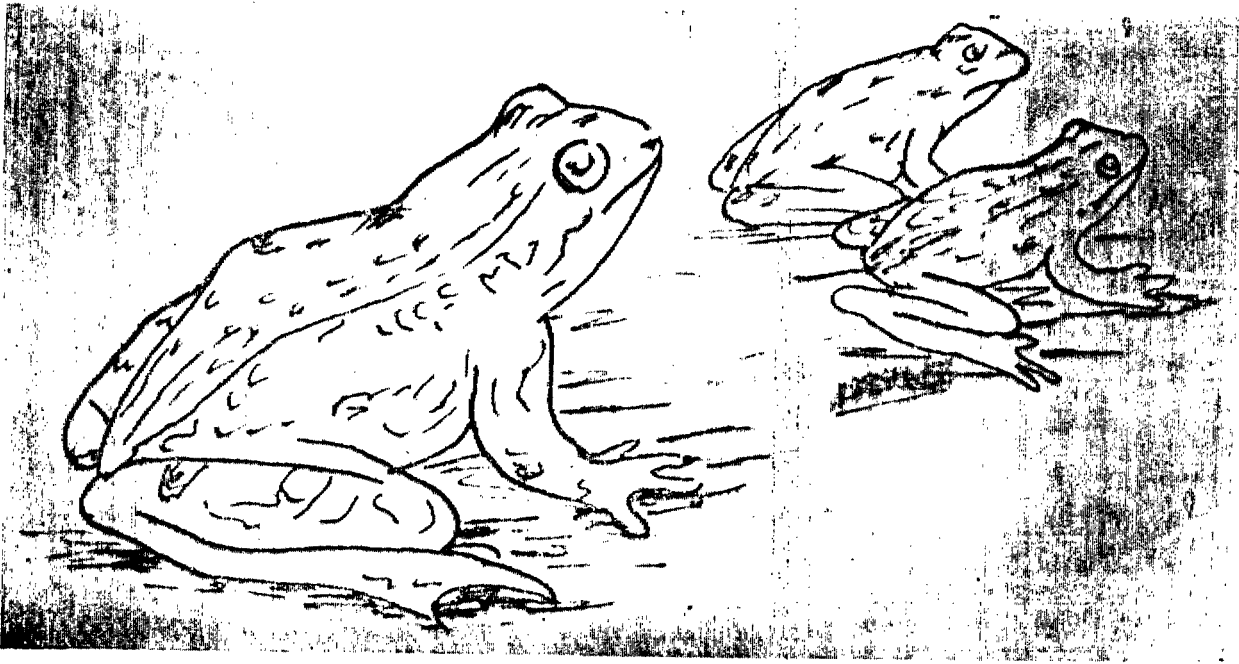
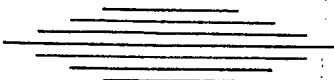
ጸኅ7ፄፄ 9ፄገ 7ሠ7 ፄፄጸ9.

7ገፄ 9ፄገ ሄሠፄ9 ሃSፄS 7ፄ0

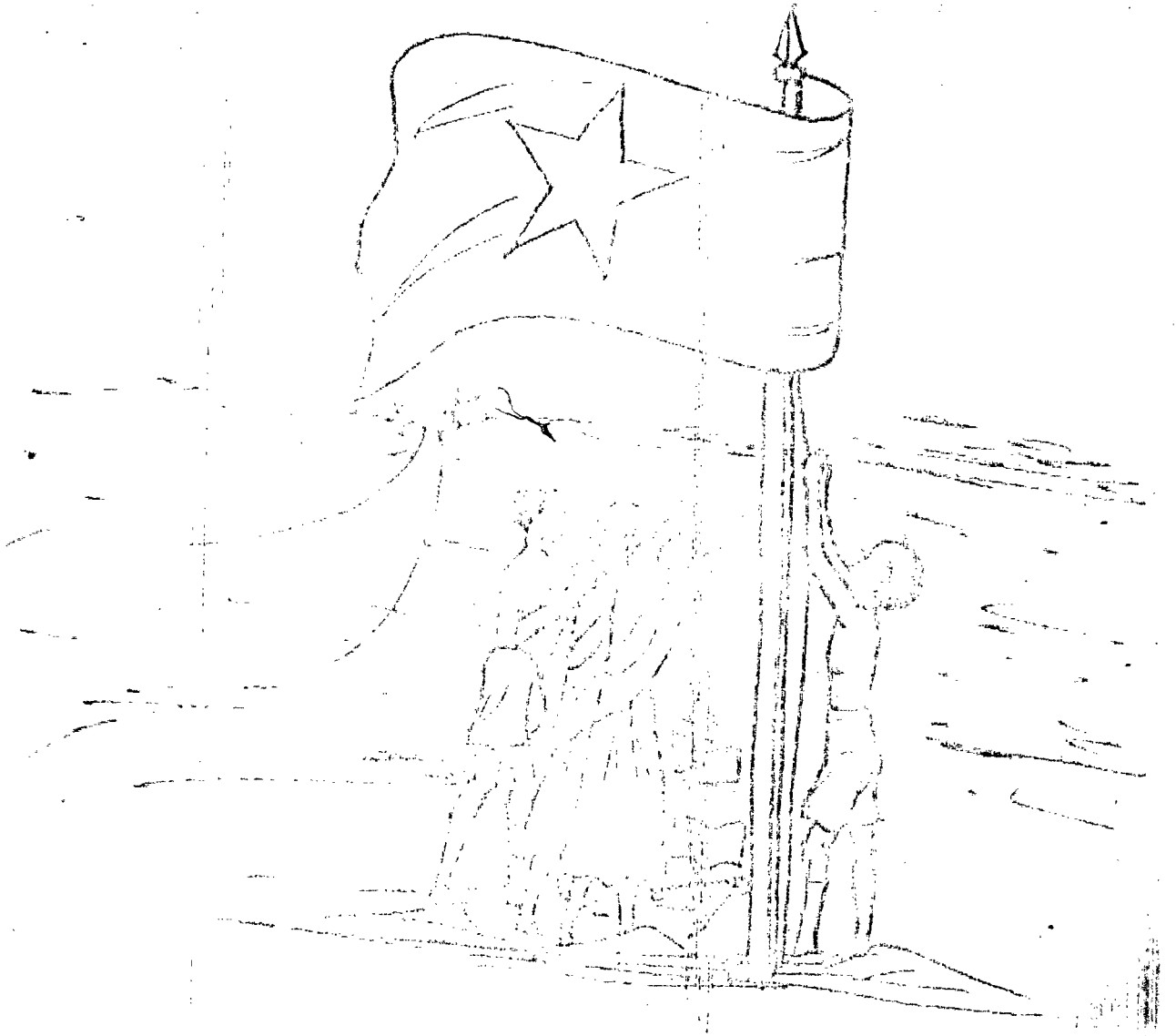
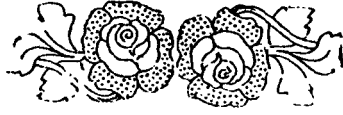
ፄፄፄ 7Sገ 9ፄገ 7Sፄፄ0. 7ፄፄS

9ፄገ 0ገፄS7.

ፄSፄ7S00SፄSፄ ሄS7SፄSፄፄSፄ.







8050LS 987 222H25USF 94

Տ 7 Մ Տ Մ Տ 7 Ա Կ Ա Ձ

Յոնեգոնցոյ ԿԳ ԵՂՆԳՁ ԵՏՄ ՏԸ, ԳՆՆԳՁՁԳԵՏՕՏՕՏՏ  
ԿԳ ԿԱ ԿԳՁՎԳ. ԵՏՆԳՆՏ ԿՏՅՎՏ ԿՏՄՏՑ ԿԱ  
ՆԱՕՏԵՏՑ ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕ ՏԵՏ ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕՑԻ. ԿԱԿԱՕՏ  
ԿԳՆԿՏ ԿԱՑՁ ԿՏՄԳ ԿՏ ԵԳՕ ՏԸ Տ 7 Մ Տ Մ Տ 7 Ա Կ Ա Ձ.



ԵԱՆՏԵՏ ՆԱՂԱ Ա 7 Ա 7 Ն ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕԿՏ ՏՑԳ Ա  
ԿՑ 7 Տ Ձ. ԿՏՄԳ ՆՊՆԱ Ա 7 Ա 7 Գ ԳՁ ԱՄՄԼ  
ՆԱՂԱ ՆԿԻՄՄՏՁԳՕՆ, ՏԵՏ ԿՏՄ ՆԱՂԱ  
ՄՏ 7 ՎՆ. ԵՂՆԳՁԿՏ ԳՁ ԵՏՑՑՏՁ ԵԱՆՏՑ  
ՅԱՄՕԳՁ ԿՏՄՏՑ ՅԱՄՕԳՁ ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕԿՏ.  
ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕԿԱ ԿԱՄԿ ԿՏ ԵՄԱՍՑԳ ԵՂՆԳՁԿՏ  
ՆՎ ՏՏՁ, 7 ՏՆ ԳՑՆ ՕՂԵՏ 7 Մ Տ. ԵՏՅԳԻԳՕՑՕՏՕՏ  
Յոնեգոնցոյ ԵՄՕՕԳՆՊՕԿՏ ՆՊՆՏ ՆՂՂՆՆՆ.  
ԵՏՄԳ ՆՊՆԱ ՕՑՕՏԵՏՑԳ?

- 48 -

simidda furayaasha 'vowels'  
gaaggaab 'short'; dheerdheer 'long'

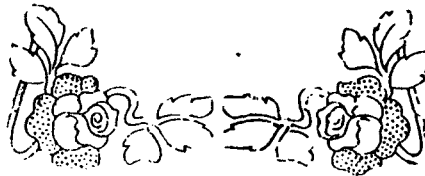
፩፱፻፱፬፮ ህገ፲፮፻፳፮

ጸ፻ጸጸ፻፵

፱ : ፱	ሀ : ሀ	ሀ : ሀ	ከ : ከ	ሐ : ሐ
09797	ሀሀ	ሀሀ	ከከ	ሐሐ
09797	ሀሀ	ሀሀ	ከከ	ሐሐ

ገ፲፲፲፲፲

፩ : ፩	ሀ : ሀ	፩ : ፩	ከ : ከ	ከ : ከ
080	ሀሀ	፩፩	ከከ	ከከ
080	ሀሀ	፩፩	ከከ	ከከ

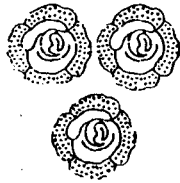


- 9ኪ -

adaygga xarfaha 'geminaton?'

S O S ጆ ጸ ጸ S ጠ S ፕ ህ S ሄ S

b	ሄ	ዐ	ፕ	ቤ	l
xabad	ጠSሄSO	ጸፍዐኪ	ሄSፕኪ	ህSቤSጆ	falay
xabbad	ጠSሄሄSO	ጸፍዐዐኪ	ሄSፕፕኪ	ህSቤቤSጆ	fallay
g	ጸ	ጆ	ኃ	ጊ	n
xuuga	ጠጸጸጸS	ፍጆጊ	Sኃኅፕ	ዘጊጊSጆ	keenay
xuugga	ጠጸጸጸጸS	ፍጆጆጊ	Sኃኃኅፕ	ዘጊጊጊSጆ	keennay



ጠSሄሄSO ጠSሄSO ዘገ ጌSሄOSጆ . ጸፍዐOSOS ጸፍዐኪ .  
 ሄSፕS OSፕህጠO ሄSፕፕSOS ሄSጊህኪ . ኪSMፍጊ  
 ህSቤSጆሄS ህSቤቤSጆ .  
 ጠጸጸጸጸS OSቤዘገ ሄS ጠጸጸጸኪ . ፍጆጊ ኪSጊፍጸጆSጊ  
 ፍጆኪ ፍጆጆጊ ኪSሄSጊ .  
 Sኃኅፕዘጆ Sኃኃኅፕ ሄኪ ጌፍጸSጆ . ፍጆSጸገ ሄፍጆኪ  
 ዘጊጊSጆ, ፍጆጊጊS ሄፍጆጊ ዘጊጊጊSጆ.





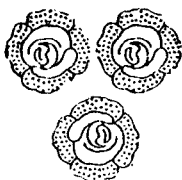


- 44 -

## Iambarrada soomaalida 'Somali numbers'

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

rug 0	ገለጺ (ጸጠኞ)	0	ዓረፍ	፩ shan 5
koow 1	አጠኝ	1	አጠኝ	፪ lix 6
labo 2	ሁለት	2	ሁለት	፫ toddoba 7
saddex 3	ሶስት	3	ሶስት	፬ siddeed 8
afar 4	አራት	4	አራት	፭ sagaal 9



toban 10	አስት	10	አስት	፮ lixdan 60
labaatan 20	አስተ	20	አስተ	፯ toddobaatan 70
soddon 30	አስተ	30	አስተ	፰ siddeetan 80
afartan 40	አስተ	40	አስተ	፱ sagaashan 90
konton 50	አስተ	50	አስተ	፲ boqol 100

- 40 -

ԵՏԻՏՆՈՅՏՈՒ ԳՑԻ ԶԶԶԶ (Տ)

ԿԳ ՄՏԿԿԳԴՏ ՏԷ ՄԳ ԿՏՄԳ ԳՑԻ ԶԶԶԶ  
ԵՏԻՏՆՈՅՏՈՒ ԳՑԻ ԶԶԶԶ.

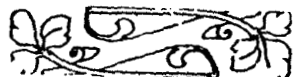
ԶԶԶԶԶԶ : ԿՏԿ ԵՏՄԳՕ ԿՏՄ Ի  
ՎՏԶՆՏԶԿԱՆՕՈՒՆ ?

ԵՏԻՏՆՈՅՏՈՒ : ԳԶՎԳԶ ԶԻՆՏԵՄՏԵ ԿՏՄՄՏ  
ԿԳԶԶԵՄՏԵՑԻ. ԿՏՄԳ ԿՏՄ  
ՎՏԶՆՏ ԿԳՄՆՑ ԿՏԶԿ ՏԷ ՏԵՏ  
ՅՏՄԻՆ ՏԷ.

ԶԶԶԶԶԶ : ԵՏՕՕԱ ԵԳՎՏԶ ԿԳ ՄՏԿԿԳԴՏ.  
ՆԻՄԿՎՆ ՏՄԳԿԿ ԵՏԿՕՆ ԶԳ ԿԳ  
ՄՏՆՆՏԶԴԳՕՏՑ ԳԶԳՕՏԶ ԿՏԶԿ  
ՏԵՏ ՅՏՄԻՆ ԶԻՃԻՆԶՕՄԶԶ ?

ԵՏԻՏՆՈՅՏՈՒ : ԶԳ ՏԶԳՆՏ ՆԻՄԿՎՆ ԳԶ ԿՏԶԿՄՄԻ  
ԿՏՄ ԵՏՑ ՅՆՆԵ. ՏՕԳՆԻ ԵԳՕ  
ԶՏՅՏՎԳՕ ԻՄ ԿԱԿԳՆՏ ԿՆԶՎԳՕ.

ԶԶԶԶԶԶ : ՏԶԳՆԻ ՕԻՄՆՆՑ ԿԳ ՆՆՆՆՆՆՆՆՆ,  
ԿՏՄՆՏ ԿԳ ԿՏՆՆՆՆՆՆ,  
ՏՄԳԿՎՆՆՆ ԿԳ ԶՏՆՎԳ ԻՄ  
ԿՏՆՆՆՆՆՆ ԿՆԶԳ.



- 30 -

5545808506 98ክ 99229 (8)

5545808509ይ 5497ሐይ ሣኑ ጸገጠላይ . ኅገጠሣ  
 ለ ሐሌሌ 9922908. ኅገ ሣ578ሌይ . ኅገጠሣ ለ  
 ሐ.979 ጸኅሣይ 92 ሣ57ኅገጠሣ ጠጠላይ ጠ  
 ኅገጠ ለ580852 ጸገጠሣ ኅገጠ ጠሣ ጸይላ .

ኅገጠሣ ላይሣይ 92ኅ ገጠጠሣ ጠሣጠሣ.  
 ጸይ ሐሌ ኅገጠሣ ኅገ ለ ጸይጸይላይ . ጠጠሣ  
 ለ ጠሣጠሣ ሣኑ ላይ ላይሣይ . ላይሣይ ሣኑ  
 ጸይላ ለ 9908. ጠ ገጠጠሣ ጠሣጠሣ ጠጠሣ  
 ለ ሣጠሣ. 98508 ሣኑ ሣይ7 ለ ጠጠሣ ጠ  
 ጸገጠሣ ለ ጠሣጠሣ .

9922908 ኅገጠሣ ሐ.979 ጸኅሣይ 92 ኅገጠ  
 ለ5808529 ኅገጠሣ ጠሣጠ ሣጠ ጠጠሣ ጸኅሣ  
 ለሣጠ ለ58049 .





**Founder of Osmanian Script**

**Osman Yusuf Keenadiid**