

TO: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR
FROM: Alan Danskin, British Library representative to JSC
SUBJECT: Bible Uniform Titles

General Comments

BL thanks LC for its proposal.

The BL has the following general comments on the first 2 strands of 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.

BL is concerned that LC's proposal will weaken the syndetic force of the "Bible" Uniform title.

The proposed change is a compromise intended to placate a group with a strongly felt and genuine grievance. From a purely bibliographic standpoint, the optimum solution would interleave a new level of hierarchy to distinguish Christian Bible / Tanakh.

e.g. Bible. Christian Bible. Old Testament. Genesis.

Thus enabling the meaningful distinction between Old and New Testaments to be maintained for the Christian Bible, while deprecating it for the Jewish tradition. This process probably could not be carried out automatically and is therefore likely to be uneconomic.

The BL is concerned that if the proposal is adopted, the existence of an explicit option will result in pressure on NBAs to adopt the option. Further, while the deprecation of O.T. and N.T. is unlikely to have any repercussion in the UK, has LC considered the reaction of the Christian community in the US? Is there a risk that placating one group of users will simply provoke another?

3. Refer to the Old and New Testaments by their spelled out forms, not abbreviations.

BL supports the proposal to prefer the spelled out form.

Specific Comments

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

Suggest a footnote to clarify what is meant by “Authorized Version”.