

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

5JSC/LC/8

TO: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR DATE: June 1, 2006

FROM: Barbara B. Tillett, LC Representative

SUBJECT: Bible Uniform Titles

Background

The goal of incorporating a global perspective within RDA argues for taking a more balanced, neutral, and culturally-sensitive approach to formulating certain headings. Members of the Judaica library and scholarly communities have expressed dissatisfaction for many years with the use of “Bible. O.T.” to represent the Hebrew Bible:

- Implicit in the term “Old Testament” is the relationship to the Christian New Testament, and an implied “subordination” of the Hebrew Bible within the Christian Bible.
- The unqualified term “Bible” signifies different works in the different religious traditions and related scholarly resources (e.g., Bible signifies “Hebrew Bible” in the Judaica tradition, but Old *and* New Testaments in the Christian tradition); this lack of parallelism presents challenges to the uninitiated library user or scholar unaware of the AACR2 model.
- Rule 25.17A includes an instruction to “use as the uniform title for a sacred scripture the title by which it is most commonly identified in English-language reference sources dealing with the religious group(s) to which the scripture belongs.” English language Judaic sources primarily use the term “Bible” to denote the Jewish scriptures, and refer only to “Old Testament” as the title within the context of the Christian canon.

As a result, some Judaica libraries reject use of the standardized headings and substitute “Bible” for “Bible. O.T.” in their catalogs, and/or may choose to refer to works with both the Old and New Testaments as the “Christian Bible” rather than simply “Bible.”

In an attempt to eliminate Christian bias in Bible uniform titles in AACR2, cataloging staff at the Library of Congress spent several months proposing and evaluating a number of models for a revised treatment for the “Old Testament” in RDA (*see* <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/BibleOTtable7.pdf> for a number of alternatives considered). While each model has certain advantages, each one also presents implementation challenges, especially those models that would require re-analysis of legacy collections to determine to which canon a given work refers (*see* <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/bibleprocon.pdf> for the pros and cons of each model).

Proposed Resolution

Because no single model considered by the Library of Congress solves all of the problems associated with the current usage of “Bible. O.T.” in AACR2, the Library of Congress instead proposes an optional approach that could be followed by libraries choosing to do so to alleviate some of the concerns, while preserving the status quo with AACR2 for Biblical works in the Christian context for other cataloguing agencies. While we acknowledge that this approach is not ideal, it seems the least disruptive of the possible alternatives. There are three aspects to the proposal:

1. Indicate that alternative uniform titles may be adopted by cataloguing agencies when appropriate, for example, “Hebrew Bible” or “Tanakh” may be substituted for “Bible. O.T.,” or for “Bible” when denoting an individual book; or “Christian Bible” might be used to substitute for “Bible” in some contexts.
2. Treat “Old Testament,” “New Testament,” and “Apocrypha” only as “Groups of books” per 25.18A4 for collective treatment, not as subheadings under which individual books of the Bible or the Apocrypha would be entered. Individual books would now be entered directly under “Bible,” thereby eliminating subordination within the Old Testament for books common to the Jewish and Christian canons.
3. Refer to the Old and New Testaments by their spelled out forms, not abbreviations.
4. Although unrelated to the “Bible. O.T.” issue, LC is also proposing a solution for the small number of sacred scriptures that should not be entered under title per 21.37 (as mentioned in 5JSC/Chair/5/Sec follow-up/LC response).

Rule Change Proposals

1. 25.17. GENERAL RULE

25.17A. Use as the uniform title for a sacred scripture (see 21.37) the title by which it is most commonly identified in the English-language reference sources dealing with the religious group(s) to which the scripture belongs. If no such source is available, use general reference sources.

Avesta ...
Bible ...
Koran ...
Talmud ...
Tripitaka ...

For component parts of individual scriptures, see 25.18.

Alternative:

Because different religious groups may use “Bible” to refer to canons with varying content, some cataloguing agencies may substitute a more specific term to represent the Bible (or parts of the Bible) used in a certain religious context, e.g., **Hebrew Bible** or **Tanakh** as a substitute for **Bible. Old Testament**, or **Christian Bible** as a substitute for **Bible**.

2. 25.18. PARTS OF SACRED SCRIPTURES AND ADDITIONS

25.18A. Bible.

~~**25.18A1. General rule.** Enter a Testament as a subheading of *Bible*. Enter a book of the~~

Catholic or Protestant canon as a subheading of the appropriate Testament.

~~25.18A2. Testaments.~~ Enter the Old Testament as **Bible. O.T.** and the New Testament as **Bible. N.T.**

3. ~~25.18A3~~ **25.18A1. Books.** Use the brief citation form of the Authorized Version.

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Ezra ...*

Bible. ~~N.T.~~ *Revelation ...*

If the book is one of a numbered sequence of the same name, give its number after the name as an ordinal numeral in its English form (see C.8A).

Bible. ~~N.T.~~ *Corinthians, 1st ...*

If the item is part of a book (other than a single selection known by its title, see 25.18A7), give chapter (in roman numerals) and verse (in arabic numerals). Use inclusive numbering if appropriate.

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Ecclesiastes III, 1-8 ...*

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Genesis XII, 1-XXV, 11 ...*

4. ~~25.18A4~~ **25.18A2. Groups of books.** Enter an item consisting of one of the following groups of books under the name given here ~~as a subheading of the appropriate testament.~~ For other groups of books, follow the instructions in 25.18A8-25.18A9.

[Examples: remove O.T. and N.T. from all current examples; add new examples in alphabetical order:]

Bible. *New Testament*

(All books of the Christian New Testament)

Bible. *Old Testament*

(All books of the Christian Old Testament or Hebrew Bible)

See alternative practice under 25.17.A

5. ~~25.18A5~~ **25.18A3. Apocrypha.** Enter the collection known as the Apocrypha (1-2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Rest of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, History of Susanna, Song of the Three Children, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasses, 1-2 Maccabees) under **Bible. Apocrypha.**⁵ Enter an individual book ~~as a further subheading~~ directly under Bible. For apocryphal books, see 25.18A14.

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Apocrypha ...*

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Apocrypha. Song of the Three Children ...*

Bible. ~~O.T.~~ *Apocrypha. Esdras, 1st ...*

6. **Current 25.18A6-25.18A14:** Renumber and remove all references to “O.T.” and “N.T.” in rules and examples.

7. **26.4B3.** Text of rule unchanged; alter first two examples:

Old Testament

see **Bible.** ~~0.T.~~ Old Testament

Genesis (*Book of the Bible*)
see **Bible.** ~~0.T.~~ *Genesis*

8. 26.4D1. Text of rule unchanged; alter first example:

Pentateuch

For the Pentateuch as a whole, see **Bible.** ~~0.T.~~ *Pentateuch*. For an individual book of the Pentateuch, see the name of the book as a subheading of **Bible.** ~~0.T.~~ (e.g., **Bible.** ~~0.T.~~ *Genesis*).

9. 21.37 SACRED SCRIPTURES [Add footnote]

21.37A. Enter a work that is accepted as sacred scripture by a religious group, or part of such a work, under title.¹ [Rest of rule unchanged]

New footnote:

1. For sacred works that are identified as works of personal authorship in reference sources dealing with the religious group to which the sacred work belongs (e.g., works of the Baha'i Faith), enter under the personal author chiefly responsible for the creation of the work.