Title: Proposal for New
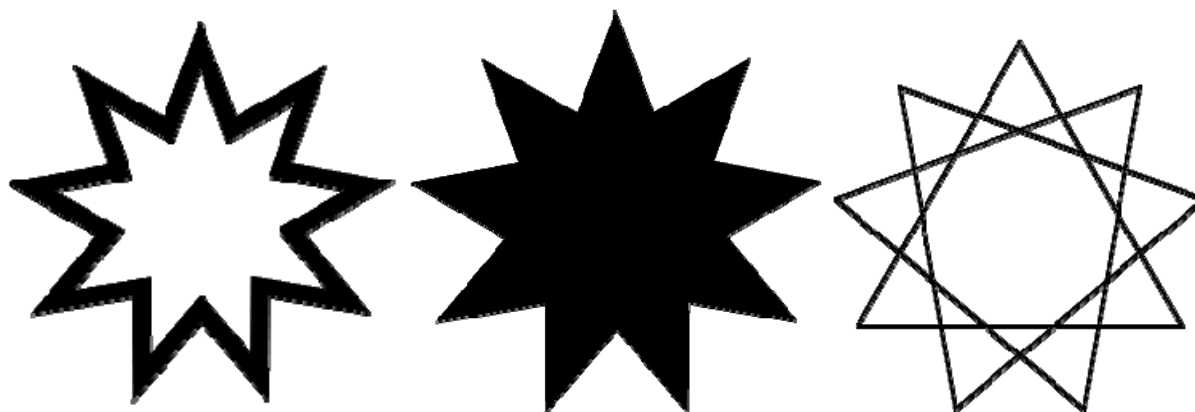Character **Submitter:** Adib
Behjat, Joop Kiefte **Date:** March
26, 2020
Additional references: This document replaces L2/17-237 (Emoji Submission)

Proposal to add Nine Pointed star to Unicode

Public Domain:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bahai_star.svg
and https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Star_polygon_9-3.svg

Introduction

The purpose of this proposal is to request that a codepoint be allocated in the UCS for the nine pointed star character, which is commonly used by members of the Bahá'í Faith.

In Baha'i Literature, different forms of stars were used that are not standardized from one publishing to another (examples below). The presence of the nine pointed star will help standardize across the different publications. Adding to that, for religions lacking a representation of their place of worship, it is suggested to use the Place of Worship emoji with the representing symbol of their faith, of which there are exactly none feasible at the moment.

In terms of Unicode, the Nine Pointed Star is one of the most common symbols of the Bahá'í Faith, specifically the most distinctive one other than maybe the Ringstone Symbol (which would be extremely less universally usable), and it would help provide a near complete lineup of religions of the world; currently, there are many religious symbols supported via the Unicode standard - including Jewish (Star of David), Christian, Muslim (Star and Crescent), Sikh, Buddhists, and Wiccan (five pointed star).

The nine pointed star will also introduce a popular star character to the list of available stars in Unicode.

Naming convention

NINE POINTED STAR is a widely accessible and commonly used term for the symbol provided. It follows the same naming standard as other available stars in the unicode (number of points - form of the star - color).

✴	U+2734	Eight Pointed Black **Star**
✵	U+2735	Eight Pointed Pinwheel **Star**
✶	U+2736	Six Pointed Black **Star**
✷	U+2737	Eight Pointed Rectilinear Black **Star**
✸	U+2738	Heavy Eight Pointed Rectilinear Black **Star**
✹	U+2739	Twelve Pointed Black **Star**

If the committee wishes to distinguish between filled and unfilled star, then the term:
- NINE POINTED STAR can be used for the filled nine pointed star.
- NINE POINTED STAR OUTLINED can be used for the unfilled nine pointed star.
- NINE POINTED STAR REGULAR COMPOUND can be used for the three overlapping triangles. The naming is also in line with the mathematical naming convention (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enneagram_(geometry)).

Note that most common usage of the star in Bahá'í context uses an outline version, although this is not prescribed in any way.

In terms of placement, the nine pointed star should ideally be added to the current lineup of religious symbols or stars. In practical terms this would for example imply receiving the same treatment as the other symbols with a religious meaning as to being rendered as an emoji in instant messaging context. This would also enable the rendering of a symbol for a Bahá'í House of Worship, of which there are a growing number in the world.

Religious symbols have been placed in different blocks, including Miscellaneous Symbols (2600 - 26FF), Dingbats (2700 - 27BF), and Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs (1F300 - 1F5FF).

For the purpose of this proposal, I have recommended that the nine pointed star be placed in the *Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs* block. However, I will leave it to the committee's opinion on the best placement for this symbol.

History

The nine pointed star is also one of the most used symbols and shapes by the adherents of the members of The Bahá'í Faith. The Bahá'í Faith is a religion that was founded by its prophet Baha'u'llah in 1863. There are over 7 million Bahá'í adherents worldwide[1], and Bahá'í institutions are recognized by many governments in the world - including the United States (https://www.bahai.us/) and European Union (http://www.eprid.eu/members/bahai-international-community/). Bahá'ís also participate in political administrations, such as the United Nations (https://www.bic.org/offices/united-nations), providing insight and perspective towards achieving world unity through discourses that promote the betterment of mankind.

Given the growth of followers of the Bahá'í Faith year over year, and the prominence of the Bahá'í Faith around the world, the availability of the Bahá'í icon would be significant to practicing Bahá'ís around the world.

In a non-Baha'i context, the nine pointed star is a common mathematical shape that consists of three intersecting triangles. The nine pointed star is also called a Nonagram, Enneagram, or Star of Goliath. In pop-culture, the nine pointed star also represents the band Slipknot, where they use the regular compound 9 pointed star figure as a symbol (image on right).

Significance of Nine in the Baha'i Faith

Shoghi Effendi, Central Figure and the Guardian of the Baha'i Administration from 1921 until His passing in 1957, gave significant commentary to the significance of the number 9, which Baha'is represent as 9 pointed star. In a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, he clearly explains that there are three reason for the significance of the number nine:

> *First, regarding the significance of the number nine: Its importance as a symbol used so often in various connections by the believers lies in three facts: first, it symbolizes the nine great world religions of which we have any definite historical knowledge, including the Babi and Baha'i Revelations; second, it represents the number of perfection, being the highest single number; third, it is the numerical value of the word 'Bahá'.*

---

[1] Pew Research Center# states "The Baha'i faith began in Persia (now Iran) in the 19th century. Bahá'ís are widely dispersed across many countries, with significant populations in India, the United States, Kenya and elsewhere." Adherents.com# (2005) statistics are: 7 million Bahá'ís around the world, ranking as the 13th largest global religion.

(Lights of Guidance, From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, July 9, 1939)

Shoghi Effendi's reference to the "numerical value of the word 'Bahá'" in the quotation is based on the Abjad numeral system, a system based on Arabic, Hebrew and other semetic languages dating back to before the 8th Century. In this system, each letter of the alphabet represents a number, so the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, alif, is used to represent the number '1'; the second letter, bā', is used to represent the number '2', and so on.

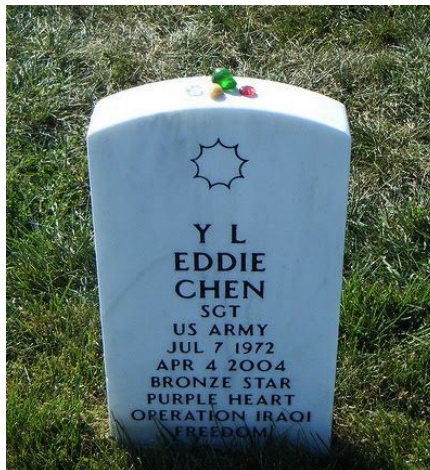This is clarified in another letter to a Baha'i believer by Shoghi Effendi:

> *In the Semitic languages—both Arabic and Hebrew—every letter of the alphabet had a numerical value, so instead of using figures to denote numbers they used letters and compounds of letters. Thus every word had both a literal meaning and also a numerical value. This practice is no more in use but during the time of Baha'u'llah and the Bab it was quite in vogue among the educated classes, and we find it very much used in the Bayan. As the word Baha also stood for the number nine it could be used interchangeably with it.*
> (Lights of Guidance, From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, February 19, 1932)

Use of Nine pointed Star

When searching for the term "Bahá'í", the presence of the nine-pointed star cannot be disregarded. The symbol is used widely in different areas of life, including - but not limited to - literature, architecture, gravestones, signage, and websites (for example, https://bahaiteachings.org/ uses the nine pointed symbol in its logo).

Baha'i star used on gravestone markers

Baha'i star used as signage for Baha'i Centers

9 pointed star on the dome of the Chicago Bahá'í Temple along with the Greatest Name Ligature

Bahá'í Temple in India - Aerial View - nine pointed star represented

Bahá'í Publishing Logo (US Trademark Office: Serial Number 72221623)

Nine Pointed Star in Bahá'í Literature

Currently, the governing institution of the Bahá'í Faith employs the five-pointed star and nine-pointed star in its Holy Writings and literature to define characters similar to a comma or period.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of the nine-pointed star, digital versions of Bahá'í Literature have to resort to employing the asterisk in place of the star. For example, In this Persian *Hidden Words* example, the asterisk is utilized as a full-stop/period. (http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/PHW/phw-66.html):
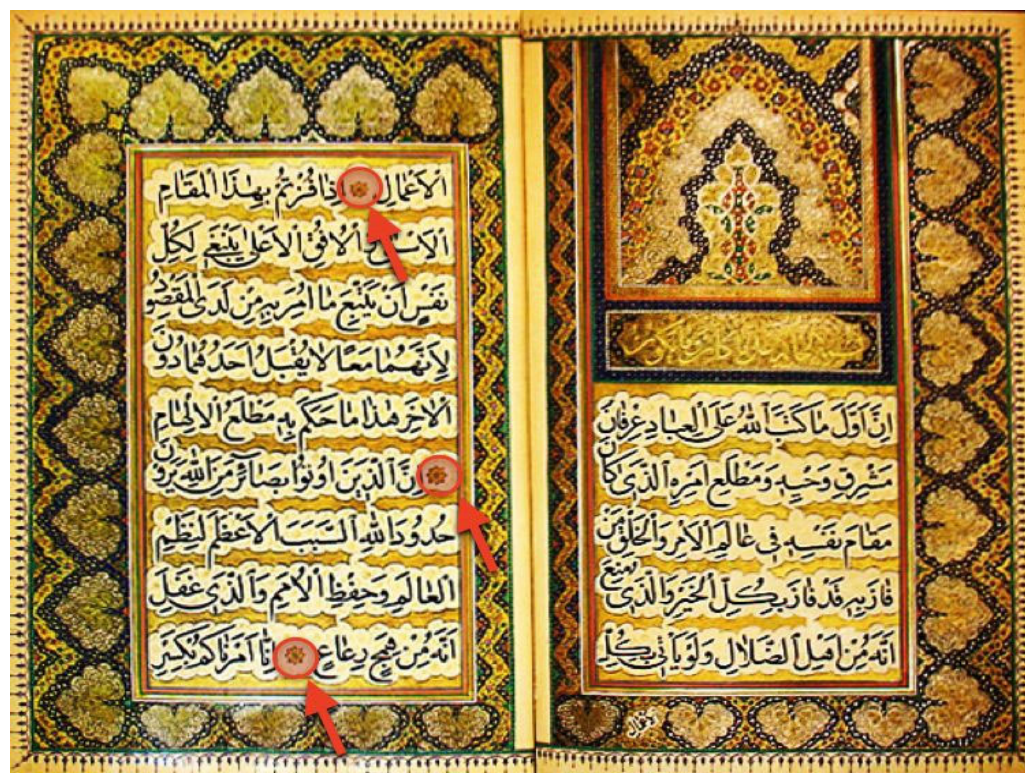
The presence of those 'stars' are common in the Baha'i Writings, including in the Baha'is Most Holy Book, Kitab-i-Aqdas (highlighted with circle):

Given the example above, when published, the stars were replaced with an equivalent star symbol that was available in the rotary press. The following represents an example of the Kitab-i-Aqdas published in 1899, where the stars are best reflected with what was available available:

.

٢ ١

O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants, and the keys of My mercy for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the Will of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-Merciful have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness.

Say: From My laws the sweet-smelling savour of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks. The Tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words: "Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty." Happy is the lover that hath inhaled the divine fragrance of his Best-Beloved from these words, laden with the perfume of a grace which no tongue can describe. By My life! He who hath drunk the choice wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favour will circle around My commandments that shine above the Dayspring of My creation.

Continued...

الاعمال ٭ اذا فزتم بهذا المقام الاسنى
والافق الاعلى ينبغى لكل نفس ان
يتبع ما امر به من لدى المقصود لانهما
معاً لا يقبل احدهما دون الأخر هذا
ماحكم به مطلع الالهام ٭ ان الذين
اوتوا بصآئر من الله يرون حدودالله
السبب الاعظم لنظم العالم وحفظ الامم
والذى غفل انه من همج رعاع ٭ انا
امرناكم بكسر حدودات النفس والهوى

Due to lack of standardization, other publications used different forms of the star. The image on the right demonstrates a different star being used than what was published in the 1899 edition.

١٢٥

بسلطان عظيم ٭ اياكم ان يمنعكم
ما نزّل فى الكتاب عن هذا الكتاب
الذى ينطق بالحق انه لا اله الا انا
العزيز الحميد ٭ انظروا بعين الانصاف
الى من اتى من سمآء المشية
والاقتدار ولا تكونن من الظالمين
ثم اذكروا ماجرى من قلم مبشرى
فى ذكر هذا الظهور و ما ارتكبه
اولو الطغيان فى ايامه الا انهم من

Baha'i News Paper and Journals

Since about 1922 the symbol of the 9 pointed star saw more and more use in printed publications, with evidence of it being hand-drawn, designed into ornate shapes, or even transformed into computer image where possible.

In "Star of the West" Baha'i Magazine, Volume 13, the following designs were used significantly (link to Archives: http://starofthewest.info/**)**

What is the solution? In a democracy of mixed and hostile religions, only a new harmonizing and universal religion can heal the breach and make spiritual training a welcome part of public education.

In the Bahai world of the future the mind, the soul, and the spirit will be trained together. And the higher up one goes in education, the more spiritual will may consciously realize that he is a brother to all mankind, irrrespective of religion or race. The thoughts of universal peace must be instilled in the hearts of all scholars. The mothers in the homes, the teachers in the school, the professors in the colleges, the presidents in the universities must teach these ideals to the young from the cradle to the years of manhood."

IN ANATOLIA 237

eth. The peoples of the earth dwell therein and spend a number of days uselessly, ultimately descending beneath the dust, repairing to the home of eternal silence leaving behind them no achievement, no blessing, no result, no fruit. All the days of their life are thus brought to naught: whereas the child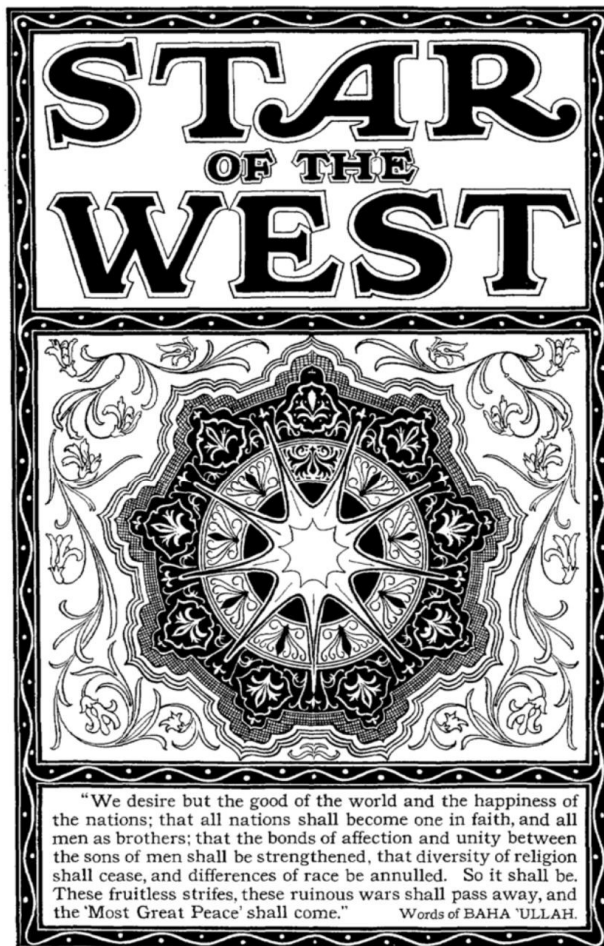ren of the Kingdom sow seeds in the fertile soil of Truth that will eventually spring up and bring forth many a harvest and shall forever bestow upon mankind its increase and bountiful grace. They shall obtain eternal life, attain unto the imperishable bounty and shine even as radiant stars in the firmament of the Divine Kingdom. The Glory of Glories rest upon you."

July 1966 U.S. Baha'i News with the 9 pointed star

U. S. SUPPLEMENT

✳ Bahá'í® News

No. 101   BAHA'I YEAR 123   JULY 1966

Door-to-Door Campaigns Clarified by Universal House of Justice

The Canadian *Bahá'í News* has published the following article in the March issue, following their consultation with the Universal House of Justice:

"The National Spiritual Assembly has now had an opportunity to consult with the Universal House of Justice on the subject of door-to-door presentation of

door-to-door, the Guardian's statement (Oct. 20, 1956) quite clearly prohibits such a practice: 'He feels that to distribute Bahá'í pamphlets from door-to-door . . . is undignified and might create a bad impression of the Faith. No doubt, it is the eagerness and devotion of the friends that led them to make this proposal, but he does

An ornate 9 pointed star for one of the series of "Star of the West"

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith, and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened, that diversity of religion shall cease, and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be. These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."   Words of BAHA 'ULLAH.
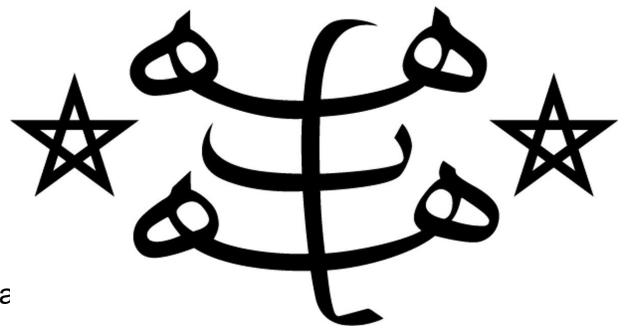
Other Bahá'í Symbols

For completeness and in line with how religious symbols and textual elements are handled so far in Unicode, we list some more frequently used Arabic Ligatures used in the Bahá'í faith as representing (elements of) the religion. It could be imagined to file for adding these symbols individually at some later point as they follow a similar pattern as similar existing code points, but they are not as essential.

Ringstone Symbol

The Baha'i Ringstone Symbol is a calligraphic form of the Arabic spelling of *Bahá* (بهاء) and two five pointed stars combined to be a visual representation of core Bahá'í concepts. It's frequently used e.g. on the title page of a book, on headstones and on jewelry. Using this symbol as a representation of the Bahá'í faith is possible and has been done, but less commonly so than using the nine pointed star.

The first level represents the world of God, the Crea Arabic letter 'Ha' connected to one another:

The second level represents the world of His Manifestations. In the Baha'i Faith, Manifestations of God are the Prophets of religions, including Jesus Christ, Moses, Abraham, Krishna, Muhammad, the Bab, Baha'u'llah, etc. The level is represented with the base of the Arabic letter

"Ba":

The third level represents the world of man (humanity), represented with the same symbol of for the World of God:

The vertical line (which is the second level, transposed ninety degrees clockwise) that joins the three horizontal levels together represent the Divine Messengers of God, which form the link between the world of God and the world of man.
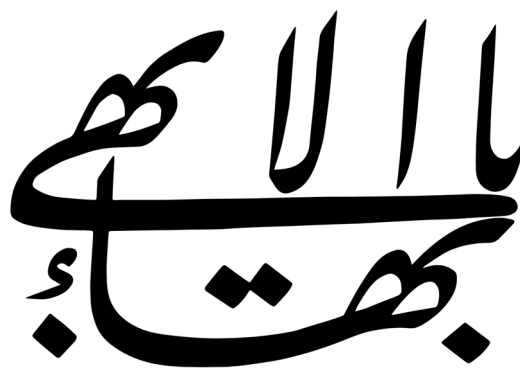
Ringstone symbol placed on the Shrine of the Bab (Haifa)

Ringstone symbol used on the ring

The Greatest Name (Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá)

The Greatest Name ligature is a commonly used representation of the expression "Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá", an invocation meaning: "O Thou Glory of Glories!". Usage of this symbol is generally limited to places with high reverence. It would be inappropriate to use this symbol instead of the nine pointed star or Ringstone symbol to represent the Bahá'í faith casually.

A very similar example currently available in Unicode to Greatest Name is the Arabic Ligature for Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahou Alayhe Wasallam (ﷺ) - unicode value U+FDFA.

The Greatest Name Ligature can be found in Baha'i Houses of Worship and framed in Baha'i households. In the case of Bahá'í Houses of Worship, it's common to see the name fitted in a nine pointed star that corresponds to the commonly nine sided form of the building.

Within the Baha'i community and in few Baha'i literature, the Greatest Name ligature is used in the start of a document. Similar to � ligature which is used in the Holy Quran to indicate the start of a prayer, decree, or a statement.

For example, in a Baha'i Will, a will must begin with the Greatest Name ligature, before writing their Will.

National Convention of the Bahá'ís of North East Africa, Cairo, Egypt, April 1958, attended by Hand of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí.

Image: A framed variation of the Greatest Name ligature held by a member of the Baha'i Faith

Demand

This proposal is an individual proposal not brought forward by any Bahá'í organization specifically, out of the perceived lack of the symbol further explained earlier in this document.

With the presence of Unicode standards and symbols, members of the Baha'i Faith will have a common star standard for their literature and have an appropriate way to mark religious affairs like places of worship in line with the other already represented religions, as there is no existing symbol that could work for this appropriately so far.

ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 2
PROPOSAL SUMMARY FORM TO ACCOMPANY SUBMISSIONS
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE OF ISO/IEC 10646[1]
Please fill all the sections A, B and C below.
Please read Principles and Procedures Document (P & P) from http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/principles.html **for**
guidelines and details before filling this form.
Please ensure you are using the latest Form from http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/summaryform.html **.**
See also http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/roadmaps.html **for latest *Roadmaps*.**

A. Administrative

1. Title: *Proposal to add Nine Pointed star to Unicode*

2. Requester's name: *Adib Behjat and Joop Kiefte*

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution): *Individual contribution*

4. Submission date: *March 26. 2020*

5. Requester's reference (if applicable):

6. Choose one of the following:

This is a complete proposal: *YES*

(or) More information will be provided later:

B. Technical – General

1. Choose one of the following:

a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters): *NO*

Proposed name of script:

b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block: *YES*

Name of the existing block: *Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs*

2. Number of characters in proposal: *3*

3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):

A-Contemporary ☐   B.1-Specialized (small collection) ☐   ✔ B.2-Specialized (large collection) ☐

C-Major extinct ☐   D-Attested extinct ☐   E-Minor extinct ☐

F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic ☐   G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols ☐

4. Is a repertoire including character names provided? *YES*

a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines"
in Annex L of P&P document? *YES*

b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review? *YES*

5. Fonts related:

a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?

The requester (Adib Behjat and Joop Kiefte)

b.   Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.):

Adib Behjat (abehjat@gmail.com)

6. References:

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

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

7. Special encoding issues:

Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input,
presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)? *NO*

8. Additional Information:

Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script
that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script.
Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour
information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default
Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization
related information. See the Unicode standard at http://www.unicode.org for such information on other scripts. Also
see Unicode Character Database (http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr44/) and associated Unicode Technical Reports
for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

C. Technical - Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? .... *NO*
   If YES explain

2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body,
   user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)? *YES*
   If YES, with whom? *No name, but received feedback from committee via docsubmit@unicode.org*
   If YES, available relevant documents: *Email titled "UTC Document Submission: Emoji Proposal - Baha'i 9 Pointed Star"*

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example:
   size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included? *YES*
   Reference: *Listed under section "History" and footnotes for links to data*

4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare) *Currently rare*
   Reference: *Section on "Nine Pointed Star in Bahá'í Literature"*

5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community? .... *YES*
   If YES, where? Reference: *Section on "Use of Nine Pointed Star"*

6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely
   in the BMP? *NO*
   If YES, is a rationale provided?
   If YES, reference:

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)? *YES*

8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing
   character or character sequence? *NO*
   If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
   If YES, reference:

9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either
   existing characters or other proposed characters? *NO*
   If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
   If YES, reference:

10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function)
    to, or could be confused with, an existing character? *NO*
    If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
    If YES, reference:

11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences? .... *NO*
    If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?
    If YES, reference:
    Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?
    If YES, reference:

12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as
    control function or similar semantics? *NO*
    If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)

13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility characters? .... *NO*
    If YES, are the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic characters identified?
    If YES, reference: