

To: Mary L. Larsgaard, chair  
ALA/ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: Keiko Suzuki, liaison, Committee on Cataloging: Asian and African Materials

Re: *5JSC/LC/2*, Area 4 Example of Simplified Rule A1.4E. Date

CC:AAM appreciates the effort by LC to tackle this task of simplification in Area 4, and would like to work together to resolve some issues we have in this area. CC:AAM also thanks the colleagues in Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL) for sharing their information, thoughts and expertise.

First of all, most of us wondered whether this proposal would be stand alone new rules or be used along with supplemental rules such as Appendix C., especially C.5 in AACR2. We would appreciate if LC clarifies that point.

Yet, we have assumed that the proposal is stand alone rules since the purpose of the proposal is simplification and eliminate the redundancies of the rules, and have made the rest of comment according to the assumption.

For a start, we have found the wording of the proposed rule confusing. Some people took “such numerals” as “non-Western-style Arabic numerals” rather than “Western-style Arabic numerals” and became very confused. Thus, we recommend to change “such” to full-wording “Western-style Arabic numerals”.

Then, the biggest issue for us is how to apply the proposal when we transcribe the date in transliteration. Using a Japanese example, we believe that we would have “..., 一九八三 [1983]” for original script transcription and “..., sen-kyūhyaku-hachijūsan [1983]” or “ichi-kyu-hachi-san [1983]” for transliteration according to the proposal. We think the transliteration looks very clumsy and cannot to see the point of doing it, not to mention it would create much confusion and reduce our productivity.

Regarding transliteration, how to transliterate original script numerals for some non-roman languages is very tricky or even non-existent. Although we understand that it is not for cataloging rules to instruct how to transliterate them, we definitely need more guidance than we have been given in the current ALA-LC Romanization Tables if this is the intension of the proposal.

We also have a concern on how to present two possible Arabic numeral dates in square brackets because our dates are also often not of the Gregorian/Julian calendar.

In addition, it is desirable that the rule would clearly instruct us to include the kind of calendar or the designation of era (e.g., reign of king or emperor) to clarify the actual publication date.

Ideally for non-roman cataloging community, we would like to use original numerals “..., 一九八三” in original script and use Arabic numerals “..., 1983” in transliteration. This would also help the bi-directional issue of dates in Arabic and Hebrew, etc., where it is desirable to avoid bi-directional text within a single field of description.

Speaking of bi-directional text, we would like to have the option not to add Gregorian/Julian calendar equivalents in square brackets for original script description, in order to avoid the difficulties of rendering bi-directional text.

In conclusion, in order for the new rule to work, it may be necessary to add an exception or a subsection providing additional instructions, such as:

**A1.4E. Date.**

a) For **published resources**, transcribe the date in which the resource was published as it appears on the resource, usually only as year(s) with indication of the kind of calendar or the designation of era as needed for clarification.

i) **Date not in Western-style Arabic numerals.**

(1) Add the year(s) in Western-style Arabic numerals in square brackets as needed for comprehensibility.

(2) When transliteration is necessary, record the date in Western-style Arabic numerals, not as instructed in (1).

ii) **Date not of the Gregorian or Julian calendar.** Follow it with the year(s) of the Gregorian or Julian calendar in square brackets as needed for comprehensibility.

[Omitted: iii) **No publication date on the resource. ...]**

Japanese example: ..., 平成七 [1995]  
..., Heisei 7 [1995]

Hebrew example: ..., תש ס"ב . ...  
..., 762 [2001 or 2002]

While the wording of the revision might need further consideration in order to accommodate everyone's need and to achieve simple/clear instruction, we believe the revision, the principle in the above examples, achieves simple and pragmatic practice for our non-roman cataloging community and clear identification of publication dates for our catalog users.

[The reason that this document uses only Hebrew and Japanese examples is strictly one of convenience for the CC:AAM liaison. In order to make the rule as clear as possible, CC:AAM supports the inclusion of examples in many other languages and scripts.]