



PD 6505 : 1982

UDC 003.034/.035 : 003.324.3 : 809.57

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Guide to

The romanization of Korean

Guide pour la romanisation du coréen

Anleitung zur Latinisierung der koreanischen Schrift

British Standards Institution



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Foreword

The Documentation Standards Committee resolved in 1979 that work should begin on a standard for the conversion of written Korean into roman script. Requests for a simple transliteration table usable even by those knowing no Korean were considered. Such a table was judged not to be feasible, but what is presented here in part one of this document does offer a transliteration (i.e. character-for-character substitution) which assumes no prior knowledge of the language. In part two, it deals with phonetic romanization (i.e. rendering the sounds of Korean in roman script, not necessarily in the same number of characters); it acknowledges that the McCune-Reischauer system of 1939 commands wide acceptance.

We are indebted to the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, for the time of Dr W E Skillend, who prepared the draft, and, for their help, to Mr Yong-Oon Tai of the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, and Prof Valerio Anselmo,

late of the Istituto Orientale di Napoli, as well, of course, to our cooperating organizations.

Terminology and conventions. Because this publication has been reproduced directly from an original supplied by an outside expert, some terminology and certain conventions are not identical with those used in British Standards.

0. Scope

Part one of this guide contains a system of transliteration which is reversible. It includes a description of Korean script and the variations between North and South Korea, and mention of the foreign characters occurring in Korean, particularly Chinese. Part two contains a description of the widely used McCune-Reischauer phonetic romanization and an account of the phonetics of Korean, which is necessary for the understanding of romanization.

Both parts include advice about word division and alphabetic arrangement.