

Ninth Session
New York, 17-27 February 1981
Agenda Item No. 8 (c)

Report of the Working Group on a Single
Romanization System for each Non-Roman Writing System

(Submitted by E. Földi, Convenor
Working Group on Single Romanization
System for each Non-Roman Writing System)

Working-group on a Single Romanization System for
each Non-Roman Writing System

Report for the Ninth Session

Submitted by E. Földi, convenor

1. Between the Eighth and Ninth Session of the GEGN one Circular /numbered 19/ had been sent out in December 1980. As the Circular was answered only by the Chairman of the GEGN in details, and Mr. Kanakubo sent a letter of receipt, the following report is based on the materials of the Circular mentioned above, as well as on those received from Prof. Breu.

2. State of romanization

2.1 Amharic

Resolution 7 of the Second Conference /1972/ is still valid. No further information has been received.

2.2 Arabic

The Romanization key submitted to the Eighth Session /1979/ in Working Paper 55 was a significant step forward. Essentially it is the same as the one belonging to Resolution 8 of the Second Conference /Vol. II, Technical Papers, p.170/, known as the amended Beirut System. They differ in the romanization of diphthongs and diacritical marks.

It must be taken into consideration that already at the Fifth Session /1973/ reference was made on this part of the key as not quite clear, consequently the publication had been possible on the basis of an agreement reached only after the Fifth Session /Report of the Fifth Session, Annex IV, point 2/.

Working Paper 55 of the Eighth Session is valuable from two aspects. First, it originates from the representative of a Western Arabic country, consequently it is probable that there will be no need for a double solution. Secondly, the Working Paper fulfils the recommendation of Resolution 9 of the Third Conference /1977/ by withdrawing the Moroccan proposal of the Third Conference.

However, a few items in Working Paper 55 of the Eighth Session remain to be clarified. The use of the hyphen after the article may be mentioned: in the first part of the transliteration key a hyphen is given after "ash-Shamsiyah" articles only, while in the second part after "al-Qamariyah" articles, too. It seems also necessary that the two different transliterations of Ta' Marbutah should be explained, as well as examples given.

2.3 Bulgarian

Resolution 10 of the Third Conference /1977/ is valid.

It has been mentioned at the Eighth Session /1979/ that a COMECON standard had been adopted in 1978 which contained among others the romanization of the Bulgarian Cyrillic together with Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Mongolian, Serbo-Croatian and Macedonian. In this standard, two systems are given for each alphabet: a system using diacritical marks, and a system using letter combinations. The cartographic application of the one using letter combinations is out of question, as according to the application rules it is meant exclusively for use in computer technique. Therefore, the transliteration using diacritical marks is shown here /as well as in the case of other languages concerned/:

а	а	ж	ѝ	м	м	т	т	ш	ѝ	я	â /ja/
б	б	з	з	н	н	у	у	щ	ѝ /ăt/	'	'
в	в	и	и	о	о	ф	ф	ъ	ѝ /" /		
г	г	й	ј	п	р	х	h /ch/	ь	'		
д	д	к	к	р	р	ц	с	ю	û /ju/		
е	е	л	л	с	в	ч	ѝ				

Compared to the Resolution 10 of the Third Conference it can be stated that the above system corresponds almost entirely to the UN system provided we take the variants given in brackets for the letters x, y, u, a. The deviation is that instead of j the COMECON system has an apostrophe, and there is an additional apostrophe with " transliteration.

An information on the use of the COMECON system had been asked from Bulgarian cartographers, but no answer has been received.

2.4 Burmese

There is no further information on this script. It is one of the scripts for which there is no UN recommendation.

2.5 Chinese

Several informations were given at the Eighth Session showing that the recommendation given in Resolution 8 of the Third Conference is gaining ground. Other developments may also be mentioned:

The Chairman of the GEGN has drawn the attention in his Circular 8 to an article in Beijing Review No. 1, January 5, 1979, pp. 18--20, titled Romanization of Chinese Names of Persons and Places, containing the Specific Rules of the State Council.

The Chairman of the GEGN in his drafts for the planned Information Bulletin mentioned two articles on the romanization of Chinese:

- a/ "La romanizzazione della lingua cinese" by S. Toniolo in Bolletino della Societa Geografica Italiana /Roma/, Ser.X, Vol.VII, 1978, p. 539--557.
- b/ "Die Pinyin-Lautschrift als internationales System für die Transkription chinesischer geographischer Namen" by S. Jakesch in Zentralasiatische Studien, Bonn, 1979, no.13, published by O.Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden.

In August 1979 the US Board on Geographic Names published the comparative Gazetteer of the People's Republic of China Pinyin to Wade-Giles, Wade-Giles to Pinyin.

It is of great importance the decision by the US Board on Geographic Names to adopt officially Pinyin names for rendering Chinese geographical names, as published in "Foreign Names Decisions of the US BGN" No. 2, 19.I, 1979.

A more recent and comprehensive article in the Beijing Review is also worth of mentioning: "Reforming Written Chinese, in the August 18, 1980 issue, pp. 19--26.

In a letter to Prof. Breu Mr. Wang Jitong gave the information that as from January 1, 1981, the International Telecommunication Union adopted the Pinyin system.

2.6 Greek

On the meeting of the Romano-Hellenic Division, Paris, October 1980, a working paper was presented by Greece on the Romanization of Greek. The paper is quoted here as follows:

"The Greek Organization for Standardization has started the normal procedure for the establishment of a system for romanization of the Greek alphabet. This system is given in Table I and refers only to the transcription of the Greek alphabet into Latin. A system for transliteration of Greek characters into Latin characters will be developed later. It should be noted that the system given in Table I is still under discussion according to the rules of the Greek Organization for Standardization. It is only after the end of this discussion and after consultation with the Government of the Republic of Cyprus that the corresponding standard can be established.

Table I
Romanization of the Greek Alphabet

No.	Greek Letter	Romanized Form	
1	A α	A a	
2	ΑΙ αι	AI ai	} still under discussion
		or E e	
3	ΑΥ αυ	a/ AV av	before the consonants β, γ, δ, ζ, λ, μ, ν, ρ, and all the vowels
		b/ AF af	before the consonants ς, κ, ξ, π, σ, τ, φ, χ, ψ, and at the end of a word
4	B β	V v	
5	Γ γ	G g	
6	ΓΓ γγ	NG ng	
7	ΓΚ γκ	a/ G g	in the beginning of a word
		b/ NG ng	in the middle or at the end of a word
8	ΓΧ γχ	NCH nch	
9	Δ δ	D d	
10	E ε	E e	
11	ΕΙ ει	I i	
12	ΕΥ ευ	a/ EV ev	before the consonants β, γ, δ, ζ, λ, μ, ν, ρ, and all the vowels
		b/ EF ef	before the consonants ς, κ, ξ, π, σ, τ, φ, χ, ψ, and at the end of a word
13	Z ζ	Z z	
14	Η η	I i	
15	ΗΥ ηυ	a/ IV iv	before the consonants β, γ, δ, ζ, λ, μ, ν, ρ, and all the vowels
		b/ IF if	before the consonants ς, κ, ξ, π, σ, τ, φ, χ, ψ, and at the end of a word
16	Θ θ	TH th	
17	Ι ι	I i	
18	Κ κ	K k	
19	Λ λ	L l	
20	Μ μ	M m	
21	ΜΠ μπ	a/ B b	in the beginning or at the end of a word
		b/ MP mp	in the middle of a word
22	Ν ν	N n	
23	ΝΤ ντ	a/ D d	in the beginning of a word
		b/ NT nt	in the middle or at the end of a word
24	ΝΤΖ ντζ	NTZ ntz	
25	Ξ ξ	X x	
26	Ο ο	O o	
27	ΟΙ οι	OI oi	} still under discussion
		or I i	
28	ΟΥ ου	OU ou	
29	Π π	P p	
30	Ρ ρ	R r	
31	Σ σ	S s	
32	Τ τ	T t	
33	Υ υ	Y y	
34	ΥΙ υι	Y y	
35	Φ φ	F f	
36	Χ χ	CH ch	
37	Ψ ψ	PS ps	
38	Ω ω	O o	

Special signs

The various accents /acute ´, grave ` , and circumflex ~ / may be reproduced as an acute only in the characters of lower case"

Previous to this information, the Chairman of the GEGN in his "First contribution to the Information Bulletin gave details from a report by the Italian expert Mr Sandro Toniolo on the situation in Greece. This included a draft romanization key prepared by the Ministry of Public Works. This romanization key was attached to Circular 19, and differed significantly from the one above. At the same time it can be regarded as superseded by the more recent one.

2.7 Hebrew

Resolution 13 of the Third Conference /1977/ is valid. No further information has been received.

2.8 Indian Division

As to the romanization of the languages of the Indian Division, Resolution 11 of the Second Conference /1972/, and Resolution 12 of the Third Conference /1977/ are valid, the second resolution giving minor modifications to the first one. It should be remarked that these modifications /Working Paper E/CONF.69/L.116/ referred to in the 1977 Resolution also contained some errors, therefore a corrected reprint of the original 1972 material /Second UN Conference, Volume II, Technical papers, p. 117-162/ would have been useful.

2.9 Japanese

As no further information has been received, the situation is unchanged, and there is no prospect for a UN resolution on this language.

2.10 Khmer

Resolution 10 of the Second Conference is valid. No further informations have been received.

2.11 Korean

No answer has been received to a letter of Sept. 1979 in which I asked for further details on the romanization system used in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. Maps published recently apply the system shown in Working Papers 24 and 25 of the Sixth Session /1975/.

2.12 Laotian

The situation is unchanged as no further information has been received. Another language without the prospect for UN resolution.

2.13 Maldivian

In an indirect source /Malediveny, Mai's Reiseführer Nr.27, Frankfurt am Main, 1979/80/ necessary to be checked through direct contacts, the following information is given on the Thaana script /translated from the German/: "As the development of a specific book-printing for this script would have been uneconomical, a Roman transcription had been applied for printing since 1977, which makes possible the instalment of modern western machines."

In view of this statement the conclusion given at the Second Conference /1972/ by P.J.M. Geelan /E/CONF.61/L.5./Add.6./ that "the Maldives may be considered to be a roman-alphabet country" is still valid, and supported by the present situation described above.

It is interesting to remark, that the source cited above distinguishes between names "used on the Maldives" and those "used on British charts." Further, it can be seen that the domestic romanization is not the one adopted jointly by the US BGN and the PCGN in 1970 /Romanization Guide 1972, p. 59/. Domestic names /with names used on British charts in brackets/ as given by the above guide-book: Haa Alifu /Tiladummati North/, Haa Dhaalu /Tiladummati South/, Shaviyani /Miladummadulu North/, Noonu /Miladummadulu South/, Raa /Malosmadulu North/, Baa /Malosmadulu South/, Laviyani /Fadifolu/, Kaafu /Male North and South/, Alifu /Ali, Rasdu/, Dhaalu /Nilandu South/ etc. It can be seen that domestic names representing administrative units /in the previous list/ are in fact names of letters in the Thaana alphabet.

2.14 Mongolian

In spite of inquiries on romanization used in Mongolia, no informations are available. Another language without UN recommendation for transcription.

The COMECON standard mentioned already in par. 2.3 also includes Mongolian as shown in the following key:

а	а	и	и	р	р	ч	ч	х	х
б	в	й	к	с	т	ш	щ	к	к
в	в	к	к	т	т	щ	щ	к	к
г	г	л	л	у	у	ъ	ъ	к	к
д	д	м	м	ф	ф	ы	ы	к	к
е	е	н	н	х	х	э	э	к	к
ё	ё	о	о	ц	ц	ю	ю	к	к
ж	ж	р	р	ч	ч	я	я	к	к
з	з	п	п	ц	ц	я	я	к	к

2.15 Pashto-Dari

At the Third Conference /1977/ in Working Paper E/CONF.69/L.131/ Add.1, a romanization key had been submitted. It is important to draw the attention that this system /or some very similar/ has been used on the following map: Afghanistan, 1 : 1,000,000, Afghan Cartographic and Cadastral Survey, Kabul, First Edition 1977. In view of the practical usage of this system, the preparation of a draft resolution for this script may be envisaged in the next one or two years.

2.16 Persian

Resolution 13 of the First Conference /1967/ is valid. No further information has been received.

2.17 Russian Cyrillic

In the COMECON standard mentioned under par. 2.3 Russian Cyrillic is also included:

а	а	и	и	с	с	ъ	“
б	б	й	к	т	т	ы	у
в	в	к	к	у	у	ь	’
г	г	л	л	ф	ф	э	’
д	д	м	м	х	н	ю	’
е	е	н	н	ц	с	я	’
ё	ё	о	о	ч	х	’	”
ж	ж	р	р	ц	х	’	”
з	з	п	р	ц	х	’	”
		п	р	щ	б	’	”

This transcription differs from the romanization known as AN 1951-1956 System used in Soviet cartography, even if the variants shown in brackets are taken.

2.18 Thai

Resolution 14 of the First Conference /1967/ is valid. No further information has been received.

2.19 Romanization of Serbocroatian and Macedonian Cyrillic in Yugoslavia

Resolution 11 of the Third Conference /1977/ is valid. Though the COMECON standard mentioned under par. 4.3 includes both languages, it can have no effect on our standardization work. The transliteration key given here is only for information:

а	а	а	з	з	з	ъ	ъ	ъ	ъ	ф	ф
б	в	б	с	-	з	о	о	о	о	х	х
в	в	в	и	и	и	у	у	у	у	ц	ц
г	г	г	й	й	й	р	р	р	р	ч	ч
д	д	д	к	к	к	с	с	с	с	ш	ш
ђ	ђ	-	л	л	л	т	т	т	т	щ	щ
ѓ	-	г	љ	љ	љ	ћ	ћ	-	к	’	”
е	е	е	м	м	м	ќ	-	ќ	ќ	’	”
ж	ж	ж	н	н	н	у	у	у	у	’	”

3. Present composition of the Working-group, and individual responsibilities

Ervin Földi /convenor/
Földmérési Intézet
1373 Budapest
P.O.Box 545
Hungary

Bulgarian, Korean /in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea/,
Mongolian

P.J.M. Geclan
Permanent Committee on Geographical Names
c/o Royal Geographical Society
Kensington Gore
London SW7 AR
United Kingdom

Ch.M. Heydn
SDNT Hydrographic/Topographic Center
6500 Brookes Lane, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20315
U.S.A.

T. Kanakubo
Director, Planning Department
Geographical Survey Institute
Kitagato 1, Yatabe-mati
Tukuba-gun, Ibaraki-ken
305 Japan

A.M. Komkov
Central'nyj Naučno-Issledovatel'skij
Institut po Geodezii i Kartografii
11 ul. Novoščužinskaja
123098 Moskva
Soviet Union

D.N. Sharma Atri Harnal
Survey of India, Southern Circle Office
81 Richmond Road
Bangalore - 560025
India

A. Tazi
Institut Universitaire de la Recherche
Scientifique
Villa Baghdad, Q.Souissi, Ait ourir
Rabat
Morocco

D. Vayacacos
Academy of Athens
Panepistimou 28
Athens
Greece

Wang Jitong
Office for Geographical Names
Research Institute of Surveying and
Mapping
7 Yongdiaglu
Beijing
China

Amharic, Burmese, Hebrew,
Japanese, Khmer, Korean
/in the Korean Republic/
Laotian, Maldivian, Per-
sian and Thai

Amharic, Greek, Persian,
Cyrillic scripts,
Pashto-Dari

Japanese

Cyrillic scripts in the
Soviet Union

Languages of the Indian
Division, Bhutanese,
Burmese, Maldivian,
Pashto-Dari

Arabic

Greek

Chinese