

TO: ALA/ALCTS/CCS/Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA)
FROM: ALA/ALCTS/CCS/CC:DA Task Force for the Review of the Romanization of Greek
RE: Report of the Task Force

CHARGE TO THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force is charged with assessing draft Romanization tables for Greek, educating CC:DA as necessary, and preparing necessary reports to support the revision process, leading to ultimate approval of an updated ALA-LC Romanization scheme for Greek. In particular, the Task Force should review the May 2010 draft for a timely report by ALA to LC. Review of subsequent tables may be called for, depending on the viability of this latest draft.

The ALA-LC Romanization table - Greek, Proposed Revision May 2010 is located at the LC Policy and Standards Division website at:

<http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/romanization/greekrev.pdf>

[archived as a [supplement to this report](#) on the CC:DA site]

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

We note that when the May 2010 Greek table was presented for general review via email, the LC Policy and Standards Division offered the following information comparing the May 2010 table with the existing table, Greek (Also Coptic), available at the LC policy and Standards Division web site at: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/romanization/greek.pdf>:

"The Policy and Standards Division has taken another look at the revised Greek Romanization tables in conjunction with comments from the library community and its own staff with knowledge of Greek. The attached alternative proposal reflects the considerations presented to return to the original Romanization table with a few minor changes and additions."

"This ALA-LC Romanization table for Greek (draft May 2010) differs from the one adopted in 1972 in the following respects:"

Changes

- Coptic is no longer covered A separate table will be proposed later.
- Modern Greek, initial rho is romanized as Rh/rh only if the rough breathing appears in the Greek text. Otherwise, the practice of supplying the "h" as appropriate remains unchanged.

Additions

- Separate entries for consonant combinations with gamma.
- Variant forms of sigma.
- A list of vowel combinations with upsilon that constitute diphthongs.
- The archaic letters digamma and qoppa.
- Variant forms of the numerals 6 and 90.
- Examples

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force has reviewed the ALA-LC Romanization table - Greek, Proposed Revision May 2010 with title "Greek." and offers the following comments:

1. The Task Force continues to support the concept of two separate romanization tables,
 - a. one for Greek, Ancient and Medieval (before 1454), and
 - b. the second for Greek, Modern (after 1453)

The Task Force notes that for cataloging purposes, Ancient Greek and Modern Greek have been treated as two different languages, each with its own language code. Having separate tables will make possible future adjustments to the romanization of Modern Greek without having to call into question the romanization of Ancient Greek (about which there is no disagreement).

2. The Task Force is disappointed that the instruction to transliterate the rough breathing mark (present or supplied) with the letter "h" in Modern Greek remains in the May 2010 draft table. The Task Force continues to believe that retention of "h" for Modern Greek is merely delaying an inevitable change to bring romanization into line with actual Modern Greek orthography. That being said, however, the Task Force is aware that there is currently little support for dropping the "h" for rough breathing in Modern Greek within the communities most affected, and so the Task Force is willing to accept the retention of "h" for rough breathing in Modern Greek, at least for the time being. The Task Force also accepts the exception given for Modern Greek of transcribing the "h" for rough breathing after the letter rho only when the rough breathing appears in the Greek text as being a clarification of current practice.
3. The Task Force believes that fewer examples could be supplied (e.g., the romanization of archaic letters is clear from the table; why are there four examples?) Examples that run more than one line should be presented with hanging indentation so that the continuation is obvious (as is done with longer examples in the Arabic table).
4. The Task Force is pleased to see the table clearly identified by date of proposed revision.

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