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TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES FOR MAP AND OTHER EDITORS

Toponymic Guidelines for map and other editors; Japan

(second edition)

TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES FOR MAP AND OTHER EDITORS: JAPAN
(second Edition)

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1. Language

1.1 National language

Japan is a unilingual country, and has used Japanese as its official language.

The northern regions of Japan have been inhabited by a small number of Ainu people who in the past had spoken their own language. They had no letters or characters of their own. Now, Ainu people no longer speak in their aboriginal language, however, a trace of the vanished Ainu language survives in geographical names and epics or "Yūkara" which have been handed down in the oral tradition for generations.

Many people speak in their own dialects in Japan, but the standard Japanese language is normally used on official occasions.

1.2 The Japanese language

The Japanese language has been spoken by Japanese people since ancient times. Historically, the Japanese language has been largely influenced by the Chinese language adapting many of its characters and its vocabulary. Despite that fact the Japanese language has been classified as a language isolated from the world languages.

The Japanese language is expressed through a combination of syllables. Its system of writing consists of *Kanji* (Chinese characters) as well as two separate forms of the phonetic syllabic script known as *Kana* (*Hiragana* and *Katakana*).

Japanese syllables are composed of vowels or consonants and vowels. The Japanese language is normally written using a combination of *Kanji* and *Hiragana*, however *Katakana* is used primarily to represent words adopted from other languages including personal and geographical names of foreign origin.

Kanji, originally introduced from China, has been used to represent a concept or content of the words when written by itself or in combination with other *Kanji*.

Kana syllabaries, derived from the stylized calligraphic forms of *Kanji*, consist of *Hiragana* and *Katakana*. *Hiragana* is the cursive form of Japanese syllabary writing, whereas *Katakana* is more angular in appearance. Unlike *Kanji*, *Kana* syllabaries provide no specific meaning, only phonetics. And unlike the Roman alphabet, most *Kanas*

do not correspond to a single sound, but rather each *Kana* represents a syllable, and thus all Japanese pronunciation can be expressed by *Kana*.

When spelling Japanese pronunciation with *Kana* syllabaries, the following principles of expression applies.

(1) When expressing *Dakuon* (the sound beginning with the consonant as g,z,d,b) or *Han-Dakuon* (the sound beginning with the consonant p), *Dakuon* symbol(゜) or *Han-Dakuon* symbol(゜) is added to the upper right of *Kana* as the superscript [e.g. が, ざ, だ, ば, ぱ].

(Table 1).

(2) When spelling a long vowel with *Hiragana*, in the [あ] series [e.g. あ, か, さ, た, な] the main character is followed by [ぁ], in the [い] series [e.g. い, き, し, ち, に] the main character is followed by [ぃ], in the [う] series [e.g. う, く, す, つ, ぬ] the main character is followed by [ぅ], in the [え] series [e.g. え, け, せ, て, ね] the main character is followed by [ぇ], in the [お] series [e.g. お, こ, そ, と, の] the main character is followed by [ぉ] as required.

In the case of *Katakana*, a symbol [-] is added.

(3) When spelling a contracted sound with *Kana*, one of the three characters, such as [っ], [っ] or [ゃ] in small letter is added to the main character (Table 1).

(4) When spelling *Sokuon* (double consonants or an assimilated sound) with *Kana*, a small [っ] should be added.

The Japanese language is written both horizontally and vertically. When the horizontal style is used the characters read from left to right and lines from top to bottom. When the vertical style is used, the characters read from top to bottom and the line from right to left.

1.3 Common alphabet

When spelling the Japanese language in the Roman alphabet, the Official Spelling System for the romanization of Japanese is

applied. That system was promulgated by the Cabinet Notification in 1954. Prior to that, Japanese had been romanized in two ways: the *Hebon Siki* and the *Kunrei Siki* (since 1937). The Cabinet Notification provides that Table 1 (Line 4 in the next table; corresponding to the *Kunrei Siki*) presented in the Cabinet Notification should be followed in expressing the national language, adding that Table 2 (Line 5 in the next table; corresponding to the *Syûsei Hebon Siki*) given in the Cabinet Notification may be used, only in international applications, or established customs and practices which cannot be easily amended. Roman alphabet is used, as shown in the following table when romanizing Japanese.

The transliteration of Japanese *Kana* syllabaries into the Roman alphabet.

ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ			
あ	い	う	え	お			
a	i	u	e	o			
a	i	u	e	o			
カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ	キャ	キュ	キョ
か	き	く	け	こ	きゃ	きゅ	きょ
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko	kja	kju	kjo
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko	kya	kyu	kyo
サ	シ	ス	セ	ソ	シャ	シュ	ショ
さ	し	す	せ	そ	しゃ	しゅ	しょ
sa	si	su	se	so	sja	sju	sjo
sa	si	su	se	so	sya	syu	syo
	shi				sha	shu	sho
タ	チ	ツ	テ	ト	チャ	チュ	チョ
た	ち	つ	て	と	ちゃ	ちゅ	ちょ
ta	ci	cu	te	to	cja	cju	cjo
ta	ti	tu	te	to	tja	tyu	tyo
	chi	tsu			cha	chu	cho
ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ	ニャ	ニユ	ニョ
な	に	ぬ	ね	の	にゃ	にゅ	にょ
na	ni	nu	ne	no	nja	nju	njo
na	ni	nu	ne	no	nya	nyu	nyo
ハ	ヒ	フ	ヘ	ホ	ヒャ	ヒュ	ヒョ
は	ひ	ふ	へ	ほ	ひゃ	ひゅ	ひょ
ha	hi	hu	he	ho	hja	hju	hjo
ha	hi	hu	he	ho	hya	hyu	hyo
		fu					

マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ	ミヤ	ミユ	ミョ
ま	み	む	め	も	みゃ	みゅ	みょ
ma	mi	mu	me	mo	mja	mju	mjo
ma	mi	mu	me	mo	mya	myu	myo

ヤ	ユ	ヨ
や	ゆ	よ
ja	ju	jo
ya	yu	yo

ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ	リヤ	リュ	リョ
ら	り	る	れ	ろ	りゃ	りゅ	りょ
ra	ri	ru	re	ro	rja	rju	rjo
ra	ri	ru	re	ro	rya	ryu	ryo

ワ	ヲ
わ	を
wa	o
wa	o

ン	ッ
ん	っ
N	T
n	((Note-2) Refer to (3))

ガ	ギ	グ	ゲ	ゴ	ギヤ	ギユ	ギョ
が	ぎ	ぐ	げ	ご	ぎゃ	ぎゅ	ぎょ
ga	gi	gu	ge	go	gja	gju	gjo
ga	gi	gu	ge	go	gya	gyu	gyo

ザ	ジ	ズ	ゼ	ゾ	ジャ	ジュ	ジョ
ざ	じ	ず	ぜ	ぞ	じゃ	じゅ	じょ
za	zi	zu	ze	zo	zja	zju	zjo
za	zi	zu	ze	zo	zya	zyu	zyo
	ji				ja	ju	jo

ダ	デ	ド
だ	で	ど
da	de	do
da	de	do

バ	ビ	ブ	ベ	ボ	ビヤ	ビユ	ビョ
ば	び	ぶ	べ	ぼ	びゃ	びゅ	びょ
ba	bi	bu	be	bo	bja	ju	bo
ba	bi	bu	be	bo	bya	byu	byo

パ	ピ	プ	ペ	ポ	ピヤ	ピユ	ピョ
ぱ	ぴ	ぷ	ぺ	ぽ	ぴゃ	ぴゅ	ぴょ
pa	pi	pu	pe	po	pja	pju	pjo
pa	pi	pu	pe	po	pya	pyu	pyo

Note 1)

Line 1 --- *Katakana*

Line 2 --- *Hiragana*

Line 3 --- International phonetic symbols

Line 4 --- Table 1 presented in Cabinet Notification

Line 5 --- Table 2 presented in Cabinet Notification

Note 2)

Spelling instructions for the romanization of Japanese.

Pursuant to the Cabinet Notification, romanization of Japanese should be carried out as instructed hereunder, unless otherwise specified in Table 1.

- (1) The sound [n] (including the sound [m] before the sound [p], [b] or [m]) expressed [ㄋ] in *Katakana*, should always be written (n).
- (2) When it is necessary to separate the sound [n] from the vowel or (y) to follow, the symbol (') is added after (n).
- (3) *Sokuon*(double consonants or an assimilated sound) is expressed by overlaying the first consonant of the next syllable on top of the other.
- (4) A long vowel is expressed by placing a superscript (ˊ) over a vowel. When a capital letter is used, the superscript is omitted and the same vowel is added.
- (5) Special sound can be expressed at the writer's discretion.
- (6) The first word in a sentence and proper names should be capitalized.

1.4 Rules for spelling Japanese geographical names

In Japan, geographical names are spelled using *Kanji*, *Hiragana* or *Katakana* by alone or in combination.

Besides, publications released for foreigners are normally spelled in English. Of these publications, geographical names should be spelled in the Roman alphabet.

1.4.1 Spelling rules for the romanization of Japanese geographical names

There is no specific rule binding on spelling when Japanese geographical names are romanized. In fact, the following practices should be followed.

- a. The specific term and the generic term in a composite word representing a geographical name are respectively capitalized and spelled separately.

Example: Huzi San Tôkyô Wan

- b. When a geographical name in which a specific term and a generic term is indivisible or there exists a distinctive adjective such as large/small, orientation or new/old, or a composite or a compound geographical name, it is hyphenated and spelled separately. In this instance, each of these nouns is capitalized.

Example: Sin-Ôkubo Amami-Ô-Sima
 (新) (大)

- c. A composite word, containing letters such as [no] or [ga] either in the specific term or between the specific and generic terms, are double-hyphenated with [no] or [ga] between these terms, as follows. In this case [no] or [ga] should not be capitalized.

Example: Oki-no-Tori Sima Kasumi-ga-Ura

- d. Where two generic terms follow a specific term, the latter part of the generic terms is spelled separately and capitalized.

Example: Titizima Rettô Osoreyama Santi
 (島) (山)

e. The name of an administrative division is spelled in a single word. When it is accompanied with [Ken] and [Si], the latter words are spelled separately and capitalized.

Example: Aomori Ken Ryûgasaki Si

Sometimes, (˘) or (-) is used as symbols representing a long vowel.

1.5 Pronunciation of Japanese geographical names

In view of the fact that each individual *Kanji* character is pronounced in many different ways and that old letters are sometimes used for geographical names, readers can often be confused over pronunciation when reading geographical names.

To avoid such confusion, geographical *Kanji* names are often accompanied by *Hiragana* or *Katakana*, where *Kana* syllabaries are used as phonetic symbols.

1.6 Basic knowledge of Japanese geographical names

Most of the geographical names are words composed of a specific term and a generic term, where a specific term precedes a generic term.

In this case, the generic term represents a natural feature, an administrative division, the type of facilities or structures.

2. Committee on the standardization and method of the standardization of geographical names

2.1 Committee on the standardization of geographical names

In Japan, there is no designated administrative organization commissioned to collection, registration and standardization of geographical names, but instead, each central government body collects and standardizes them in the course of performing their operations.

A couple of the central government organizations including the Geographical Survey Institute and the Hydrographic Department of the Maritime Safety Agency in charge of map compilation established the Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1960 to standardize geographical names entered on the maps and hydrographic charts they issue and are currently conducting standardization activities.

The use of geographical names standardized in the Joint Committee is becoming widespread. The standardized names are now entered on the maps developed by the Geographical Survey Institute and the Maritime Safety Agency, are extensively used for schooling and public broadcasting, therefore efforts have been made to popularize them in the society as a whole.

2.2 The method of the standardization of geographical names

Of the geographical names in Japan, administrative division and their names are stipulated by laws and ordinances. New names and their territories are carried in central and local government gazettes, and thus, there is no need to restandardize these geographical names.

The Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names is working on standardizing the geographical names of places and sites other than populated place names.

Major rules laid down by the Joint Committee to standardize geographical names are as follows.

- a) Preferential consideration is given to local naming or titles when standardizing geographical names.
- b) Where source materials of the Geographical Survey Institute and the Maritime Safety Agency are reconciled, the names both agencies have agreed upon are adopted.

3. Source materials

3.1 Maps

National maps with romanized geographical names are available as follows.

1:1,000,000 scale international map, 3 sheets, 1994

Note) This map series was published by the Geographical Survey Institute.

3.2 Gazetteers

No standard romanized gazetteer has been released in Japan.

4. Glossary of generic terms necessary for the understanding maps of Japan

This glossary lists generic terms and adjective elements often used for geographical names in Japan.

Some geographical names are duplicated on the listing since *Kanji* reads in many different ways.

Japanese	Romanized Japanese	English or usual spelling in English
盆地	Bontsi	Basin
台地	Daiti	Upland
岳	Dake	Mountain
道	Dô	Prefecture
潟	Gata	Lagoon
川	Gawa	River, Stream
群島	Guntô	Islands, Islets, Archipelago
浜	Hama	Beach
半島	Hantô	Peninsula
平野	Heiya	Plain
東	Higasi	East
府	Hu	Prefecture
海	Kai	Sea
海岸	Kaigan	Seacoast
海峡	Kaikyô	Strait, Channel
潟	Kata	Lagoon
川	Kawa	River, Stream
県	Ken	Prefecture
北	Kita	North
小	Ko	Little, Lesser
湖	Ko	Lake
区	Ku	Ward
丘陵	Kyûryô	Hills
町	Mati	Town
南	Minami	South
岬	Misaki	Cape
村	Mura	Village
灘	Nada	Sea
中	Naka	Central
西	Nisi	West

沼	Numa	Marsh, Swamp
大	Ô	Great, Greater
列島	Rettô	Islands, Islets
崎, 埼, 碕	Saki	Cape
山	San	Mountain, Hill
山脈	Sanmyaku	Mountain range
山地	Santi	Mountains
沢	Sawa	Stream, Wide valley in the mountains
瀬戸	Seto	Strait, Channel
市	Si	City
島	Sima	Island, Islet
新	Sin	New
村	Son	Village
水道	Suidô	Strait, Channel
諸島	Syotô	Islands, Islets
岳	Take	Mountain
都	To	Metropolis
島	Tô	Island, Islet
峠	Tôge	Pass
町	Tyô	Town
浦	Ura	Cove, Inlet, Embayment
灣	Wan	Bay
山	Yama	Mountain, Hill
崎, 埼, 碕	Saki	Cape
山	Zan	Mountain, Hill
沢	Zawa	Stream, Wide valley in the mountains
島	Zima	Island, Islet

5. Administrative divisions

Japan consists of approximately 3,300 municipalities, which are grouped together to constitute Tōkyō To, Hokkai Dō, Ōsaka Hu, Kyōto Hu and 43 Kens.

The prefectural divisions are as follows.

Japanese Romanized Japanese		Japanese Romanized Japanese	
北海道	Hokkai Dō	滋賀県	Siga Ken
青森県	Aomori Ken	京都府	Kyōto Hu
岩手県	Iwate Ken	大阪府	Ōsaka Hu
宮城県	Miyagi Ken	兵庫県	Hyōgo Ken
秋田県	Akita Ken	奈良県	Nara Ken
山形県	Yamagata Ken	和歌山県	Wakayama Ken
福島県	Hukusima Ken	鳥取県	Tottori Ken
茨城県	Ibaraki Ken	島根県	Simane Ken
栃木県	Totigi Ken	岡山県	Okayama Ken
群馬県	Gunma Ken	広島県	Hirosima Ken
埼玉県	Saitama Ken	山口県	Yamaguti Ken
千葉県	Tiba Ken	徳島県	Tokusima Ken
東京都	Tōkyō To	香川県	Kagawa Ken
神奈川県	Kanagawa Ken	愛媛県	Ehime Ken
新潟県	Niigata Ken	高知県	Kōti Ken
富山県	Toyama Ken	福岡県	Hukuoka Ken
石川県	Isikawa Ken	佐賀県	Saga Ken
福井県	Hukui Ken	長崎県	Nagasaki Ken
山梨県	Yamanasi Ken	熊本県	Kumamoto Ken
長野県	Nagano Ken	大分県	Ōita Ken
岐阜県	Gihu Ken	宮崎県	Miyazaki Ken
静岡県	Sizuoka Ken	鹿児島県	Kagosima Ken
愛知県	Aiti Ken	沖縄県	Okinawa Ken
三重県	Mie Ken		