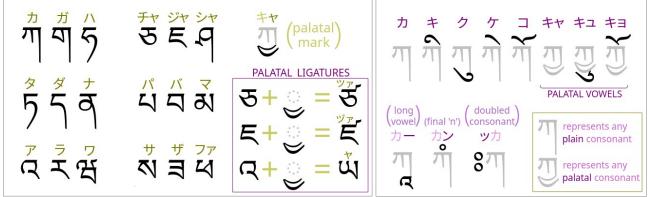# CHIBETTO MOJI ཅབེཿཏོ་མོཧི チベット文字

Introduction:

Chibetto Moji is an adaptation of the Tibetan Uchen script for writing Japanese. The name literally means 'Tibetan characters' in Japanese. This script is intended to be more straightforward and comprehensive than Japanese Kana (both Hiragana and Katakana) in its phonetic representation of Japanese words. Morphemes are delimited from each other like in Tibetan, thus there is no distinction between orthography of native Japanese words and loan words; they can be told apart from the context.

Although Chibetto Moji doesn't encode any semantic content of Japanese words, one is permitted to use Kanji characters if that makes it easier to understand. Chibetto Moji also permits the use of Tibetan 'letter heads' to distinguish different words with identical pronunciation from each other. Nevertheless, the standard use of Chibetto Moji doesn't feature any Kanji characters or Tibetan letter heads since they generally aren't necessary.

The Script:

In the following images, the consonants (with inherent 'a' sound) of Chibetto Moji, labelled with equivalents in Katakana and the vowel marks are shown on a greyed out consonant 'ཀ' labelled with equivalents in the 'k' series of Katakana. Along with the vowels are 3 embellishment marks labelled with equivalents in Katakana:

There are some differences between Chibetto Moji and the Uchen used for Tibetan. In Chibetto Moji:
◆ fewer letters are used than in Tibetan
◆ each letter sounds the same wherever it is in a word; they are phonetically consistent
◆ there are no silent letters other than the 3 optional 'letter heads' (more on that later)
◆ there are no consonant clusters although the [◌ྱ] mark can be used on consonants
  ○ this mark is called the 'palatal mark' in Chibetto Moji
  ○ when added to a consonant, it follows it with a 'y' sound, like in Tibetan
  ○ some regular Tibetan letters are treated as ligatures of Chibetto Moji letters with this mark:
    ■ [ཚ] + [◌ྱ] becomes [ཚ]. this is pronounced like [ts]; this is a special case of palatalization
    ■ [ཛ] + [◌ྱ] becomes [ཛ]. this is pronounced like [dz]; this is a special case of palatalization
    ■ [འ] + [◌ྱ] becomes [ཡ]. this is pronounced like 'y' as a consonant.
  ○ No other consonants combine with each other in Chibetto Moji
◆ each letter (including vowel marks and embellishments) represents 1 syllable, and vice versa
◆ the letter [འ] is always used instead of [ཨ], to represent any vowel not followed by a consonant
◆ the letter [ཕ] is used for the 'f' sound

As seen above, a total of 18 plain consonants, 1 'palatal mark', 8 vowels and 3 embellishments are used in Chibetto Moji. The palatal mark can be attached to most plain consonants to add a 'y' sound to it, occasionally forming ligatures with the consonant and/or modifying its pronunciation.

The 8 vowels occur as marks placed above and below consonants to form syllables. Among these, there are 5 plain vowels [ア, イ, ウ, エ, オ] and 3 palatal vowels [ヤ, ユ, ヨ]. The plain vowels are used on plain consonants and palatal vowels, on palatalized consonants.

The 3 embellishment marks, shown here below the vowel marks, can be added to any syllable to perform their functions. The 'anusvara' mark has been adapted here to act as a final 'n' [ン] added at the end of some Japanese syllables. The 'visarga' mark has been adapted here to double a following consonant like the [ツ] mark.

The following table shows the various syllables used in Chibetto Moji labelled with equivalents in Katakana.
Those syllables shown in grey are not formally used in Japanese but can be used for proper nouns and loan words:

カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ	キャ	キュ	キョ
ガ	ギ	グ	ゲ	ゴ	ギャ	ギュ	ギョ
ハ	ヒ		ヘ	ホ	ヒャ	ヒュ	ヒョ
チャ	チ	チュ	チェ *(grey)*	チョ	ツャ *(grey)*	ツ	ツォ *(grey)*
ヂャ / ジャ	ヂ / ジ	ヂュ / ジュ	ヂェ / ジェ *(grey)*	ヂョ / ジョ	ヅャ *(grey)*	ヅ	ヅォ *(grey)*
シャ	シ	シュ	シェ *(grey)*	ショ			
タ	チィ *(grey)*	トゥ *(grey)*	テ	ト			
ダ	ヂィ *(grey)*	ドゥ *(grey)*	デ	ド	ドャ *(grey)*	ドュ *(grey)*	ドョ *(grey)*
ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ	ニャ	ニュ	ニョ
パ	ピ	プ	ペ	ポ	ピャ	ピュ	ピョ
バ	ビ	ブ	ベ	ボ	ビャ	ビュ	ビョ
マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ	ミャ	ミュ	ミョ
ワ	ヰ *(grey)*		ヱ *(grey)*	ヲ			
ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ	ヤ	ユ	ヨ
ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ	リャ	リュ	リョ
サ		ス	セ	ソ			
ザ		ズ	ゼ	ゾ			
ファ *(grey)*	フィ *(grey)*	フ	フェ *(grey)*	フォ *(grey)*	フャ *(grey)*	フュ *(grey)*	フョ *(grey)*

Note: 1 or more of the 3 embellishment marks can be used on any of the syllables above, to form more syllables.

While Chibetto Moji focuses on the phonetic representation of Japanese, the Japanese language itself uses a lot of homophones with very different meanings. Chibetto Moji offers a couple of options to distinguish between homophones. One could either use Kanji characters in place of some Chibetto Moji words, to specify their meaning, or use Tibetan 'letter heads' to mark words with different meaning yet identical pronunciation apart. Both these features are optional and can be used to one's discretion.

The Tibetan letter heads are basically miniature Uchen letters placed on top of the consonant in a syllable without modifying the pronunciation of the syllable. Like in Tibetan, Chibetto Moji offers 3 letter heads, which don't carry any phonetic value, but can be used on different words of identical pronunciation to tell them apart:

There are no well-defined rules as to which letter head must be used where as long as different heads are used on different homophones.

Like in Tibetan, the morphemes in Chibetto Moji are separated using the 'morpheme break' mark [ˈ]. This eases the reading of Japanese text by displaying the native vocabulary, grammatical particles and loan words in a sentence, discretely. The Tibetan comma separator [།] and sentence break mark [༔] are used for punctuation.

Sample Text:

The following sample text is the Japanese version of article 1 of the UDHR, using Chibetto Moji. It uses the standard form of Chibetto Moji (i.e. without optional features like letter heads or Kanji):

ཤུ་བེ་ཏེ་ནོ་ནིང་གེན་ཁ ༔ ཆུམ་རེ་ནགར་ནི་ཡི་ཏེ་ཨི་ཡུ་ཏེ་འར་ར ༔ གཙུ ༔ སོ་གོ་ཏོ་ཀོ་རེ་ཏོ་ནི་ཅུ་འི་ཏེ་བྱོ་དོ་ཏེ་འ་རུ།

ནིང་གེན་ཁ ༔ རི་སེ་ཏོ་ཪིང་ནིང་ཏོ་ཕོ་སཱ་ཀ་ར་རེ་ཏེ་འ་རི ༔ ཏ་ག་འི་ནི་དོ་ནོ་སེ་ནིང་ཕོ་མོ༔ཏེ་ཀོ་དོ་ཤིན་ཀ་རེ་བན་ར་ན་བེ།