

Response to Unicode Technical Committee

From: [Charles Korankye, Adinkra Alphabet Encoding Committee]

Subject: Adinkra script

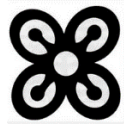
Date: August 20, 2021

ADINKRA ALPHABET

(Akan, Ewe, Ga and Dagbani)

a	b	c	d	e	f
g	h	i	j	k	l
m	n	o	p	q	r
s	t	u	v	w	x
y	z	ch	d	dz	ε
f	gb	y	kp	ny	ŋ
o	sh	ts	v	3	Y

Question 1: The proposed symbols are simplifications and alterations of the Adinkra symbols as usually found:



Bese Saka Adinkra symbol:

Adinkra alphabet V: 

Bese Saka appears quite different in appearance from “v”; how was the “v” shape determined.

Answer:

Please see page 7 of Adinkra Alphabet, Adinkra symbols as Alphabet and their Hidden Meanings in both the 3rd and 4th editions explain the rational for the ‘Symbol Letter Assignment’. “Letter assignments were based on the sound of the first letter of the symbol, the prominent vowel or consonant sound, shape of the Symbol or its meaning.”

Bese saka literally means sack of kola nuts. Below is a diagram of kola nuts. Besa saka symbol shows four nuts’ seeds tied at the center. The modified symbol of Bese Saka appears closest to the shape of the letter ‘V’ turned upside down. So, Bese Saka was assigned the letter ‘V’.

The first simplification of Bese saka shows one seed tied at the center. This was published in the first, second and Third Edition of Adinkra Alphabet book. In the final simplification of Bese saka published in the fourth edition of Adinkra Alphabet book, the oval shape at the base was dropped and made into a straight line and the lateral edges were straightened out for simplification and ease of handwriting.



Kola nuts:



First simplification of Bese saka:



Final simplification of Bese Saka:

Question 2: While the Adinkra symbols have been used in art, fabrics, pottery, and other media, their use today as an alphabet requires more evidence.

Q 2a: How many people are using the alphabet today? (Provide, if possible, statistics and source, such as governmental report)

Answer:

Adinkra script is used both in Ghana and Ivory Coast. The population of Ghana is 30 million and the population of Ivory Coast is 25 million making the potential usage of Adinkra script to be about 55 million people.

Q2b: How many people are using the script daily to write the language? (Provide statistics, if possible, and source)

Answer:

Below is a group of students at Adinkra Nola School in New Orleans, handwriting with Adinkra script

Located @

<https://www.facebook.com/AdinkraNOLA/photos/pcb.1806981066040024/1806979709373493>



Below is a writing with Adinkra script by a gentleman from Ivory Coast located @
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=3689751164412641&set=pcb.2907953602759806>



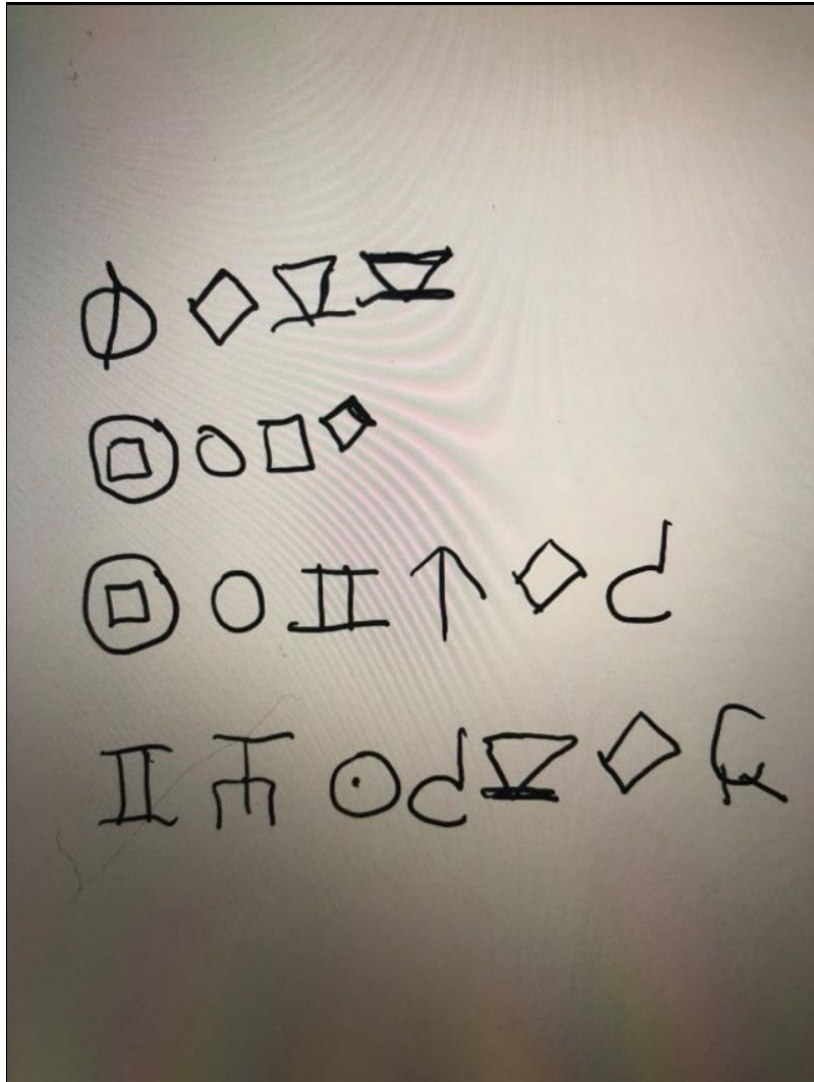
Below is a tattoo with Adinkra script located @
<https://www.facebook.com/Acarttattoostudio/photos/a.165710985186837/365377285220205/>



Reads: JOY

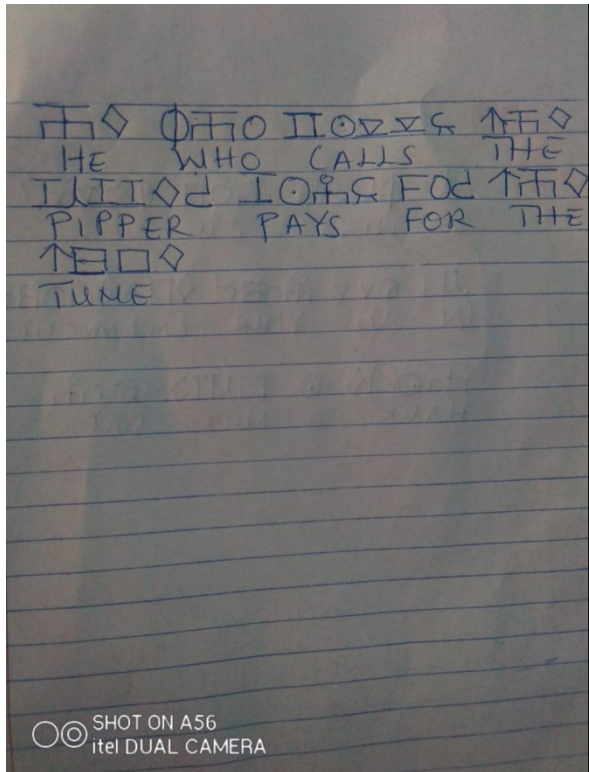
Below is handwriting with Adinkra script by one of our followers on Facebook located @

<https://www.facebook.com/adinkraalphabet/photos/a.1652873174991810/2739264616352655/>



Reads: Well done doctor Charles

Another handwriting with Adinkra script by another Facebook follower located @
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1218049958557599&set=a.386072565088680>



Q2c: Are there publications not produced by the script's creator?

Answer: No, but, there have been a few requests by Students and a professors to utilize some aspects of the Script in their dissertation work and their teaching materials.

Below is email request for use of Adinkra Alphabet for doctoral dissertation.

[Redacted]

Message: Dear Dr. Korankye,

Hello! I am writing this to request the copyrights for an image contained in your book, Adinkra Alphabet: The Adinkra Symbols as Alphabets & Their Hidden Meanings, 3rd edition, Kindle edition, 2017.

I would like to use symbol #40, Nkyinkyim, as part of my doctoral dissertation and teaching material. My dissertation supports my Doctor of Education in Higher Education Leadership degree and is titled "Creative Identity Development in the Design Classroom: A Three-cycle Action Research Study with Whole Creative People". I successfully defended my dissertation and hope to publish it by the end of July.

My dissertation research involved the support of holistic expression of creative identity in college students studying design. As part of my research, I introduced visual reflection activities into a portfolio website design class. I encouraged my student participants to consider images that represented their values, backgrounds and experiences in their initial reflective drawings. I wanted to provide examples that represented a diversity of cultures. I found your book and was struck by the multiple meanings conveyed by the Adinkra alphabet symbols. I chose the symbol Nkyinkyim (also included on your website, <https://www.adinkraalphabet.com/adinkra-symbols/>) for the beauty of its rhythm. The Akan proverb describing a winding journey ("Obra kwan ye nkyinkyim. English Transliteration: Life's path is full of ups and downs; twists and turns"), was particularly meaningful when having students consider their educational experiences. I have included this symbol as an example when I described instructions to draw a personal coat of arms. I would like to include your Nkyinkyim symbol image and description of the proverb from your book in my dissertation and teaching presentation slides and hope that you will authorize me to use this content in my work.

I look forward to hearing back from you!

Sincerely,

[Redacted]

Q2d: Is the script being used for newspapers, pamphlets, and in books? How many books in the alphabet have been produced? (That is, besides books about the alphabet.)

Answer:

The Adinkra Alphabet encoding committee has developed a dictionary for the Akan (Twi) language of Ghana located @ <https://www.ilovetomeditateonadinkra.com/twi-dictionary/>

The use of Adinkra script has made it possible to develop a searchable dictionary in the Akan (Twi) language for the first time.

The screenshot shows a web interface for the Adinkra Alphabet encoding committee's Twi dictionary. At the top, there is a header with Adinkra symbols. Below this is a search bar with the text "Search Akan (Twi) Dictionary" and a "Search" button. Under the search bar, there is a prompt "Type word in Akan(Twi) or English to search". Below the prompt is a keyboard layout with Adinkra symbols for each letter of the alphabet. The word "counting" is entered in the search bar.

⊙⊙⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿

Search Akan (Twi) Dictionary

Search

Type word in Akan(Twi) or English to search

⊙a ⊠b ⊡d ⊢e ⊣ε ⊤f ⊥g ⊦h ⊧i ⊨k ⊩l
⊪m ⊫n ⊬o ⊭p ⊮r ⊯s ⊰t ⊱u ⊲w ⊳y

counting

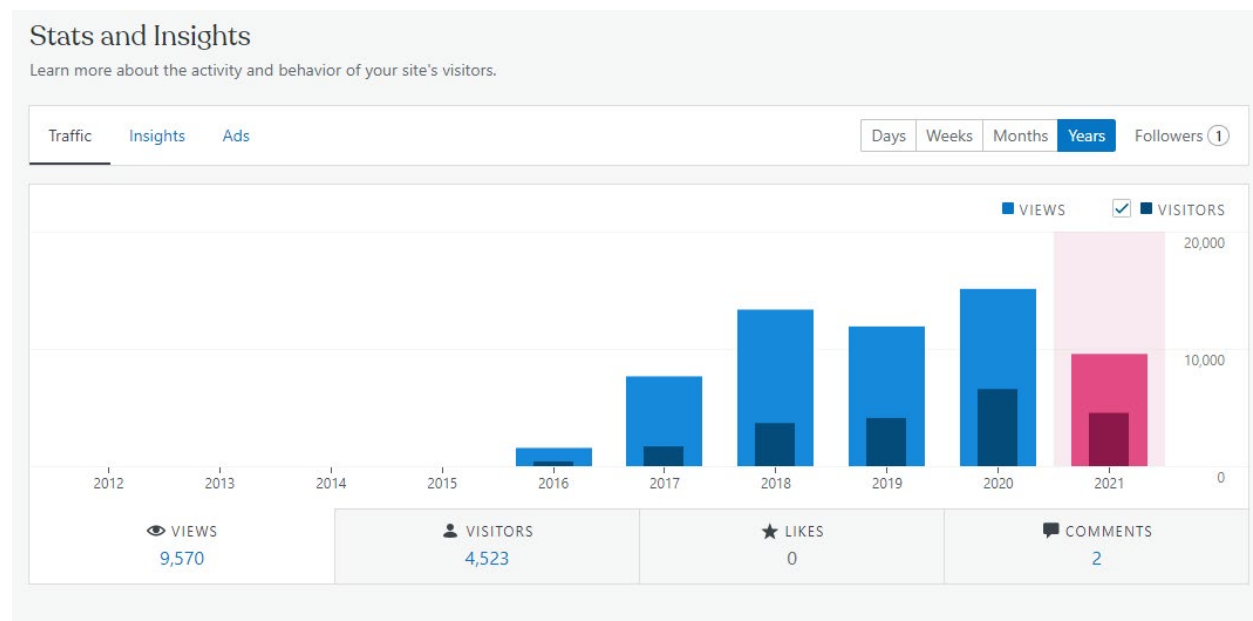
Q2e: Can the proposers provide evidence the script is being used and its use growing?

Answer:

Below is a graph showing yearly visit to the Adinkra Alphabet website since 2016:

<https://www.adinkraalphabet.com/>

Also, we have received many requests by different individuals to use the Adinkra Script for artwork and other product designs.



Q2f: How many people are learning the script in schools today? Are there any graduates of the school yet and, if so, how many?

Answer:

The script is currently taught for free on social media mainly Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and the Adinkra Alphabet website www.adinkraalphabet.com. There are plans to develop classes to teach the script in the future.