

THE NEW CHINESE CATALOGING RULES AS THE
FOUNDATION OF THE CHINESE MARC

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Abstract. In accord with the drive toward Chinese library automation the Cataloging Rules Working Group of the Library Automation Planning Committee, LAC, Taipei, based on ISBD(G) format and AACR2, began preparing a new code for the bibliographic description of library materials since June 1980. It serves as a foundation of bibliographic control by means of the Chinese MARC. This new code not only retains the essence of traditional Chinese bibliographic descriptions especially suitable for Chinese graphic materials, but also complies with international codes in both format (i.e., ISBD) and description (i.e., AACR2). Of special interest to the West is the part on Chinese rare books in that it plays a linking role between the Orient and the West in the treatment and control of this type of library material.

INTRODUCTION

China has had a long history of cataloging dating back from the first century when Liu Hsiang and his son Liu Hsin compiled the first bibliography of China (i.e., 別錄 Pieh Lu and 七略 Chi Lioh). But the compiler of the earliest extant Chinese bibliography was Pan Ku (班固), a follower of the Lius. Since then, the tradition was passed on from dynasty to dynasty, and the numbers of bibliographies compiled by state historians, and private bibliographers mounted to the myriad. However, such works often emphasized accuracy of verification and attempted to justify the classification with respect to the contexts of books. They recorded the printed works of the preceding dynasty so that scholars of the succeeding generations could search through them to understand the writings or publishing of the period even though the physical volumes were no longer existed. Since the founding of the Republic, public libraries sprouted everywhere as the result of western influences. In order to facilitate control and use of printed materials, library theories and practical code of cataloging rules were formulated. Kuo-chuin Liu's Draft of the Cataloging Rules for Books in Chinese was issued in 1929, serving as the guidelines and later foundation of the official NCL Cataloging Rules for Books in Chinese, prepared by National Central Library in 1935. This latter code has been widely adopted in every type of library in China.

As the twentieth century advances, the astonishing development of science and technology take with them the growing number of publications in an overwhelming speed. Libraries find it almost impossible for any single party to afford the increasing expence on conventional manual operations. Cooperative and automated cataloging are necessary. Consequently, cataloging rules should be reevaluated and reformulated to catch up with the time. A new set of cataloging rules which will be convenient for computer treatment and be applicable both in domestic libraries in Republic of China and in libraries abroad, is the pressing demand of today.

For the promotion of library automation, National Central Library has worked closely with the Library Association of China. In 1980, a Library Automation Planning Committee was organized to work on the National Library Automation Project; Chinese Cataloging Rules Working Group is one of the three divisions of the Committee (The other two are: Chinese MARC and Chinese Subject Headings). From June 1980 through May 1982, the Group has so far worked out the chapters on General Rules, Books, Serials, Cartographic Materials, Chinese Rare Books and Rubbings (in preparation), Music, Sound Recordings, Motion Pictures and Videorecordings, Graphic Materials, Three-Dimensional Artifacts and Realia, Microforms, and Analysis. These are topics included in the first part. Part two comprises: Headings for Persons, Geographic Headings, Headings for Corporate Bodies, Uniform Titles, References, etc., together with a glossary and a Directory for Publishers (In preparation).

GUIDELINES FOR THE NEW CODE

The Group sets up the following guidelines while compiling the new rules: (1) They should be applicable to all types of publications, including print and non-print materials, and can be used in book catalogs, card catalogs, or machine readable catalogs, (2) Adapt the merits of AACR2 as the frame of the rules, (3) Consult UNIMARC and make the rules applicable to library automation.

FEATURES OF THE NEW CODE

Concerning general rules,

(1) Organization of the description: In compliance with the UBC program, the drafting of the new rules is largely based on ISBD(G). It will be provided with more complete descriptions than the former NCL code.

(2) Punctuation: The 12 prescribed punctuation marks adopted in the new code are specifically devised to cope with computer operations. One radical change in punctuation in the new code is that the mark of omission (...) prescribed by AACR2 for "omitting all but the first of each group of more than three persons or bodies, and for long and unnecessary titles" (1.1F5) will be replaced by the Chinese character "等" (et al.)

(3) Format: Each bibliographic record will contain two parts, namely the basic entry (body) and the heading. According to ISBD, the former "main entry" is no longer appropriate to bibliographic description today, the new approach is "every entry is a main entry." The New Chinese Cataloging Rules would not emphasize the title proper as the main entry, but, for the sake of efficient use of the machine readable cataloging, the basic entry will retain the customary practice of placing the title proper at the position usually designated for the author heading (the first indentation). Headings would be accordingly added when access points for persons or corporate bodies are absolutely necessary.

(4) Inaccuracies: For typographic errors, the new code follow the AACR2 practice by transcribing them as they appear on the title page, and then, giving the correct words in the note area (AACR2 will insert the correction immediately after the errata). This alteration contrasts with the NCL code as the former code gives the correction in description and the errata in the note.

(5) Title: The new code would transcribe the title as it appears on the title page regardless of the languages it uses, that is, the former literal transformation into Chinese characters will no longer be used.

(6) Description of the bibliographic volumes (卷 Chuan): For centuries, the description of bibliographic volumes has been conventionally treated as a part of the title whereas the present AACR2 regards the bibliographic volume as other title information. The new code retains the traditional Chinese format by entering the numerals in Chinese characters, but not in Arabic numerals, e.g., 古今圖書集成一萬卷 not 古今圖書集成: 10,000卷. The justification is that, the numerical designation of bibliographic volumes of Chinese works is in strict conformity with the Chinese characters used in the title proper. By following the general principle of transcription, it would be absurd if we substitute it by Western style numerals. Besides, the same work may have appeared in variant extent of volumes from one time to another due to its recovery under different extent - sometimes less and sometimes more than the original, e.g.

千頃堂書目 三十二卷, 千頃堂書目 五十一卷

(7) Statement of responsibility: NCL code strictly follows the discipline founded by the old masters in that every author should adopt his official real name and should be verified against authentic sources before entering his or her name as entry - main and added entries as well. The new code abandons this practice and follows AACR2 by adopting "the name by which he or she is known. This may be the person's real name, pseudonym, title of nobility, nickname, initials (not in Chinese), or other appellation (22.1A). For anonymous works, NCL code states as "不著撰人" (Anonymous), the new code dropped out this practice but would add the ascertained dynasty name preceding the statement "佚名", e.g. (宋) 佚名撰 in the note. If not ascertainable, the statement "不著撰人" is also to be given in the note area.

(8) Edition area: Chapter 4 of the new code formulates a set of rules for the description of editions which usually appeared in Chinese rare books. The date of carving - carving was the most prevalent process in wood-block printing - or editing was usually an integral part of the statement of edition, hence we could not separate the carving date with the engraver or commentator. e.g.

宋史四百九十六卷/(元)脫脫等撰——明成化十六年/兩廣巡撫朱英/嘉靖間南監修補本 (c)

(a) publishing date; (b) publisher and reviser; (c) revision date and place.

(9) Publication, distribution, etc. area. The new code retains the former description for "no place" (S.1) as "出版地不詳" and "no publisher" (s.n.) as "出版者不詳" in Chinese characters, but would abandon the statement of "no date" (出版時不詳) and give an approximate date. For consultation of foreign users, western Gregorian (or rather Christian) chronology would be added to the Chinese chronology in square brackets, e.g. 民60 [1971]

(10) Series Area: ISSN numbers for Chinese serial publications would be given when available.

(11) Standard number and terms of availability area: Since the ROC has recently been allocated the ISBN number as "957", the new code will give this international designation whenever the publisher provides one.

Concerning description of books:

(1) Chief source of information (2.0.2): NCL code regards the first page of the text as the chief source of information and the caption title therein as title proper even though there is a title page. The new code adopts the title page together

with the copyright page as the chief source of information, since Chinese printed books frequently provide with more complete bibliographic data than the title page.

(2) Physical description area; The new code abandons the former NCL description for books that are unpagged or with various pagings as 1 v. (unpagged 不標面數), or 1 v. (various pagings 面數雜) and would state the exact extent in pages or volumes (physical) or an approximation so as to present to the user a more adequate description of item. As to the adoption of "面" (page) or "葉" or "頁" (leaf), the new code prefers "面" because this term is in rigid conformity with international standards that "a sheet printed on both sides is called a 'page'", whereas "a sheet printed on only one side is called a 'leaf'".

CONCLUSION

After two years of preparation work, the Cataloging Working Group concludes that these new rules would satisfactorily meet the needs of both print and non-print materials; even Chinese rare books find it applicable in converting into machine readable cataloging. All types of libraries unanimously agreed to adopt the new code upon its completion. The National Central Library has successfully keyed in all the publications issued in 1981 and will shortly put these records in magnetic tapes both for domestic uses and international exchanges.