Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors, Japan

(Third Edition 2007)

Contents

1. Language

1.1. General statement

In Japan, Japanese has been generally used since its beginning. There are various local dialects in Japan, but common Japanese (standard Japanese) is normally used on official occasions.

The northern regions of Japan have been inhabited by Ainu people who have spoken their own language. The Ainu language has no written form, and the number of people speaking it is decreasing. The language has been handed down for generations in many geographical names and in the oral tradition of epics called "*Yûkara.*"

1.2. National language (The Japanese language)

The Japanese language has been spoken by the Japanese people since ancient times. Historically, the Japanese language was greatly influenced by the Chinese language, adapting many of its characters and its vocabulary.

The Japanese language is syllabic. The writing system consists of *Kanzi* (Chinese characters) and *Kana* (the collective name of the two phonetic syllabaries known as *Hiragana* and *Katakana*)

With the exception of the syllabic nasal "n", Japanese syllables are composed of only single vowels or one or two consonants followed by a vowel.

The Japanese language is normally written using a combination of *Kanzi* and *Hiragana*; *Katakana* is used primarily to represent words adopted from other languages including personal and geographic names of foreign origin.

Kanzi, originally made in China and introduced to Japan, has been used in Japanese language to represent words when written by itself or in combination with other *Kanzi.*

The *Kana* syllabaries were derived from the *Kanzi*. Unlike *Kanzi*, *Kana* syllabaries provide no specific meaning, only phonetics. And unlike the Roman alphabet, each *Kana* character represents a syllable. Thus, all Japanese pronunciations can be expressed by *Kana* characters.

When spelling Japanese pronunciations with *Kana* syllabaries, the following rules of expression apply:

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

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

In the case of *Katakana*, the symbol [ー] is used instead of the extra vowel.

(3)   When spelling *Yôon* (contracted sound) with *Kana*, one of the three small characters [や], [ゆ] or [よ] is written as a subscript after the main character. [e.g. きゃ, きゅ, きょ].

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

(5)   *Hatuon* (syllabic nasal, representing the sounds [n], [m], and [N]) is expressed as [ん].

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 spelling method of Japanese

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 (corresponding to the *Kunrei Siki*) presented in the Cabinet Notification should be followed in expressing the national language, adding that Table 2 (corresponding to the *Hebon Siki* and other ways) given in the Cabinet Notification may be used, only in international applications, or established customs and practices which cannot be easily amended.

The Roman alphabet is used when romanizing Japanese, as shown in the following table. The Line 4 presents Table 1 in the Cabinet Notification and the Line 5 corresponds to *Hebon Siki* in Table 2.

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

ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ				Line 1
あ	い	う	え	お				Line 2
a	i	u	e	o				Line 3
a	i	u	e	o				Line 4
								Line 5

ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ	リャ	リュ	リョ
ら	り	る	れ	ろ	りゃ	りゅ	りょ
ɾa	ɾi	ɾu	ɾe	ɾo	rja	rju	rjo
ra	ri	ru	re	ro	rya	ryu	ryo

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

ワ		ヲ
わ		を
wa		O
wa		o

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

ン	ッ
ん	っ
N	T
n	(Note-2) Refer to (3)

タ	チ	ツ	テ	ト	チャ	チュ	チョ
た	ち	つ	て	と	ちゃ	ちゅ	ちょ
ta	tˢi	tˢu	te	to	tˢja	tˢju	tˢjo
ta	ti	tu	te	to	tya	tyu	tyo
	chi	tsu			cha	chu	cho

ガ	ギ	グ	ゲ	ゴ	ギャ	ギュ	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

ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ	ニャ	ニュ	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

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

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					

ダ		デ	ド
だ		で	ど
da		de	do
da		de	do

マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ	ミャ	ミュ	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

バ	ビ	ブ	ベ	ボ	ビャ	ビュ	ビョ
ば	び	ぶ	べ	ぼ	びゃ	びゅ	びょ
ba	bi	bu	be	bo	bja	bju	bjo
ba	bi	bu	be	bo	bya	byu	byo

ヤ	ユ	ヨ
や	ゆ	よ
ja	ju	jo
ya	yu	yo

パ	ピ	プ	ペ	ポ	ピャ	ピュ	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)

    (1) Line1 - *Katakana*

    (2) Line2 - *Hiragana*

    (3) Line3 - International phonetic Alphabet

    (4) Line4 - Alphabet in Table 1 presented in Cabinet Notification

    (5) Line5 - Corresponding to the *Hebon Siki* alphabetization in Table 2 presented in Cabinet Notification

Note 2)

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

    (1) *Hatuon* should always be written (n).

    (2) When it is necessary to separate *Hatuon* from the vowel or (y) to follow, the symbol (') is added after (n).

    (3) *Sokuon* is expressed by overlaying the first consonant of the next syllable on top of the other.

    (4) *Tyôon* is expressed by placing a circumflex accent (^) over a vowel. When a capital letter is used, the circumflex accent is omitted and the same vowel is added.

    (5) Special sounds 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 *Kanzi*, *Hiragana* or *Katakana* alone or in combination. It should be noted that publications released for foreigners are normally written in English. In these publications, geographical names are spelled in the Roman alphabet.

1.4.1. Spelling rules for the romanization of Japanese geographical names

The spelling rules presented in Line 4 of Table A shall be applied to the spelling rules for Romanization of Japanese, as described in "1.3 Common alphabetic spelling method of Japanese." However, regarding geographical names, *Hebon Siki* is customarily used in Japan.

The Geographical Survey Institute of Japan and the Japan Coast Guard, both of which are national mapping agencies, revised the regulations in 2004 and 2000, respectively, taking into consideration user convenience, in accordance with the current utilization of Roman characters, and decided to use, in principle, the spelling method presented in Line 5 of Table A. In fact, the following practices should be followed.

a. The specific and generic terms in a composite word representing a geographical name are each capitalized and spelled separately. Table B in "4. Glossary of generic terms necessary for understanding Japanese maps" shows the generic terms.

(e.g.) Fuji San 富士山 ふじさん　Tokyo Wan 東京湾 とうきょうわん

b. *Hatuon* is always written as (n).

(e.g.) Kanmon Kaikyo 関門海峡 かんもんかいきょう

c. When it is necessary to separate *Hatuon* (n) from a vowel or (y) that follows, a hyphen is added after (n).

(e.g.) Hon-ura 本浦 ほんうら　Ban-ya 番屋 ばんや

d. *Sokuon* is expressed by overlaying the first consonant of the next syllable on top of the previous syllable. However, (t) is used instead of overlaying (c) if the sound of (ch) follows.

(e.g.) Sapporo 札幌 さっぽろ　Hatchobori 八丁堀 はっちょうぼり

e. As a general rule, symbols that represent *Tyôon* are omitted. However, *Tyôon* in Column [い] of the Japanese syllabary are expressed by repeating (i), and [えい] are written as (ei).

(e.g.) Kyoto 京都 きょうと　Niigata 新潟 にいがた　Hiei Zan 比叡山 ひえいざん

f. If a geographical name derives from foreign language, the spelling of the original word may be used.

(e.g.) Port Island ポートアイランド ぽうとあいらんど

1.5. Pronunciation of Japanese geographical names

In view of the fact that most *Kanzi* characters can be 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 names written in *Kanzi* are often accompanied by *Hiragana* or *Katakana*, where the *Kana* characters 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 the specific term precedes the generic term. In this case, the generic term represents the type of natural feature, administrative units, facility, or structure.

2. Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names and standardization method

2.1. Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names

In Japan, there is no designated administrative organization commissioned to collect, register and standardize geographical names. Instead, each central government body collects and standardizes them in the course of their normal operations.

Two of the central government organizations in charge of map compilation, that is, the Geographical Survey Institute and the Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department of the Japan Coast Guard, established the Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1960 to standardize geographical names used on the maps and hydrographic charts they issue. The Committee continues to conduct 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 Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department of the Japan Coast Guard, are extensively used for schooling and public broadcasting. Therefore efforts have been made to popularize them among the general public.

2.2. The method of standardizing geographical names

Among the geographical names in Japan, the names of administrative units for municipalities and their hierarchical details such as town divisions (cho), village divisions (oaza), and village blocks (aza), that is, residential geographical names, are regulated by law, and new names and their areas are published in official gazettes of the national and prefectural governments. Given this kind of legal control, there should be no confusion resulting from different pronunciations, characters, etc., of residential geographical names. 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 other than residential geographical names. Major rules laid down by the Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names, include the following:

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 Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department of the Japan Coast Guard are reconciled, the names both agencies have agreed upon are adopted.

3.   Source materials

National surveying and mapping organizations

- Geographical Survey Institute Japan
  http://www.gsi.go.jp/
- The Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department of The Japan Coast Guard
  http://www1.kaiho.mlit.go.jp/

3.1.   Maps

National maps with romanized geographical names are available as follows.

- "1:1,000,000 international map" 3 sheets, 2005
  Note) This map series was published by the Geographical Survey Institute.
- Global Map Japan, Version 1.1
  http://www1.gsi.go.jp/geowww/globalmap-gsi/globalmap-gsi.html
  Note) Data organized by the Geographical Survey Institute for the Global Map Project

3.2.   Gazetteers

The following are gazetteers that carry romanized geographical names in Japan.

- Gazetteer of Japan, 2007

4.   Glossary of generic terms necessary for understanding Japanese maps

This glossary lists generic terms and adjective elements often used for geographical names in Japan. Some geographical names are duplicated on the listing since *Kanzi* characters can often be read in many different ways.

TableB: Glossary of generic terms

Japanese	Romanized Japanese	English or usual spelling in English
盆地	Bonchi	Basin
台地	Daichi	Upland
岳	Dake	Mountain
道	Do	Prefecture
潟	Gata	Lagoon
川	Gawa	River, Stream
群島	Gunto	Islands, Islets, Archipelago
浜	Hama	Beach
半島	Hanto	Peninsula
平野	Heiya	Plain
東	Higashi	East
府	Fu	Prefecture

海	Kai	Sea
海岸	Kaigan	Seacoast
海峡	Kaikyo	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	Kyuryo	Hills
町	Machi	Town
南	Minami	South
岬	Misaki	Cape
村	Mura	Village
灘	Nada	Sea
中	Naka	Central
西	Nishi	West
沼	Numa	Marsh, Swamp
大	O	Great, Greater
列島	Retto	Islands, Islets
崎、埼、碕	Saki	Cape
山	San	Mountain、Hill
山脈	Sanmyaku	Mountain range
山地	Sanchi	Mountains
沢	Sawa	Stream, Wide valley in the mountains
瀬戸	Seto	Strait, Channel
市	Shi	City
島	Shima	Islands Islet
新	Shin	New
村	Son	Village
水道	Suido	Strait, Channel
諸島	Shoto	Islands, Islets
島	Jima	Island, Islet
岳	Take	Mountain
都	To	Metropolis
島	To	Island, Islet
峠	Toge	Pass
町	Cho	Town
浦	Ura	Cove, Inlet, Embayment
湾	Wan	Bay
山	Yama	Mountain、Hill
崎、埼、碕	Zaki	Cape
山	Zan	Mountain、Hill
沢	Zawa	Stream, Wide valley in the mountains

5. Administrative divisions

As of April 1, 2007, Japan consisted of 1804 municipalities. The number of municipalities has been decreasing through mergers. They are grouped together to constitute the Tokyo *To* (metropolis), Hokkai *Do* (prefecture), Osaka and Kyoto *Fu* (prefectures), and 43 *Ken* (prefectures). The prefectural divisions are as follows:

Table C: The prefectural division

Japanese	Romanized Japanese	Japanese	Romanized Japanese
北海道	Hokkai Do	滋賀県	Shiga Ken
青森県	Aomori Ken	京都府	Kyoto Fu
岩手県	Iwate Ken	大阪府	Osaka Fu
宮城県	Miyagi Ken	兵庫県	Hyogo 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	Fukushima Ken	鳥取県	Tottori Ken
茨城県	Ibaraki Ken	島根県	Shimane Ken
栃木県	Tochigi Ken	岡山県	Okayama Ken
群馬県	Gunma Ken	広島県	Hiroshima Ken
埼玉県	Saitama Ken	山口県	Yamaguchi Ken
千葉県	Chiba Ken	徳島県	Tokushima Ken
東京都	Tokyo 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	Kochi Ken
富山県	Toyama Ken	福岡県	Fukuoka Ken
石川県	Ishikawa Ken	佐賀県	Saga Ken
福井県	Fukui Ken	長崎県	Nagasaki Ken
山梨県	Yamanashi Ken	熊本県	Kumamoto Ken
長野県	Nagano Ken	大分県	Oita Ken
岐阜県	Gifu Ken	宮崎県	Miyazaki Ken
静岡県	Shizuoka Ken	鹿児島県	Kagoshima Ken
愛知県	Aichi Ken	沖縄県	Okinawa Ken
三重県	Mie Ken		