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TRANSCRIPTION OF THE CYRILLIC ALPHABET IN ROMAN CHARACTERS

Paper submitted by the Government of the
Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

Transcription of the Cyrillic Alphabet in Roman Characters

**(The viewpoint of the Czechoslovak delegation
to the suggest of the Soviet and of the Bulgarian delegation)**

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Transcription of the Cyrillic Alphabet in Roman Characters
(To the suggest
of the Soviet and of the Bulgarian delegation)

In Czechoslovakia the transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet (Russian alphabet) had been great concern of the Transliteration Commission of the Slavonic Institute as early as in 1939.

A draft for transliteration, published in Slavia journal (No. 7, 1939, pp. 317 - 320), was accepted and implemented in the issues of Czech scientific institutions, in scientific journals as well as specialized libraries. The draft was published anew in the same journal in 1951 (pp. 158 - 161) and approved by the Commission on Terminology in 1953, some other languages having been included.

The basic principles of both the original and the later drafts are the following: the issue here is a transliteration, which is to make a precise reverse transcription possible, to render each character of the Russian alphabet in one Roman letter, and to manage all this with the characters of the Slavonic Roman alphabet. At the same time, the Commission took into full account the latinization that is either generally established in a language, as is the case in Serbian, or officialy acknowledged, as it is the case of the proposal of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union. It was necessary to introduce certain differences in the transcription of individual languages with respect to the divergent sound validity of some characters or to the different degree of latinization already

established. Also the principal relationship between the graphical and sound systems in a language was paid attention to so that the differential value of the graphical system might not be wiped off.

This transliteration, the so-called scientific transcription, is to meet the needs of scientific publications and specialized libraries even today; for the needs of the current press, general publications, newspapers as well as generalizing scientific journals and publications the Transliteration Commission has devised a simplified transcription, called current transcription, which forms a supplement of orthographical principles of the Pravidla českého pravopisu, Praha 1969.

This current transcription lays down how to write foreign words and names in a connected Czech texts. At the same time, the transcription is to indicate the common pronunciation in Czech as far permitted by the Czech sounds.

Analogous principles are also set down for the transcription of the Russian characters in Slovak.

Scientific transcriptions have been worked out for Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Macedonian, Moldavian, Mongolian, Tadzhikian, Kazakhstani, Uzbekistani, Azerbaijani, Turkmenian, and Kirghizian characters; current transcriptions for Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Macedonian as well as Serbian.

On the basis of the recommendations of the Prague Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Terminology held on October 4th to 6th, 1971, the Czech sug-

gestion was in January, 1972, put at disposal of Soviet and Bulgarian specialists, who were entrusted with the elaboration of a unified official transcription of geographical names from the Cyrillic alphabet in Roman characters.

Viewpoint:

The Czechoslovak delegation fully supports the viewpoint emphasising that it is highly necessary to devise a unified transcription of all Cyrillic alphabets in Roman characters, and that the formation and standardization are within the full power of terminological or cartographic authorities respectively of the states and countries concerned. Their decisions should be fully respected which will fundamentally contribute to the standardization of geographical terms taken from the Cyrillic alphabet.

The Czechoslovak delegation is in full favour of the Soviet and Bulgarian suggestion considering it fully recommendable for further implementation.