

Far East

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JAPANESE WRITING REFORMS

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Japanese Writing Reforms

The Introduction of Writing into Japan

The use of Chinese characters was introduced into Japan as early as the first century A. D.; however, it was not until the year 391 that its introduction should be seriously considered. After this year the Yamato clan began to import artisans and scholars from Paikché. Among them was one, Atiki, who was able to read the Chinese classics. It was on his approval that in 405, Wani, of whom it is said that there was no book which he did not thoroughly understand, was brought from Paikché to tutor the heir apparent. Sansom goes as far as to say, "The Chinese language and script were, of course, known in Japan before this date (405). Rulers who wished to send messages to the Court of China or to the Chinese colony in Korea must have used interpreters in the 1st century of the Christian era, for we know that Chinese secretaries and scribes were employed by many tribes and countries on the borders of China." ¹ The use of writing, however, until the eighth century was generally dependent upon Chinese and Korean scribes and did not reach the masses. It was not until the eighth century that native Japanese scholars had reached the necessary degree of competence to enable them to compile their first volume of written history.

The introduction of writing greatly influenced the later development of the country. Not only were written records then possible but writing gave definite shape to concepts which were entirely lacking in earlier Japanese culture. Official terms used to describe the functions of a centralized bureaucratic government and the philosophical vocabulary of Buddhism could then be incorporated into the Yamato kotoba and the concepts for which they stood be put into constructive use.

Therefore, from an early date the Japanese were indebted to Chinese culture since the language they incorporated into their own limited structure was the foremost factor in the subsequent growth of political and philosophical ideas accompanying the substitution of official for tribal institutions.

In adopting the graphic representation of the Chinese, two very important problems of the time were thereby solved:

1. The inadequacy of Japanese vocabulary
2. A script which would later enable them to record their own native language.

Writing was, however, restricted to a small number of scribes who were patronized by the upper classes who could purchase the services of these scribes and therefore felt no compunction to undergo the drudgery of learning to read and write Chinese. Writing was considered a craft and consequently left to these clerks whose specialty it was.

During the eighth and ninth centuries the slow rise of native culture is reflected in the development of a means of

writing their own native tongue. The difficulties involved in the transfer were overcome by various devices and it must have been assumed at the time that from the very complexity of Man'yôgana³ a simpler method for the representation of Japanese sounds would be evolved. In the ninth and tenth centuries simplification was effected by the process of writing certain kanzi, or Chinese characters, first in their complete form and later in abbreviated form as simple, syllabic phonograms devoid of any specific semantic properties in themselves.

This process was facilitated by the fact that the imported characters each represented open monosyllabic sounds corresponding to Chinese morphemes. Both hiragana⁴ and katakana⁵ which were thus developed proved to be extremely convenient and encouraged the writing of literature in the native tongue.

It is peculiar that the Japanese did not continue the exclusive use of these syllabaries. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the resurgence of the prestige associated with things Chinese completely smothered their original initiative. Not only did erudite scholars use kanzi for Chinese words which at the time were steadily flowing in, but also inserted characters representing individual, uninflected words into Japanese texts which had previously been written with only the Chinese words in characters.

Eventually it became the practice for scholars to write as many uninflected words and the constituents of as many uninflected words as possible and to reserve the use of kana only

What are 書 and 書? [↑]

for the terminations of words in which such inflections could not be conveniently represented by characters.

In addition to the obvious complexity of such a rapidly accumulating mélange, two other factors increased the difficulties of the system:

1. Each kanzi incorporated into the language retained its original Chinese phonetic approximation(s). In many cases there arose two or more Chinese pronunciations depending on the era and geographical position.

2. Many of the kanzi represented more than one Japanese word ~~according to the context in which the word was placed.~~

In brief the Japanese are the encumbered heirs to a system of writing which includes:

1. katakana
2. hiragana, variants of which plague personal correspondence today (hentaigana)
3. a number of kanzi, ranging from five hundred to ten thousand, depending on the ^{industries} authority, of which exist three separate forms, kaisyo, gyôsyô, and sôsyô.

Tens of thousands of technical and scientific words have been borrowed from the Chinese or coined in Japan by joining two or more characters and pronouncing the compound in Chinese phonetic equivalents ~~while usually retaining their native pronunciations for single characters.~~ Since the Chinese roots which were borrowed display such homophony, we may find at present in Kenkyûsya's New Japanese-English Dictionary lists of no less than twenty forms pronounced kôkô; sixteen pronounced

kai and thirteen pronounced sinsei.⁹

It has been suggested that pitch is a primary phoneme in Japanese and thus, much homography could be eliminated if some system for indicating this quantity were utilized in a phonemic transcription of the characters. In 1919, the Japanese Government Department of Education appointed a committee of five for the purpose of investigating and standardizing word-tone in Japanese. The results of this committee's investigation of the nature of Japanese word-tone were published in a pamphlet entitled Aksento towa Nanika? (What Is Accent?), and a brief summary of certain facts ascertained by the members of the committee was published in the article by K. Zinbô, entitled: "The word-tone of the standard Japanese language." Word-tone is fixed with each word, that is to say, the same distribution of high and low pitches is observable in the same word pronounced by any person of a given community under any circumstances. Hence, it should be remarked, word-tone in Japanese differs from the absolute pitch or so-called speech-intonation, for while women and children have naturally high absolute pitch of voice, adult men have low pitch generally.

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According to Joseph K. Yamagiwa, the normal ear catches three well-defined degrees of pitch, low, mid, and high, when words are pronounced by themselves. The interval between the low and mid pitches is somewhat greater than that between two adjacent notes on the diatonic scale. The interval between mid and high pitch is similar to that of between low and mid.

These pitch accents are measured in terms of their frequencies and should be distinguished from the stress accents employed in English, these being measured in terms of the amount of force used in utterance. Although it is possible, Yamagiwa further observes, that adjacent syllables in a Japanese word may be pronounced with varying stress, it is still the varying pitch that is significant. This pitch accent is usually that which distinguishes one word from another that is pronounced similarly. Hence, accent in Japanese has a significative value, like stress accent in English.

11

Pletner has pointed out that in English stress often has semantic force in the differentiation of homonyms; for example, 'insait (insight) and in'sait (incite). Again, there are innumerable cases in English where homonyms are not differentiated by stress; for example, dessert and desert are both pronounced di'zert. In still other cases, stress in English has a morphological function; for example, 'inkri:s as the substantive and in'kri:s as a verb. In Japanese, however, stress appears to be of no importance. Bloomfield states: "...there seems to be no secondary phoneme of word stress (in Japanese) and its place is taken by tone." ¹² Hence, in Japanese are found homonyms distinguished by tone, for example, ása (morning), asá (hemp), and also homonyms not distinguished by tone, for example, kámi (god) and kámi (hair). In other cases, Pletner remarks, tone in Japanese has a morphological function. For example, compare atúi (hot, adjectival form) and átuku (hot, adverbial form). He states: "The shifting of the high pitch places the word in a new morphological category," but, it should also be noted that it is not only the shifting of tone

that places this word in a new morphological category; it is both the shifting of tone and inflection, curiously unmentioned by Pletner.

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According to M. Mori, in English, the stressing of most words of two or more syllables is generally fixed by convention throughout the English-speaking world, but, the position of Japanese pitch accent in individual words varies from one dialectical region to another, though within each area it remains fairly constant. Thus, for example while Tôkyô speakers say úmi (sea) with high pitch on the first syllabic unit, Kyôto speakers and Nagasaki speakers say umi, and Tosa speakers, umi. The difference of pitch accents among various dialects has been reduced by Mori into two main dialects, "speaking in the broadest terms ... from the view point of pitch accent," namely, Kantô (including Tôkyô and northeastern Japan), and Kansai (including Kyôto, Sikoku, and Kyûsyû). It is to be noted that many words have their accent in exactly opposite positions in the Kantô and Kansai areas. For example kami (paper) in the Kantô area is kámi in the Kansai areas. But, the two dialects are not always opposite in respect to tone: kámi (god) ^{god} in both areas.

The validity of Mori's reduction of Japanese into two main dialects from the viewpoint of pitch accent is extremely questionable, this writer feels, for many exceptions can be found. It is only mentioned here to indicate the difficulties pursuant to any attempt to relate specific lexical meanings with pitch patterns in Japanese.

Many terms must be seen as they are written in characters to be understood. Even in context in some cases, the forms are unintelligible if the characters are unavailable. Such multiplicity of Japanese readings, the coexistence of both Japanese and Chinese readings, and the two sets of phonetic symbols mean that in every line of Japanese, series of problems in reading and interpretation are likely to arise. As a result Japanese orthography is a system of unparalleled difficulty and inconvenience which according to many has been a serious impediment to the intellectual and technical development of modern Japan.

It is hardly proper for an outsider to criticize some one aspect of another culture on the basis of value judgments, but even progressive Japanese reformists agree that the complexity of such a hybrid system renders anything approaching a scholarly knowledge of the written language a tremendous task to the foreigner.

Children in Mexico and Germany learn to write their thoughts in about eight months; in Russia where the alphabet is less regularly employed, in about a year, while in Japan, even after the end of three years' close application, the ability to express oneself in kanzi is extremely restricted.

This inadequacy is not merely a juvenile problem which is gradually mastered and later resolved into sets of active patterns by which the whole phonography of the language can

be controlled. It extends also into the adult period of every Japanese.

The reader who is fortunate enough to be educated in a language the units of which are phonemically recorded has the advantage of expanding his reading vocabulary even without the aid of a dictionary through mere contact with spoken words. The Japanese, on the other hand, is unable to associate a written symbol with some particular spoken word unless the audible referent which the symbol represents has been pointed out, either by oral instruction, or by recourse to a dictionary.

[In a very few cases] one might guess at the pronunciation of some Chinese compound if both elements composing the compound be known; however, the multiplicity of Chinese readings renders this process sheer guesswork.

The Meizi Reform

Before the Meizi Reform the complications arising from the orthography were not particularly significant since the less wealthy had neither the time nor the incentive to read and since the rich had both leisure and sufficient interest to compensate for the luxury. Popular literature of the time was for the most part written in kana. Since a syllabary could be learned with considerably less effort than the Chinese characters, it was only natural that the masses would

continue to read only that literature written phonetically and ignore the more literary and educative works which abounded in ideographs. Thus, the common man was in an intellectual vacuum.

Even though the restoration euphemistically suggested revolution and the leaders of the coup had revived certain of the ancient official nomenclature and governmental organs, the underlying objective was to establish a strong nation similar to those in the West. Consequently Western patterns of society and government were studied. The restoration was characterized by sweeping reforms in the calendar, religious attitudes, police, legal, tax and banking systems, civil service, and the government proper. In the search for Western solutions to problems, great interest in the differences prevailing between Japan and the West naturally arose.

Jesuit missionaries had introduced an orthography based on the Portuguese. In 1690 Arai Hakuseki¹⁴ (1656-1725) had advocated reforming the Japanese orthography by means of a Dutch system which dominated the times¹⁵ and Kamo no Mabuti¹⁶ (1697-1769), a type employing only kana. It was not however until the nineteenth century that agitation for reform grew to significant proportions. In 1866 Baron Maesima, founder of the postal system, presented a memorandum to the Syōgun requesting that it be remembered that the future progress of the country depended on the reform of the written language.¹⁷ Shortly after the restoration, Nanbu Yosikazu presented a

similar request to the new government.¹⁸ The reform suggested by Hukuzawa Yukiti in his Kanzi no Osie of 1873 should also be cited as an indication of the early realization of the Japanese that their written language was a serious impediment to future progress.¹⁹ He suggested that it was entirely possible to write Japanese using approximately nine hundred Chinese characters. Hukuzawa was not only concerned with the number of kanzi in use, but displayed great interest and ability in the actual simplification of the written style. He is noted for his clarity and simplicity.

Successive reform proposals after the early Meizi period will be given under the following four divisions:

1. Kanzi reduction
2. Exclusive use of kana
3. Sinzisetu²⁰
4. Romanization

but before attempting a discussion of the above categories of reform it would be well to examine the most important objections raised against the orthography as it stands today.

Problems Arising from the Present Orthography

The number and diversity of symbols now required to follow acceptable practices in writing the Japanese language are appalling. The nonphonemic nature of the kanzi so burdens the memory that during the elementary years a pupil is required to give a very large part of his time to the sheer task of learning to read. In other countries the earlier

ability to read can be used during one's first school years as a tool for further learning. The results achieved by the inordinate amount of time allotted to recognizing and to writing kanzi are not, in general, proportionate to the time consumed. The Japanese who are not scholars have trouble in reading common materials such as daily newspapers and popular magazines. As a general rule, they cannot grasp books dealing with contemporary problems and ideas. The handicap is best illustrated in the large number of works printed with kana accompanying the individual kanzi.

The crucial rôle of the written language is therefore of first-rate importance in the educative process and in subsequent intellectual growth, thus, the quality and efficacy of both processes is to an enormous degree dependent upon the character of written symbols. The Japanese language in its present written form therefore constitutes a formidable obstacle to learning.

Reform in General

From early Meizi times to approximately the middle of the 1930's four principal types of language reform were advocated: The reduction of kanzi, the exclusive use of kana, sinzisetu, and romanization. At present, however, any agitation for symbols other than kanzi, kana or Roman letters is nil. The majority of progressive reformists today recognize the inconsistencies inherent in the Roman alphabet, however,

they also share the opinion of Jespersen in his advocacy of it:

"However, despite all its imperfections and defects the Latin alphabet is the only one of which one would be able to recommend universal adoption. It is in itself clearer and more convenient, for writing as well as printing, than the majority of other alphabets. The argument which without doubt is the more decisively in favor of its general use lies in the fact that the use of this alphabet has been definitely established in the entire occidental world, and therefore in all the more important countries..."²¹

Much the same opinion prevails concerning the kana writing. According to Tanakadate Aikitu, "...I may say that the service rendered by kana to Japanese civilization in the development of the language and consequently in the diffusion of knowledge cannot be too highly estimated. But it is doubtful whether they could survive kanzi. It may be added that there are people who still maintain that kana writing will prevail before the Roman letters come into general use. There is, however, at present scarcely anyone who is seriously engaged in the active promotion of such a scheme. All enthusiasts, as far as I know, desire to leap by a bound to the adoption of the Roman characters. It is not necessary that one should have the gas light in the transition stage from the oil lamp to the electric light."²²

Prof. Tanakadate has undoubtedly underemphasized the importance of the kana movement today, yet, his enthusiasm

does reflect the dominant trend at present toward romanization.

Reform involving reduction in the number of kanzi has had the most widespread application of all the reforms proposed. Its success has been due to the fact that in such re-education an immediate improvement in the situation is effected with the least possible friction. The reform effected along this line is admittedly temporary,⁶ however, its temporality may be viewed both favorably and unfavorably.

Dr. Joseph Yamagiwa considers the reform as progress; thus, "No doubt the attempt in the end will be to reduce the complicated system of characters to romanization, but for the present a limited number of characters is retained in order to assure the possibility of written communications between the older and younger generations."²³

Prof. Tanakadate on the other hand, has taken the dimmer view and states that as long as the language is centered around kanzi it would be impossible to effect a stable reform. With kanzi as the basis of the written language it would be ^{only} a matter of time before more and more kanzi invaded the reformed system and then another reform would be necessary.

Romanization which is by far the most drastic type of reform with the exception of sinzisetu, the importance of which the present writer hopes will be somewhat diminished by the succeeding remarks, has made great strides considering the overwhelming odds against it.

No other country in the world except perhaps those occupied by colonial or imperial powers ever displayed the amount of voluntary romanization that was seen in Japan even before the war. It should be remembered, however, that the romanization of trade marks, billboards and the like is quite a different matter from that of romanizing the entire vocabulary of a language. It is also important to remember that it is far simpler for a people to rely on some extremely difficult and irregular system with which they are familiar rather than to accept an unfamiliar device and the consequent effort to acquire it regardless of the latter's superiority. The Japanese are by no means unique in their desire to preserve the status quo.

Kanzi Reduction

In 1872 during the instigation of compulsory education, the Minister of Education Ôgi²⁴ in an attempt to restrict the number of kanzi succeeded in having Tanaka Yosiyasu,²⁵ Ôtuki Osamu, Kubo Yosihito and Ozawa Keizirô choose the necessary characters. After as many deletions as these scholars thought possible, they submitted the total number of 3,167 kanzi which in their opinion were absolutely indispensable.²⁶

In 1885 Yano Humio wrote Nihon Buntai Mozi Sinron in which he explained that the overall number of kanzi necessary for everyday use in ordinary writing should not exceed three thousand.²⁷

The government subsequently formed a committee to examine Yano's proposal which had met with widespread approval from both officials and citizens alike. In 1886 Yano became the editor of Hôti Sinbun and began to set forth the principles of kanzi reduction. He published a three thousand character dictionary, corrected the movable type and on October 10, 1887 put into practice his restriction to three thousand kanzi. Although this experiment was to all appearances very convenient, since the spirit of reform had not yet penetrated to the majority of the people, the newspaper went into bankruptcy.³¹

Reforms in the number of characters required by compulsory education made more progress. In an attempt during Meizi by the Ministry of Education to standardize the characters of the national readers, a marked fluctuation in the required number of characters is observed.

During the years 1872 to 1900 the Ministry of Education followed the policy of attempting to teach two thousand kanzi chosen from texts approved by both official and non-official individuals within the four-year school period.³²

From 1900 to 1904 the Ministry again put into force a reduction based upon materials selected by a group of non-officials and pursued the policy of requiring that approximately one thousand two hundred kanzi be instructed during the four-year school period.³³

From 1904 to 1908 the Ministry initiated the Kokutei
³⁴
Kyôkasyo and greatly reduced the kanzi. During this period
³⁵
 approximately five hundred kanzi were required.

From 1908 through 1925 the Ministry decreed that approxi-
 mately one thousand three hundred six characters be covered in
³⁶
 six school years.

It is evident, therefore, that even prior to capitula-
 tion and the victor's subsequent suggestions to reform their
 orthography, internal pressures had already begun to lighten
 the burden of the Japanese student.

During the above mentioned attempts by the Ministry of
 Education to solve the difficulty of standardizing both the
 characters and their proper number, there were also attempts
 made by individuals not directly concerned with the Ministry
 of Education to investigate and arrive at a definite number
 of commonly used characters which could be concentrated upon
 to the exclusion of less important ones.

³⁷
 In October, 1899 the Kokuzi Kairyô Bu was established
³⁸
 by the Teikoku Kyôiku Kai and included a committee composed
³⁸
 of Nama Tunayori, Isikawa Kurazi, Iwa Hideo, Mituisi Sizuo
 and others to investigate the possibilities of character re-
 duction.

The above committee examined a proposal containing
 five articles of procedure which if followed would necessi-
³⁹
 tate the use of only five hundred kanzi.

In March, 1902 the Ministry of Education formed the
⁴⁰
Kokugo Tyôsa Iin. In July of the same year this committee

published Kanzi Yôran⁴¹ which represented the research done on the problem; however, they reached no definite plan for adequate reduction and in 1913 the committee was abolished.⁴²

In June, 1921 the Ministry of Education established the Rinzi Kokugo Tyôsa Kai⁴³ which first investigated the commonly used kanzi and in May, 1923 published a proposed selection of 1,962 honzi and one hundred fifty-four ryakuzi.⁴⁴

In May, 1931 the list was altered to 1,858 characters which is basically the same as the present Tôyô Kanzi Hyô of 1,850 characters published by the Ministry of Education, November 16, 1946.

According to Kusakabe Zyûtarô the introduction of the typewriter and monotype during the Meizi era was greatly responsible for stimulated interest in kanzi reduction.

The Sugimoto (Kyôta) typewriter required 1,890 characters, which was a considerable reduction for the time even though quite cumbersome. It required in addition to the Chinese characters, katakana, hiragana, and Gothic characters which raised the total number of symbols to two thousand five. This total was raised further by a box of eight hundred fifty-eight carefully chosen kanzi for special situations.⁴⁵

In order to impress the reader with the number of 'special' situations that might occur, it is convenient to quote Kusakabe's enumeration of various lists of characters that have entered Japan at one time or another. Kusakabe prefaces his listing with the statement, "...over eighty thousand

characters have entered Japan."⁴⁶

<u>Kôki Ziten</u>	48,641	
<u>Kaizoku Daikôkai Gyokuhen Daizen</u> (Môri Teizai)	39,567	
<u>Nihon Daigyokuhen</u> (Isikawa Kôzai)	49,450	47

The Tôyô Kanzi Hyô and its accompanying Gendai Kana-zukai has been the latest proposal offered advocating reduction in the total number of kanzi. "...on November 16, 1946 the Japanese Cabinet and Ministry of Education issued a list of 1,850 Chinese characters under the title ... 'Table of kanzi to be used for the present time.' The issuing of a list of 1,850 characters which should be used 'for the present time' presumably outlaws the use of perhaps four or five thousand other characters carried by most newspapers in the fonts that they customarily use. The reduction to 1,850 characters is undoubtedly meant to anticipate a future time when all the kanzi will be outlawed and when the Japanese language will be written entirely in romanization."⁴⁸

The close adherence to the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô⁴⁹ should immediately eliminate such forms as kaizin since the kanzi do not appear on the list of 1,850. If only the first element, kai (Chinese pronunciation), is written akuta (Japanese pronunciation) in kana, it would convey relatively the same meaning as the obscure kaizin composed of more difficult kanzi which do not appear on the list of 1,850. If such words as akuta, which have no other homophone, are written in kana, no character would be required to "complete" the

meaning. Thus, the expensive practice of writing hiragana along the side of unfamiliar characters might be easily dispensed with.⁵⁰

Stylistic atezi like urusai sometimes written with three kanzi will quickly disappear.⁵¹

After a number of years, Japanese authors should be able to express themselves entirely adequately within the limits of the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô. Naturally, experienced writers will feel somewhat restricted by the writing requirements; however, as the written language comes more closely to an approximation of the colloquial, the difficulties of seemingly restricted expression will in proportion be solved. If the written language can be forced to draw from the spoken language the necessary locutions to clarify ambiguities which now prevent phonemic recording of the language, then it will in the course of years be a relatively simple matter to make the more desirable transfer to romanization.

In order to determine the extent to which reform based on the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô and its accompanying semiphonetic spelling is being effected, it is convenient to quote again from Joseph Yamagiwa's study, Reforms in the Language and Orthography of Newspapers in Japan:

"The question, whether any kanzi or ryakuzi is used which is not in the list of 1,850 will naturally occur to the reader. The record here is rather good, since checking the kanzi of several articles against the list of 1,850 shows

almost complete conformance with the list.

"The Yomiuri seems to have taken to heart the injunction that whatever cannot be expressed in the kanzi given in the table of 1,850 should be expressed in kana.

"The newspapers are apparently trying their best to confine themselves to the kanzi in the list of 1,850, but the influence of traditional practices prevents complete conformance with the suggestions that have been made."⁵²

Concerning the success of the semiphonetic spelling rules we find:

"The response to the proposals thus to change the spellings in kana is remarkable in several respects. A survey of such spellings in the front pages of the Asahi Sinbun for November 27, 1946 and February 7, 1947 shows that the rules set forth in the table are followed with great consistency."⁵³

Tamaru Takurô showed considerable foresight in 1920 when he gave several suggestions for avoiding compounds. His list is characterized by such examples as these which follow:

<u>aruku</u>	for	<u>hokô suru</u>
<u>hairu</u>	for	<u>nyûgaku suru</u>
		<u>nyûin suru</u>
		<u>nyûei suru</u>
<u>suwaru</u>	for	<u>tyakuseki suru</u>
		<u>tyôza suru</u>

Exclusive Use of Kana

The first proposals to write the Japanese language by means of kana without the traditional admixture of kanzi dates to the middle of the eighteenth century. Kamo no Mabuti, one of the first students of the etymological and grammatical study of the Japanese language, championed such a proposal in one of his numerous works. Although he gained the support of a few adherents, and gave examples of kana writing in the Nara period, in the Man'yôsyû and cited numbers of waka and wabun of the Heian period in which almost exclusive use of kana is found, he was met with such violent opposition by the Chinese scholars of the time that the idea was abandoned.

In December, 1866 Maezima Hisoka offered the Syôgun Tokugawa Yosinobu a proposal to abolish kanzi in his work Kanzi Gohaisi no Gi which suggested that national education might be accomplished through the use of a phonetic script (onpuzi), since such had been responsible for the widespread education in Western countries.

In April 1870 Yanagawa Haruzô also published a memorial which suggested that edicts and announcements be written in kana. In May of the same year, Maezima proposed a bill to the Lower House supporting Yanagawa's proposal.

In 1872 Maezima presented to the Minister of Education Ôgi and to the Prime Minister Iwakura Migi a work entitled:

Gakusei/ni Satidati Kokuzi Kairyô Ainaritaku Hikennai Tyûsyo.

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In 1874 Kiyomizu Usaburô published a chemistry text
entitled: Monowari no Hasigo which was written entirely in
kana (hiragana). In May of the same year he wrote Hiragana
no Setu.

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In December 1881 Prof. Itô Keisuke explained the convenience of kana writing in an article in a volume of the
Tôkyô Gakusi Kaiin Zassi.

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In 1880 organized groups supporting kana writing were begun. During the next fifteen years Yosiwara Masatosi, Arisima Takesi, Kondô Sanegoto, Takazaki Masakaze, Saitoku Zirô, Maruyama Sakura, Mozu Takami, Ôtuki Humihiko and others organized the Kana no Tomo; Hida Hamagorô, Niwa Okurô, Atohuzi Makita, Konisi Nobuhati, Tuzi Yosikuki, Miyake Yonekiti and others founded the Iroha Kai; Hatano Syôgorô, Yamamoto Hikoiti, Watanabe Isamu, Itô Kinsuke and others founded the
Irohabun Kai.

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The above groups later underwent amalgamation and formed
the Kana no Kai which was divided into three groups. The
Tuki no Bu group preferred the historical spelling of words;
the Yuki no Bu preferred to spell according to the pronunciation;
and the Hana no Bu advocated improvements in the kana letters themselves.

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In July, 1884 the three groups joined for discussion; however, since no agreement as to the spelling of words could be reached there occurred another split. In July 1885 the

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Moto no Tomo and the ⁷⁸Kakikata Kairyô were formed by the
opposing members of the Irohabin Kai. These two groups
lasted until the middle of 1887.⁷⁹

In the meantime, the ⁸⁰Kana no Kai under Arisukawanomiya
⁸¹Narihito as its president, had set up its headquarters in
Tôkyô and approximately thirty branches in outlying regions.
The number of members in the Tôkyô group in July 1885 was
3,310. Before the end of 1888 it had reached the number of
5,009. The branch offices claimed over 10,000 members.⁸²

There were several publications published by this or-
ganization:

Kana no Moto

Kana no Mitihiki

Kana Sinbun

Kana no Tekagami

Kana no Manabi

Kana no Zassi

83

Kana no Sirube

⁸⁴
Suganuma Iwazô in 1895 published ⁸⁵Momotarô no Hanasi.
In 1898 and 1899 Konisi Nobuhati,⁸⁶ Yumoto Takehi and Higuti
⁸⁷
⁸⁸Kanzirô edited the ⁸⁹Syûsin Dôwa. Both of these works, Momo-
tarô no Hanasi and the Syûsin Dôwa are famous kana writings
of this early period.

⁹⁰
In 1907 Yamasita Yositarô published his Yokogaki Kata-
⁹¹kana which were katakana characters slightly modified and
written from the left of the page in Western style.

In 1912 Takao Ken'iti announced his Nihonzi which
 were very similar to Yamasita's proposal mentioned above.

In 1920 Nakamura Haruzi established the Kanagaki Hiro-
 me Kai. The official journal Kana no Mebae was written in
 squat, phonetic hiragana.

In June, 1928 Kawakami Kaiti proposed a reform of
katakana in his Kokuzi Kairyô Mondai narabini Sono Kisu which
 very much resembled the proposal by Takao. After Yamasita's
 death in 1923, the management of his project Kana Mozi Kai
 was taken over by Hosino Yukinori and Inagaki Inosuke.
 After considerable reorganization they began a monthly perio-
 dical, Kana no Hikari. This journal is today the most im-
 portant if not the only periodical devoted to the complete
 abolition of kanzi through the exclusive use of kana.

Most of the native reformists whose works have been ex-
 amined in the course of preparation of this paper have criti-
 cized the kana letters with much the same types of objections.
 One objection which seems to be the most popular is the fact
 that kana are syllables within themselves. In recording the
 one hundred nine syllables in Japanese it is inevitable that
 makeshift devices will occur when these syllabic symbols are
 resorted to in the attempt to record elemental consonants.
 Thus, the sound kyô might be written ki yo u, ki ya u,
ke u, ki yo hu, ki ya hu, or ke hu. Such variety might lead
 one to conjecture that it would be a simple matter to make
 use of this great adaptibility in creating and standardizing
 any desired form; however, this very flexibility has caused

the kana movement to wither from within through controversies waged over the 'proper' form to use.

This syllabicity is also responsible for much criticism of the inadequacy of the characters in transliterating certain foreign sounds. At times the arguments are almost convincing; that is, until one realizes that reform is being directed at the Japanese and not at some foreigner who might hear a certain word or phrase of his native tongue mutilated beyond recognition. It is no defect in the characters themselves that results in such distortion. Discrepancies between the borrowed word and its original form arise out of the differences between the phonetic systems of the two languages involved.

Similarly the English-speaker is not in the least misunderstood by other English-speakers when he uses the word reveille which is unintelligible to the French who are more accustomed to hearing réveille.

In this case the English-speaker has not only adapted the word to his phonetic system, but has also superimposed stress and added a syllable. Th's, v's, l's and f's might all very well be added to the Japanese script, but this would have no effect on the phonemic structure of the language. In just the same way, the acquisition of kana by some Americans has had absolutely no effect on the pronunciation of the word kimono when pronounced along with other English words.

Prof. Tanakadate has gone as far as to say that the main difficulty with kana letters lies in the fact that they

are not readily distinguished from one another. "The kana are each one of them the same size, and consequently the words composed of them cannot carry much distinctive appearance about them;..." and then goes on to infer that Roman letters do.

Yamasita Yositarô, however, compares kana with Roman letters by saying that the latter are all of the same type and therefore offer little distinction while on the other hand, kana are distinctively crooked.

Thus, two authorities in different camps have used the same comparison in order to make a point.

In the opinion of the present writer the kana have only one concrete advantage over other types of reform and that is their widespread recognition. The brilliance of this one point fades somewhat when it is remembered that the language as it stands today in its written form is to a great extent illegible when written exclusively in kana. In the sentences,

105
Kono niku no siru wa oisii

and

106
Ayamari o siru,

there could be no ambiguity; however, if

Kono gakkô wa siritu desu

Sono gakkô wa siritu desu

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were written in kana there would be little indication as to which school is the municipally administered and which the private.

It has been proposed that the historical kana spellings be employed, in which case many homophones would at least be separated in meaning by different spellings; however, the Japanese who are accustomed to writing these homophonous combinations of kanzi are doubtlessly unaware of these potential graphemic distinctions they are told lie behind the characters. Even if it were made clear to them that kô could be written ko u, ka u, etc., and they took the time to develop a spelling problem as we have in English, that would still account for only a few of the three hundred twenty separate morphemes of Chinese derivation listed in Ueda's Daiziten under ko u. In this respect, however, the kana are no worse off than rômazi or some type of sinzi as far as homonymity is concerned.

Mr. Narumi and Prof. Katayama have made similar proposals for romanization. They would drop the historical values in transliteration and use diacritical marks to indicate such omission: a dot over a vowel would indicate that a historical h had been dropped, thus tukau̇; a breve over a vowel would indicate that a ^{precedent} historical w had been dropped, thus, öнна, Kännon.

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Sinzisetu

Kusakabe defines sinzisetu as any proposed adoption of some idealistically constructed system of orthographic characters not included in the various devices that characterize the kana or rômazi movements.

There has been a considerable number of new proposals since early Meizi, some of which are well-known; however, as candidates for national characters, they have attracted little support or enthusiasm.

In 1885 Hiraiwa Noriyasu published Nihon Mozi no Ron which advocated the adoption of a modified form of Kamiyo Mozi consisting of nineteen characters closely resembling the Korean alphabet.

In 1886 Kozima Ittô published a type of kana which were to be joined together when handwritten.

In 1900 there was an alphabetical proposal called Nihon Sinkokuzi written by Gerstberger. Only nineteen characters were again required.

Other proposals followed:

Siwa Mozi in 1901

Ziyû Kana in 1902

Dai Nihon Kairyô Mozi in 1903

Tôa Sinzi in 1904

Hamada Yatarô's Nihonzi in 1922

Sekai Mozi in 1925

Sinkôkizi in 1929

Syômei Mozi in 1929

Sansui Mozi in 1930

Syôwa Mozi in 1930

Issin Nihonzi in 1931

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The character reform division of the Teikoku Kyôiku Kai suggested that the following questions not be overlooked

in any attempt to devise original characters:

1. The ability to record Japanese sounds adequately
2. Speed of writing
3. Ease of reading
4. Burden on the memory
5. Elasticity
6. Convenience in printing
7. Suitability for the typewriter
8. Aesthetic considerations
9. Space requirements
10. Uniformity of type

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Although several varieties of original characters satisfactorily filled the above conditions, the very fact that they were unique in so doing was a major reason for their inacceptability. The established internationality of Roman letters is without doubt the most formidable obstacle to the acceptance of an a priori orthographic system.

The section on language reform in the Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan concludes with much the same opinion:

"Thoughtful men and women everywhere, desirous of bringing lasting peace to the world, realize that wherever possible linguistic supports of the spirit of national isolation and exclusiveness need breaking down. The adoption of Romaji would constitute a major contribution to the transmission of knowledge and ideas across national boundaries."

The variety of sinzi reflects the attempt to construct a unique orthographic system by the Japanese themselves to serve as national symbols which their own culture has always lacked. In such rationalization they have ignored the fact that all modern alphabets are derived from one common source and can be considered genuinely national by no group.

Romanization

The introduction of alphabetic writing to Japan dates from the middle of the sixteenth century at which time Jesuit missionaries wrote the religious instructions in the language of the people they had come to convert.

Japanese romanization, however, can be divided into five rather distinct periods each characterized by its own particular variety of orthography. The first, second and third periods underwent Portuguese, Dutch and English influences respectively; the fourth exhibited activity among different ^{ut} synchronous systems; and the fifth has seen the rise of Japanese systems.

I. At the beginning of the first period, in the 1570's, many romanized transliterations of Japanese works as well as the Gospels, Aesop's Fables, Proverbs, a Latin grammar, etc. were printed by means of a printing press imported by the Jesuits.

The Tokugawa interdiction in the seventeenth century ended the Jesuits' operations.

II. The second period which continued through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is characterized by the establishment of relations with the Dutch and the consequent predominance of Dutch orthographic styles. Arai Hakuseki, advisor to Tokugawa Ietugu, openly admitted the convenience of the Latin alphabet and took active part in the movement to reform the written language along the lines suggested by Dutch usage.

III. In the third period the appearance of the Japanese-English dictionary by Hepburn and Kisida Ginkô proved to be of considerable importance in the advancement of romanization. The orthography adopted by Hepburn conformed to English usage; however, through the use of this dictionary romanization was to a great degree standardized.

IV. The beginning of the fourth period is marked by the creation in 1884 of the Rômazi Kai¹²³ which had as its purpose the national adoption of romanization. Shortly after its inception the government formed a forty-member Orthography Commission which in the course of discussion reviewed a proposal made by Prof. Terao now known as Nihonsiki or more properly Naikaku Kunrei Siki. Since the majority of the commission participated in the Rômazi Kai and advocated the Hepburn system, the proposal was promptly rejected by the commission as a whole.¹²⁴

In 1902 the Minister of Education named a committee whose purpose was to decide upon an orthographic system which

would be the most appropriate for the Japanese language.

In 1923 after a long, drawn out period of discussion the committee was dissolved although it had still arrived at
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no definite decision.

The year after the Russo-Japanese War a society for the propagation of Roman letters known as the Rômazi Hirome Kai was formed. Prince Saionzi was its first president. The Rômazi Hirome Kai succeeded in reuniting advocates of both the Nihonsiki and the Hepburn systems regardless of the prevailing differences in spelling and managed to publish a monthly review called Rômaji. Since it was impossible to persuade either group to change to the system of the other, the review carried articles in both types of spelling. A third group in the society was not concerned over the seemingly confused state of affairs. It was their opinion that the Hepburn system was merely a semiphonetic transcription using Roman letters, while the Nihonsiki was a national writing; the former, therefore, should be used everywhere ^{where} contact with foreigners was anticipated while the latter should be reserved
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for national uses. This third group ignored the fact that all foreigners except perhaps speakers of English, would find in either type unfamiliar pronunciations extracted from equally unfamiliar combinations of characters.

A parallel situation can be drawn by the fact that the Polish language contains perhaps the world's largest number

of consonant clusters and is at the same time one of the most well-written. No matter how distracting the spelling might prove to be to foreigners, such an attitude in no way influenced the Polish Academy in their reform of 1936.

After some time the Rômazi Hirome Kai ceased to uphold its catholicity in excluding the Nihonsiki from its publication Rômaji. The advocates of the Japanese system immediately began a journal, Rômazi Sekai, which is continued today by the Nippon no Rômazi Sya.

Thus, today there are two important romanization societies--the one following the modified Hepburn system and the other advocating the Nihonsiki.

V. The fifth period of Japanese romanization is characterized by the final recognition of the Nihonsiki and the successive adoption by various official departments.

Even though Nihonsiki is recognized by the government and appears in all official publications, the Hepburn system is deeply rooted and widely used. It is important that on two occasions, in an attempt to record their language first by the Chinese characters, and secondly by the Hepburn type of romanization, the Japanese have supported inadequate systems which in time became so thoroughly rooted in their culture that considerable effort is now required to effect their disuse.

In the opinion of the present writer the Nihonsiki is the only adequate solution yet proposed to the romanization of the Japanese language. This system is often criticized

for its misrepresentation of spoken sounds. Such criticism comes predominantly from biased English speakers who are under the illusion that Roman letters possess some inherent phonetic quality which is permanent and unchanging. It is unfortunate that those who criticize the system have not benefited by the advances made in linguistics during the last century. During the nineteenth century and before, phoneticians were occupied in constructing a large number of elaborate symbols which were representative of individual sound segments. By means of these speech sounds various languages were minutely recorded. However, the more they scrutinized the individual segments the more complicated and the more impractical the transcription became. For example, a strict phonetic recording of the Japanese d u:n ka ¹²⁷ exhibits three different symbols for the three n's employed in the Hepburn system which claims to be phonetic. Likewise, in ^{noting phonetic reality} the English word paper two symbols for p would be required since there is a phonetic difference between the two.

Towards the end of the century, however, linguists began to observe the fact that what is represented by each letter of an alphabet is not a single, particular sound, but a group of sounds which the speaker of a given language regards as a unit in the structure of that language. The variations among the submembers of such a unit are ignored by the native speaker, but on the other hand, a foreigner may very often be able to hear the differences and insist that

this difference complicate the written language as Hepburn did.

In 1931 at the Second International Congress of Linguists, Prof. Prince Trubetzkoy of the University of Vienna, pointed out the fact that the Nihonsiki system was a paragon of practical spelling according to phonemic principles:

Als Musterbeispiel für die Bedeutung der Phonologie bei der Schaffung eines praktischen Alphabets kann die heutige japanische nationale Lateinschrift dienen. Bei der Transkription japanischer Namen und Wörter bedienen sich bis jetzt die Europäer und Amerikaner einer lateinischen Transkription (des sogenannten "Hepburn'schen Systems"), die nur den phonetischen Wert der Laut wiedergab, ohne die phonologische Seite der Sprache zu beachten.

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Tamaru Takurô defends Nihonsiki thus:

"In a few words the Japanese people have their own grammar, which is founded on a full acknowledgment of the regularity of the Fifty Sounds Syllabary. This is an actual state of things which can neither be denied nor neglected. The adoption of Hepburn's system would mean the introduction of many grammatical irregularities which are not inherent to the Japanese grammar. Such a system could not possibly be recognized by the people as an adequate way of writing their own language.

"...and we believe we can, by advocating this system (Nihonsiki) secure more sympathizers with the movement for romanization among the Japanese people. The Japanese system of spelling may be said to be the key to the success of the movement.

"...it makes all grammatical matters simpler and more correct--more correct in the sense that it better corresponds to the actual philological relations as conceived and felt by the Japanese.

"...the phonetic nature is not the only property of a language; grammatical matters and other relations (such as euphonic changes) are equally if not more, important properties. If we take all such properties of the Japanese language into consideration, we may safely say that, as a system of spelling the Japanese language (not sounds only), our system of writing is more scientific than Hepburn's.

"Considering all things, it will be seen that our system affords a decided advantage for those foreigners who wish to learn Japanese; the few irregularities in pronunciation, which may at first seem inconvenient, being in fact perfectly regular irregularities, will be soon got over. Moreover, these irregularities are of a trifling nature when compared with other important matters which have escaped...the attention of most foreign students of the Japanese language."
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The comparative rapidity with which the Nihonsiki is learned by Japanese children was brought out by Tanakadate in a number of experiments:

"As for the Japanese children, the saving of whose labors is a chief common object, they can learn to read and write with the Japanese system in much less time than they can with Hepburn's system. We have actually made experiments in several of the primary schools in Tōkyō,...

"It was also tried once in a Japanese settlement in Mexico, with two similar groups of children side by side, one with the Hepburn and the other with the Japanese system of spelling, when it was found the time required was in the ratio of nearly three to two.¹³⁰"

Regardless of the superiority of the Nihonsiki system, its immediate and exclusive use faces a variety of objections many of which may also be applied to a reform advocating the immediate and exclusive use of kana.

The most inclusive difficulty facing any attempt at romanization lies in sheer habit. With a way of writing obtaining for many centuries there are great obstacles to overcome before a common understanding by a majority of the people could be attained. It is only natural that the older generation would find any change in the status quo both difficult and annoying. Japanese who are not versed in the Latin letters find them exceedingly more difficult to read than the present mixture of kana and kanzi. The mere memorization of an alphabet does not render immediate facility in reading whole sentences written in that alphabet. This comes only after considerable practice.

Dr. Inoue Tetuzirô has explained the problem thus:

"As I have already observed, nothing is easier than learning Roman letters, but if after a great many Romanized books have been published people refuse to read them, the use of Roman letters can never become universal.

"Refusal to read books written in Roman letters is the result of habit. People who have been accustomed to read Sinico-Japanese think this more convenient than simple Romanized Japanese from force of habit. This constitutes a great obstacle to the adoption of Roman letters. This attachment to old ways cannot be got rid of by mere argument. It can only be accomplished by showing people in a practical way that the Roman letters are more convenient than the symbols now in use; in order to do this, the handy and civilized (sic) Roman letters must be taught to pupils of Elementary Schools during the first year of their attendance along with the symbols hitherto used, and things must be shaped so that as these pupils grow up they may take pleasure in using Roman letters. In order to effect this, Romanized literature will be necessary, some Romanized great books will be indispensable. If there are no books written in Roman letters in existence, though Roman letters may be known to be convenient, the means of getting versed in the use of them will be wanting, as this proficiency can be obtained only by reading. But if great literary works appear in a Romanized form, people will take to reading them without being urged to do so, and though at first they may seem difficult to peruse, by practice people will get accustomed to them and will recognize their convenience, and so sooner or later our whole literary world will become Romanistic, that is, will favor the exclusive use of Roman letters. It

is the same with this as with other things, in order to make anything general, it is essential that people should turn to it naturally, that they should feel that it is something that must be carried into practice. Without this condition success is uncertain. Romanization is not to be brought about by mere argument. If you say to a people the Roman letters are convenient therefore use them, most of them, not being accustomed to these symbols, will think them inconvenient and hence will pay no attention to you. So it becomes a pressing matter to devise measures for making the use of Roman letters a practical necessity throughout the country." ¹³¹

There are some who would have the government issue a degree immediately abolishing kana and kanzi. It is further claimed that romanization would of necessity arise from the chaos produced. Modern reformers often point to the success with which the Turkish Republic made the transition from Arabic to Roman letters all within a two-year period. Although often cited as a parallel situation, the Turkish reform was merely a matter of transliteration while the Japanese problem is more involved. By dictatorial order, however, the Turkish government did hurdle the greatest obstacle to reform, namely, tradition. In such a reform the government ignored the religious and aesthetic sensitivities of the people. The literature of the past was sacrificed. Written communication between the older and the younger generations was temporarily halted. Place and proper names were arbitrarily standardized.

Even upper case letters were introduced.

According to a report by Prof. Ahmat Caferoğlu of the University of Constantinople, the benefits have well outweighed the initial inconveniences.

"In adopting Latin characters and in thus eliminating many inconvenient symbols, the Turkish language has acquired an alphabet in which each sound (sic) is represented by only one letter, whereas before several letters represented the same sound. ...thirty letters of the modern alphabet now advantageously replace the ninety letters of the older system.

"The adoption of Latin characters has led also to a simplification of the language. The secular usage of Arabic characters had introduced into the language many Arabic words and expressions. The modern alphabet, however...renders representation of these foreign words very difficult and as a consequence they will sooner or later be eliminated. In four years, that is to say, since the adoption of Latin characters, Turkish has dropped a fourth of such words and expressions which had been used for centuries. The replacement of these words by Turkish equivalents has contributed to the rise of words which would have otherwise been forgot. A result of the reform therefore has been to render the language both simpler and richer.

"The Arabic alphabet carried no capital letters and therefore a serious deficiency has been filled.

"Roman letters have opened new fields of philological research. Many dialectal works and examples of popular

literature have appeared which will make it possible to collect and classify existing dialects. In gathering folklore with the aid of the new characters, one accomplishes a double purpose: first, the extraction from different dialects of a vocabulary composed of true Turkish sounds which have already replaced the Arabic, secondly, one will be able to write basic and definitive grammars based on the best pronunciation according to the Turkish structure. Before 1928 there was no means of writing the various dialects so that differences in pronunciation would be observed and as a consequence no comparative grammar or dictionary had ever been made.

"The adaptation of Latin characters to the Turkish language now affords more convenient access to Europeans who were once obliged to learn Arabic characters.

"Romanization has exercised considerable influence on the grammar: Sentences are shorter because they are no longer patterned after the archaic written style and more natural because they now record the thoughts of the writer rather than the stereotype formulas of the ancients.

"Romanization now permits well defined rules for punctuation.

"Within this four-year period romanization taught in public night-schools has permitted approximately two million people to learn to read.

"In order to encourage the continued reading of the people, many new libraries composed of romanized books have

been opened. Each provincial government furnishes these libraries with books published by the government press and with useful works published by private firms.

"Accurate statistics are not yet available, but, from the appearance of so many new libraries, the number of books now being printed has expanded considerably.

"Minority groups may now easily learn the written language a fact which was previously obviated by the difficulty inherent in the script.

"Turks who are desirous of learning foreign languages (Caferoğlu obviously implies languages written in Roman letters) will be better equipped.

"Before 1928, formulas used in chemistry, geometry, physics and algebra were taught in Arabic letters. The teaching of international sciences has been facilitated by the reform since it has enabled Turkish schools to conform to universal conventions used in those sciences.

"Romanization has greatly simplified printing. Before 1928 all type had to be hand-set at the rate of 4,500 characters in six hours; today, 7,000 Roman characters can be set in the same time.

"Books which previously sold for thirty Turkish pounds now sell for twenty which is a considerable saving.

"Thousands of women have found employment as stenographers because of the widespread use of typewriters."
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The Turkish reform should serve as an example to the Japanese people. It also should serve as an illustration of the ease with which certain seemingly unattainable goals have been reached by another people encumbered by an unwieldy orthography which reflects the unassimilative superposition of foreign culture.

Since the particular problems of each individual country are unique, it would go without saying that Japan is not in exactly the same dilemma that faced Turkey twenty years ago nor would the immediate romanization of the Japanese orthography produce exactly the same results.

Many antiromanizers would have to concede the fact that direct action by the Japanese government has often been extremely powerful in effecting revolutionary alterations of traditional institutions. These same individuals who oppose the change will also concede the point that other countries besides Turkey have been forced by the government to alter their orthographic systems.

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Objections based on the desire of the Japanese to remain nationalistically exclusive in the use of a unique orthography should be dispelled by the impressive list of countries that already have active romanization movements. It should serve as an indication that methods of recording language have lost a great deal of their emotive qualities formerly relied upon to further nationalistic sentiments.

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The antiromanizer may still however raise the question of homophonous words which looms to exaggerated proportions in the eyes of most Japanese who oppose reform. On the other

hand, advocates of romanization often oversimplify this aspect of reform. Tamaru Takurô in response to criticism of this weak point actually states:

"However, the ambiguities mentioned earlier (homophonous examples) do not result from any deficiency in the Roman letters, without doubt, they stem from a defect in the Japanese language."¹³⁶

In a brief examination of random material the following percentages of homophonous words were found:

<u>Kokugo no Atarasii Kakikata</u>	28.6%	137
<u>Rômazi Sekai</u>	38.5%	138
<u>Bukkyô Ronrigaku</u>	52.6%	139

In this particular, restricted case it appears that the smallest number of ambiguous words occurs in writing based on the principles and restrictions outlined in the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô (and the Gendai Kanazukai). In addition to the above figures it is important to note that in the first two examples, the context clarified the homophonous words, even if the selection from the Kokugo no Atarasii Kakikata had been written in Roman letters or read. In the third example, however, that taken from Bukkyô Ronrigaku, it is the opinion of the present writer that only a specialist in the particular field covered by the work could decipher a romanized version, and even then, it would not be readily understood.

To all appearances, therefore, there is a definite trend toward the disuse of homophonous ambiguities. In romanized

writing the decrease has been occasioned by the impossibility of using certain words and combinations of words where the context might possibly allow their ~~mis~~^sinterpretation. Likewise, the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô has brought about a similar result through the efforts of writers to stay within the restricted number of characters.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of the present writer that in effecting the reform embodied in the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô, the Japanese government has indirectly initiated the ultimate romanization of the written language.

The very title of this paper indicates that the Japanese themselves are concerned with the difficulties encumbering their written language. The historical enumeration of various types of reforms has also shown that the Japanese had considered reform well before the end of the war and its attendant reforms. The argument for reform, therefore, is not unfamiliar to the majority of the Japanese. It has, however, taken a war to cause reform (Tôyôkanzihyô) to be placed into the realm of practicality rather than into that of idealism. The occupation of Japan by the United States has given the stimulus which no one had previously been powerful enough to effect. The sacrosanct nature of the traditional orthography has been ignored by the military authorities' suggestion that the Japanese effect a reform in their writing. Although, the Japanese have been well aware of the difficulties inherent in

their orthographic system and the history of reform proposals is not short, no practical, nation-wide reform had been initiated until the occupation.

I have used above the word "ultimate" because at present there are two broadly inclusive factors which prevent the romanization of the language in its present written form:

1. Ambiguity

The large number of homophonous words in anything but the simplest of colloquial speech renders it impossible to employ romanization of the language at its present stage of development (Cf. percentages given on page 45 above).

2. Tradition

a. The Japanese as a rule are naturally unfamiliar with romanization and therefore consider the characters difficult to learn to read.

b. If the Japanese must choose between books written in Chinese characters and books written in Roman Characters, the former will be chosen through sheer force of habit.

Even though this state of affairs so conditions the situation that immediate abolition of kanzi is at present impossible, there are very definite indications that the Japanese written language is undergoing considerable change.

The Tôyô Kanzi Hyô has been responsible for such change and from all available information one would expect the trend toward colloquialization of the written language to be continued.

It has been conjectured that the remarkable gains made in the simplification of the written language have been effected through the special conditions of the occupation which have been responsible for many of the novelties of post-war Japan; however, in the opinion of the present writer, although the reform was initiated primarily through the submission of the Japanese to 'suggestions' offered by the occupying authorities, it is not a faddist movement which will fall into decay soon after the military supervision by the Allies will have terminated.

Previous kanzi reduction proposals made by the Japanese do not parallel the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô. Reforms initiated prior to 1946 were intended primarily as a standardization of the characters to be taught in public schools, and had no restrictive effect on the total number of kanzi which might or might not have been used in novels, newspapers, magazines, etc. Thus, even though a restricted number of kanzi were taught in elementary schools, the very fact that novels, newspapers, magazines and the like necessitated a greater number of kanzi than had been learned in school, the earlier restrictive lists were ineffective--the burden of the young pupil was lessened somewhat but the graduate still had some three thousand characters yet before him which he must have absorbed in one way or another; if not, he remained semi-illiterate.

The unique quality of the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô is that its promulgation has struck at the roots of the character problem and has not merely postponed the deluge of logograms which inevitably followed under the former proposals.

It should be remembered that the list of 1,850 characters which the Japanese government rapidly whipped into shape was not a product of Allied genius. This basic list is the end result of years of inquiry and investigation into a problem which has long plagued progressive Japanese thinkers.

The long history of the character problem, high points of which have been discussed in the foregoing sections of this paper, illustrates without doubt that the Japanese have been thoroughly cognizant of the difficulties involved in any reform of their written language.

The occupation has, however, begun the removal of the chief obstacle to the ultimate romanization of the Japanese language, namely, tradition.

Furthermore, it is the present writer's opinion that Japanese authors in following the principles outlined in the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô will rapidly evolve a new medium of written expression which will be devoid of ambiguous locutions and be based upon colloquial speech patterns. Words like siritu meaning both public and private will perhaps become siritu (private) as opposed to kôritu (public). There is here sufficient contrast to allow perfect comprehension and since no other kôritu is an adjective followed by no there would also be no ambiguity in this respect. I am told that the Japanese when speaking would never use the word

siritu for public, but rather kôritu. Therefore, it should be repeated that the ability to romanize the language will always be proportionate to the degree of colloquialization present in the written style. This corresponds to the basic assumption of the linguist that any forms which are understood when spoken will be understood when written provided that a well written, phonemic orthography is followed when writing the forms.

With the introduction into elementary schools of Roman letters and a standardized system for applying them, their difficult and unfamiliar appearance which so chagrins the present day Japanese will be entirely dispelled.

One generation's use of the Tôyô Kanzi Hyô (not in reading, but in writing) will have worked the anticipated simplification of the written language and a practical working knowledge of Roman letters will have permeated the entire population. With such preparation and planning, the transition from kanzi to rômazi may be effected even by a conservative government with considerably more ease than that initiated by Ataturk, who without the slightest preparation dictated the Turkish reform of 1928.

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Monbusyô, 1871

Yamasita Takutarô 山下卓太郎

Kana mozi no kairyô 假名文字の改良

(Reform of the Japanese syllabary)

Kokuzi kairyô 国字改良

(National character reform)

Kokuzi kairyô no hituyô 国字改良の必用

(The necessity of reforming the national characters)

Yano Humio 矢野文雄

Nihon buntai bunzi sinron 日本体文字新論

(A fresh approach to Japanese style and characters)

Yatabe Ryôkiti 矢田部良吉

羅馬字を以つて日本語を綴りの説

(An explanation of the spelling of Japanese in Roman letters)

Zitikan 自治館

Kokugo kairyô iken 国語改良異見

(Divergent views on reform of the national language)

K. Zinbô

"The word-tone of the standard Japanese language," Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution, v.3, pt.4, pp.659-667.



N O T E S



"KRAFT"
FOLDER

THE KRAFT SYSTEM
NO. K 321 1/2 FOLDER
MADE IN U. S. A.

Notes

Japanese Writing Reforms

NOTES

1. George B. Sansom

Japan: A short cultural history, New York, Appleton-Century, 1931, p.36

2. Yamato kotoba

The spoken language of the Yamato clan before the influx of Chinese borrowings which occurred soon after the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. It has been used today by an advocate of character abolition as a term to designate "pure Japanese," i. e., any Japanese words which are not of Chinese origin may be considered Yamato kotoba

3. Man'yôgana

Literally: Letters used in the Man'yôsyû, a compilation of poems in ca. 759 by Tatibana no Moroe (立花 諸兄). The poems were written by means of Chinese characters used phonetically, i. e., indigenous, Japanese words were written with characters devoid of semantic value. At first the choice of characters to represent Japanese syllables was a matter of individual fancy and it may be imagined that in the beginning there was great confusion. Characters were used in the Man'yôsyû both semantically and phonetically and both types were so numerous and were used in so irregular a fashion that the difficulty of giv-

ing the correct reading is indescribable

4. Hiragana

As the phonetic Man'yôgana came into wider use, the need for some less cumbersome method grew plainer.

During the ninth century a syllabary, composed of abbreviated Chinese characters, cursively written, selected to represent one Japanese syllable each, was evolved. Tradition ascribes this development to Kôbô Daisi and it is quite likely that he made the choice, for he was a renowned calligrapher, and his Sanskrit studies must have convinced him of the advantages of a simple phonetic script.

5. Katakana

A syllabary whose development is ascribed to Kibi in the eighth century. It was composed of symbols derived from some element of a character which was chosen to represent the phonetic value of the whole. Katakana is angular and suggests derivation from the kaisyo or square type of character while the soft lines in hiragana suggest the sôsyô, or, cursive type of character.

6. Kaisyo

An angular, block-letter type of writing, e. g., (利); most of the books printed today are written in this style

7. Gyôsyô

A more cursive style of handwriting than the kaisyo which is usually found in personal correspondence, e. g., (利)

8. Sôsyô
An extremely abbreviated, flowing style of writing which is usually used today primarily for artistic effects, e. g., (物)
9. Takenobu Yositarô
Sin waei daiziten 新和英辞典
(New Japanese-English dictionary), Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1942, American edition.
10. Joseph K. Yamagiwa
Modern conversational Japanese, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1942, p.5
11. Oreste Pletner
"Musical accent in Japanese morphology," Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution, v.3, pt.3, p.448
12. Leonard Bloomfield
Language, New York, Holt, 1933, p.116
13. M. G. Mori
The pronunciation of Japanese, Tôkyô, Herald-Sha, 1929, p.223
14. 新井白石
15. Kusakabe Zyûtarô 日下部重太郎
Kokuzi mondai 国字問題
(The national character problem), Tôkyô, Meizi Syoin, 1933, p.6

16. 加茂真淵

17. 南部義篤

18. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.18

19. Ibid., p.6

20. Examples of sinzi will be given in the section entitled: Sinzisetu; or, see Note #112

21. Transcription phonétique et translittération. Conférence de Copenhague, Oxford, 1926, p.6

22. Tanakadate Aikitu 田中館愛橘

Kuzu no ne 葛の根

(The root of the arrowroot), Tôkyô, Nippon Rômazi Sya, 1938, pp.143-4

23. Joseph K. Yamagiwa

"Reforms in the language and orthography of newspapers in Japan," J. A. O. S., v.68, no.1, January-March, 1948, 1.1

24. 大木

25. 田中義廉

大槻修二

久保吉人

小澤圭二郎

26. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.6
27. 矢野文雄
28. 日本文体文字新論
29. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.6
30. 報知新聞
31. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.6
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p.7
34. 国帝教科書
35. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.7
36. Ibid.
37. 国字改良部
帝國教育会
38. 南摩島圖記
石川倉久
巖秀雄
三石貞夫
39. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.7
40. 国語調査委員

41. 漢字要覽
42. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.7
43. 臨時國語調査会
44. Kusakabe, op. cit. p.7
45. Ibid., p.8
46. Ibid., p.9
47. 康熙字典
 增續大度會玉篇大全
 (毛利貞齋)
 日本大玉篇
 (石川鴻齋)
48. Joseph K. Yamagiwa
 "Reforms in the language and orthography of newspapers in Japan," J. A. O. S., v.68, no.1, January-March, 1948, p.47, 3.1
49. 芥塵
50. Cf. Hakusui Sya, ed. 白水社
Hurigana haisiron to sono hihan (り)がな廢止論とその批判
 (The proposed abolition of hurigana and its criticism)
 Hakusui Sya, Tôkyô, 1938
51. Monbusyô. Kokugo Mondai Kenkyû Kai
 文部省 國語問題研究会
Atarasii bunsyô no tebiki 新しい文章の手引
 (A guide for the new writing),
 Tôkyô, Zizi Tûsin Sya, 1947; itutu/tuki/hai
 五月蠅

52. Joseph K. Yamagiwa
 "Reforms in the language and orthography of newspapers in Japan," J. A. O. S., v.68, no.1, January-March, 1948, p.48, 3.4, 3.5
53. Ibid., p.49, 3.10
54. Tamaru Takurô 田丸卓郎
Rômazibun no kenkyû コーマ字文の研究
 (A study of romanization), Tôkyô, Nippon Rômazi Sya, 1920, p.179
55. 梅の花の歌 (三十一首), 鳥梅能波奈, 伊麻佐可利奈理
56. waka (和歌)
 A thirty-one syllable Japanese ode; a tanka
57. wabun (和文)
 Literature composed in Yamato kotoba as opposed to kanbun, literature composed in Chinese style
58. 前田密
59. 漢字御廢止の議
60. 音符字
- 61 仰川春三
62. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.12
63. 岩倉右

64. 学制御施行に先ち国字改良相成'度卑見内中書

Kusakabe, op. cit., p.12

65. 清水卯三郎

66. 此のわりのはしこ

67. 平假名の説

Kusakabe, op. cit., p.12

68. 伊藤圭介

69. Tôkyô gakusi kaimin zasshi
東京学士会院雜誌
v.3, no.10, December 1881

Kusakabe, op. cit., p.12

70. 吉原正俊 大槻文彦
有島猛
近藤真琴 かなのとら
高崎正風
西徳二郎
丸山作樂
物集高見

71. 肥田濱五郎
丹羽雄九郎
後藤牧太
小西信八
辻敬文
三宅米吉

いろはくわい

72. 波多野承五郎
山本彦一
渡邊治
伊藤欽亮

いろはぶんくわい

73. かなのくわい

74. つきのぶ [月の部]
75. ゆきのぶ [雪の部]
76. はなのぶ [花の部]
77. 儿とのとれ
78. かきかたがいらようぶ
79. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.13
80. かなのくわい
81. 有栖川宮威仁
82. Kusakabe, op. cit., p.13
83. かなのとれ
 かなのみちびき
 かなしんぶん
 かなのてがみ
 かなのまなび
 かなのざつし
84. かなのしるべ
 菅沼岩藏
85. 桃太郎の部
86. 小西信八
87. 湯本武比
88. 樋口勘次郎
89. 修身童話

90. 山下芳太郎
91. ヨコガキカタカナ
92. 高尾謙一
93. ニホンジ
94. 中村春ニ
95. かながき ひろみかい
96. かなの めはえ
97. 川上嘉市
98. 国字問題並に其歸趨
99. カナモジカイ
100. 星野行則
 梶垣伊之助
101. カナノヒカリ
102. トウキョウトブンキョウク]マゴメ カミフジマエ 151,
 カナモジカイ
103. Tanakadate, op. cit., p.143
104. Tamaru Takurô 田丸卓郎
 Rômazi kokuzi ron ローマ字国字論
 (The controversy over Roman letters and kanzi), Tôkyô,
 Nippon Rômazi Sya, 1914, p.236: Tamaru here quotes
 from Yamasita's Kokuzi Kairyô no hituyô

105. 此の肉の汁は旨しい

106. 誤りを知る

107. 此の学校は私立です
其の学校は市立です

108. ka u, ku wa u, ka hu, ko u are the only alternate, historical spellings listed in Monbusyô, Mondai Kenkyû Kai, op. cit., p.293

109. Ueda Mannen 上田 萬年
Daiziten 大辞典
(Dictionary), Cambridge, Harvard University Press,
1942, American edition

111. Tamaru Takurô
Rômazibun no kenkyû
(op. cit., Note 54) pp.41-47

112. Sinzi 新字

Examples:

1. Kozima Ittô (小島一勝) 1898

a. ka ki ku ke ko
カ キ ク ケ コ handwriting

カ キ ク ケ コ printing

b. ha hi hu he ho
ハ ヒ フ ヘ ホ handwriting

ハ ヒ フ ヘ ホ printing

c. Written together thus:

Handwritten examples of character combinations:
 H H 2
 E E 11
 の の 毛
 O O :
 O O 口
 E E 且
 F F 毛
 = = O
 X X 七
 F F 子

2. Omori Yukinori (小森 徳之) 1902

"Ziyû Kana" (自由假名)

a. na ni nu ne no

ナ ニ ヌ ネ ノ

b. ka ki ku ke ko

カ キ ク ケ コ

c. kya kyu kyo

カ キ ヲ

d. za zi zu ze zo

ザ ズ ズ エ ズ

e. pa pi pu pe po

パ ピ プ ペ ポ

f. Written together thus:

Handwritten examples of character combinations:
 H H H Y
 E E E R O
 H Y H

3. Masuda Otusiro (増田 乙四郎) 1903

"Dai Nihon Kairyô Mozi" (大日本改良文字)

a. HA HI HU HE HO

ハ ヒ フ ヘ ホ

printing

ほ ひ ふ へ ほ

handwriting

b. ha hi hu he ho
 ㄏ ㄏ ㄏ ㄏ ㄏ

printing

ほ ひ ふ へ ほ

handwriting

4. Maeda Mokuhô (前田黙鳳) 1904

"Tôa Sinzi" (東亜新字)

魚 魚
 魚 魚

5. Kobayasi Hôzyu (小林法樹)

a ka sa ta na ha ma ya ra wa ga za da
 ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ / ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ ㄐ
 ba
 ㄐ

113. 平岩 愼保

114. 日本文字の論

115. 神代文字

116. 小島一蔵

117. 日本新国字

118. ゲルストベルガー

119. 視 話 文 字
 自由假名
 大日本改良文字
 東亞新字
 濱田彌太郎の日本字
 世界文字
 新乙姫字
 昭明文字
 山水文字
 昭和文字
 一新日本文字

Kusakabe, op. cit., pp. 27, 28, 29

120. Ibid, p.29

121. United States Education Mission to Japan, Report,
 Tôkyô, S. C. A. P., 1946, p.23

122. George B. Sansom

op. cit., p.434

123. Tamaru Takurô

Rômazibun no kenkyû

op. cit., p.1

124. Dossiers de la Coopération Intellectuelle

L'Adoption universelle des caractères latins, Paris,

Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle,

1934, p.99

125. Ibid., p.99

126. Ibid., pp.99-100

127. 十年間
128. Deuxième Congrès International de Linguistes,
Actes, Genève, 1931, p.122
129. Tamaru Takurô
Pocket handbook of colloquial Japanese, Tôkyô
1928, 2d ed., introd.
130. Maison Franco-Japonaise, Bulletin, v.XLVI,
October-December, 1920
131. Asiatic Society of Japan, Transactions, v.
XLI, pt.1, 1913, pp.18-19
132. The Arabic alphabet contains no upper case
letters. Elaboration of the letters occurs
in the distinctive forms for word-initial,
-medial and -final positions
133. Dossiers de la Coopération Intellectuelle,
op cit., pp. 123, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.
134. Poland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Mongolia,
Russia, Czechoslovakia
135. Dossiers... op. cit., disregard above pagina-
tion
136. Tamaru Takurô
Romazi kokuzi ron (op. cit., Note 104) p.19

137. Monbusyô. Kokugo Mondai Kenkyû Kai.
op. cit., disregard pagination
138. Rômazi sekai, v.38, no.1, March 1, 1948
139. Uihaka Hisasi 宇井伯壽
Bukkyô ronrigaku 佛教論理学
(Buddhist logic), Tôkyô, Syuppan Sya, 1936

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