

Tibetan

The United Nations resolution III/8 in 1977 recognized the Scheme for a Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (Pinyin) as China's official Roman alphabet scheme and recommended the alphabet as the international system for the romanization of Chinese geographical names. In China Tibetan geographical names are transcribed directly from the Tibetan script into Pinyin. The scheme was published in *Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors: China, 1982*¹.

The system is used in China and in international cartographic products.

Tibetan uses an alphasyllabic script. The romanization scheme is based on the pronunciation of Tibetan names in the Tibetan broadcasts by the Central People's Broadcasting Station (the Lhasa pronunciation). Due to the historic nature of the script the rules of correspondence between the script and the pronunciation are complicated and the romanization is not reversible to its original written Tibetan form.

Romanization

I. Consonant characters

1 ཀ ga	12 ལ na	23 འ a
2 ཁ ka	13 ག ba	24 ར ya
3 ཀ ka, ga ^A	14 ང pa	25 ལ ra
4 ཅ nga	15 ཌྷ pa, ba ^A	26 ལ la
5 ཇ ja	16 མ ma	27 ཇ xa
6 ཉ qa	17 ཚ za	28 ལ sa
7 ཁ qa, ja ^A	18 ཛ ca	29 ཇ ha
8 ཉ nya	19 ཝ ca, za ^A	30 མ a
9 ཇ da	20 ལ wa	
10 ལ ta	21 ཇ xa	
11 ཇ ta, da ^A	22 ལ sa	

^A If the character is not accompanied by a prefixed character or a superscripted consonant, it is read as aspirated and the first romanization equivalent is used; otherwise it is read as nonaspirated and the second equivalent is used.

II. Consonant combinations at the beginning of syllables (the list is not complete)

1 ཇ gya	4 ཇ zha	7 ཇ sha
2 ཇ kya	5 ཇ cha	8 ཇ lha
3 ཇ kya, gya ^A	6 ཇ cha, zha ^A	

^A If the combination is not accompanied by a prefixed character or a superscripted consonant, it is read as aspirated and the first romanization equivalent is used; otherwise it is read as nonaspirated and the second equivalent is used.

III. Vowel characters (ཀ stands for any consonant character)

1 ཀ a	3 ལུ u	5 ཀོ o
2 ཀི i	4 ཀེ e	

IV. Other symbols

· syllable separation character, e.g. ནག་ཚུ Nag Qu.

V. Syllable endings

1 ཨ a	27 ཨིངས ing	54 ཨེད ེ
2 ཨུ au	28 ཨིབ ib	55 ཨེས ེ
3 ཨག ag	29 ཨིབས ib	56 ཨེང ེng
4 ཨགས ag	30 ཨིམ im	57 ཨེངས ེng
5 ཨང ang	31 ཨིམས im	58 ཨེབ ེb
6 ཨངས ang	32 ཨིར ir	59 ཨེབས ེb
7 ཨབ ab	33 ཨིན in	60 ཨིམ ེm
8 ཨབས ab	34 ཨུ u	61 ཨིམས ེm
9 ཨམ am	35 ཨུག ug	62 ཨིར ེr
10 ཨམས am	36 ཨུགས ug	63 ཨིན ེn
11 ཨར ar	37 ཨུང ung	64 ཨོ o
12 ཨལ ai [ä]	38 ཨུངས ung	65 ཨོག og
13 ཨའི ai [ä]	39 ཨུབ ub	66 ཨོགས og
14 ཨད ai [ä]	40 ཨུབས ub	67 ཨོང ong
15 ཨས ai [ä]	41 ཨུམ um	68 ཨོངས ong
16 ཨན ain [än]	42 ཨུམས um	69 ཨོབ ob
17 ཨི i	43 ཨུར ur	70 ཨོབས ob
18 ཨིལ i	44 ཨུལ ü	71 ཨོམ om
19 ཨིའི i	45 ཨུའི ü	72 ཨོམས om
20 ཨིུ iu	46 ཨུད ü	73 ཨོར or
21 ཨིུ iu	47 ཨུས ü	74 ཨོལ oi [ö]
22 ཨིག ig	48 ཨུན ün	75 ཨོའི oi [ö]
23 ཨིགས ig	49 ཨེ ེ	76 ཨོད oi [ö]
24 ཨིད i	50 ཨེལ ེ	77 ཨོས oi [ö]
25 ཨིས i	51 ཨེའི ེ	78 ཨོན oin [ön]
26 ཨིང ing	52 ཨེག ེg	
	53 ཨེགས ེg	

Notes

1. Prefixed consonant characters ཀ (k), ཇ (t), ཐ (p), མ (m), འ (a), and superscripted consonant characters ར (r), ལ (l), ལ (s) remain mostly unpronounced and are not reflected in the romanization.
2. Subscript characters ས (w), ས (y), ས (r), ས (l) are pronounced only in certain combinations (see also the consonant combinations at the beginning of syllables).
3. A number of homonyms exist in the Tibetan language and they are not all listed here.
4. The characters འ and མ are treated as without initials when transcribed with Pinyin.
5. When the prefixed characters མ and འ or the superscripted consonant ལ give the preceding syllable an additional nasal or make the vowel in it nasalized, it is spelt according to the actual pronunciation. The nasalized vowels (a), (o), (u) are represented by the finals *an*, *on*, *un* in the Pinyin system.
6. Where two Roman equivalents are given, the second (in brackets) is used for recording the pronunciation of place-names while the first form is for general use.

Reference

1. *Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. Geneva, 24 August – 14 September 1982. Vol. II. *Technical papers*, pp. 121–125.