

*National Geospatial Intelligence Agency  
and  
United States Board on Geographic Names*

From: BGN Foreign Names Committee Staff

Memo: Guidance on Proper Usage of Quotes

Draft 3

March 20, 2006

## **Background**

In BGN/PCGN-approved Romanized names, only three distinct types of quotes are used.

1. (2018) Left Single Quotation Mark: ‘

*Represents the Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Pushto letter ‘ayn; the pharyngeal fricative in Amharic; and the glottal stop in Austronesian languages such as Hawaiian, Samoan, Tahitian, and Tongan.*

2. (2019) Right Single Quotation Mark: ’

*Represents the Arabic, Persian, and Pushto Hamza; the Amharic glottal stop; ejective articulation in Amharic and Armenian; plain (aspirated) articulation in Georgian; the apostrophe in Azerbaijani and Macedonian; the Cyrillic soft sign; syllable separation in Chinese Pinyin; alef in Hebrew; tense consonants in Korean;*

3. (201D) Right double Quotation Mark: ”

*Represents the hard sign in Cyrillic.*

For each of these three types of quotes, several different Unicode code points have been used in the past. There is a need to standardize these various values to three standard Unicode values. The values recommended below follow guidance from the Unicode Consortium.

**Table 1: Mappings from non-standard quotes to standard quotes**

<i>Standard Unicode Character</i>	<i>Unicode Name</i>	<i>Standard Hexadecimal Value</i>	<i>Non-standard Unicode Character</i>	<i>Unicode Name</i>	<i>Non-standard Hexadecimal Value</i>
‘	LEFT SINGLE QUOTATION MARK	2018	’	SINGLE HIGH_REVERSED-9 QUOTATION MARK	201B
			˘	GRAVE ACCENT	0060

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			‘	MODIFIER LETTER TURNED COMMA	02BB
			◌◌	MODIFIER LETTER REVERSED COMMA	02BD
			◌	HEAVY SINGLE TURNED COMMA QUOTATION MARK ORNAMENT	275B
’	RIGHT SINGLE QUOTATION MARK	2019	’	MODIFIER LETTER APOSTROPHE	02BC
			‛	APOSTROPHE	0027
			◌	HEAVY SINGLE COMMA QUOTATION MARK	275C
”	RIGHT DOUBLE QUOTATION MARK	201D	“	DOUBLE HIGH- REVERSED-9 QUOTATION MARK	201F
			”	QUOTATION MARK	0022
			”	DOUBLE PRIME	2033
			◌	HEAVY DOUBLE COMMA QUOTATION MARK ORNAMENT	275E
			”	DOUBLE PRIME QUOTATION MARK	301E
			“	LEFT DOUBLE QUOTATION MARK	201C
			◌	HEAVY DOUBLE TURNED COMMA QUOTATION MARK	275D
			”	REVERSE DOUBLE PRIME QUOTATION MARK	301D

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			“	DOUBLE REVERSED-9 QUOTATION MARK	HIGH- 201F
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## **Recommendations**

### 1. NGA / BGN /PCGN Policies

All Unicode code points listed in Table 1 below shall be mapped into one of the three standard code points.

The mapping shall be accomplished for the following functions:

- (a) Database validation and standardization: all of the non-standard quote characters listed in Table 1 in the GNDB shall be converted to one of the three standard values.
- (b) Batch ingest validation: all incoming batch files shall use only standard quote values. A filter shall either reject files which contain non-standard quotes, or else fix them before ingest.
- (c) GNS Query Interface: all queries which contain quotes shall be standardized by the interface before processing, so as to contain only standard quote values for searches.

### 2. User-level Solutions

Users of Microsoft Office products who are preparing files for ingest into the GNDB should take care to disable the ‘smart quotes’ feature within Office. This feature replaces certain quote characters with others, and can result in problems if not disabled.

Within Microsoft Office, quote characters (as with all Unicode characters) may be entered using their hexadecimal values, by typing the hexadecimal value, and then the sequence ALT-x. For example, to enter the right single quotation mark in MS-Word, type 2019, then type ALT-x immediately afterwards.