To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative

Subject: Between", "Before" and "After" dates (Revision of RDA 9.3.1.3)

ALA thanks BL for this proposal to provide more options for recording uncertain dates for personal names. ALA supports the proposal in principle; however, we have some additional changes to suggest. Our revisions address our preference not to choose between the two options presented, along with a different approach to the details of the proposal to make the instructions clearer. Our proposed changes address the following:

1. *Known vs. unknown dates.* ALA believes that the instructions in 9.3.1.3 would benefit from a clearer separation of instructions for known dates and for uncertain dates. Our proposed revision below introduces two new sub-instructions, 9.3.1.3.1 *Known Dates*, and 9.3.1.3.2 *Uncertain Dates*.

2. *"Before"/"after" or "not before"/"not after".* ALA recommends creating 6 specific categories under "uncertain dates": probable; known to be one of two years; known to be between two years; known to be before or after a particular year; known to be not before or not after a particular year; and approximate. Thus our revision takes both of the BL options into account. It is ALA's observation that reference sources may use either *before/after* or *not before/not after* based on the information available about a given person; we do not believe that catalogers should spend time converting one type of date description to another. We also note that "active not before 1759" is not equivalent to "active after 1760".

3. *Recording multiple dates for the same attribute.* ALA proposes adding a specific instruction in RDA 9.3.1.3 to allow catalogers to record multiple dates, including those for a specific attribute when reference sources do not agree. For example, one source may say that a person was born March 6, 1903 while another says February 8, 1903. The addition of this instruction will have an impact on the choice of date for the authorized access point. See the ALA response to 6JSC/BL/20 for a revision that addresses this situation.

4. *Moving two paragraphs and their examples from 9.3.1.3 to 9.3.4.3.* ALA recommends moving the instructions and examples in the final two paragraphs of the current 9.3.1.3 to 9.3.4.3, since they are specific to the period of activity of the person.

5. *Revision of 9.3.4.3.* Moving the paragraphs from 9.3.1.3 to 9.3.4.3 requires some minor revisions of the instructions and examples in 9.3.4.3 to reduce duplication.

6. *Impact on dates associated with families.* Because 10.4.1.3 refers to 9.3, the changes here will also affect the instructions for families, although no actual changes are needed to Chapter 10. However, the related instructions for date of the corporate body (11.4.1.3) will not be impacted; they already address period of activity and uncertain dates explicitly.

If ALA's approach is not endorsed by the JSC, we offer the following comments on the BL proposal as written:

1. Additional word to qualify the *before/after* or *not before/not after* instruction.
   ALA recommends adding the term "particular" to the instruction. This would create the following sentence under BL's Option 1:
   > If the year is uncertain but known to be before a <u>particular</u> year or after a <u>particular</u> year, record the date in the form *before [year]* or *after [year]*.

2. As noted above, ALA would prefer a solution that would accommodate Option 1 and Option 2, rather than forcing catalogers to choose only one way of recording such dates.

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9.3.1.3 Recording Dates Associated with Persons

Record dates associated with persons by applying these instructions, as applicable:

date of birth (see **9.3.2**)

date of death (see **9.3.3**)

period of activity (see **9.3.4**).

Record dates in terms of the calendar preferred by the agency creating the data. For details on the Christian calendar, see appendix **H**.

Record dates as separate elements, as parts of access points, or as both. For additional instructions on recording dates as parts of authorized access points, see **9.19.1.3** (date of birth and/or death) or **9.19.1.5** (period of activity of the person and/or profession or occupation).

<u>Record as many dates as are applicable to the person, even if they represent the same attribute (e.g., different birth dates found in different reference sources).</u>

Record a date associated with a person by giving the year.

Optional Addition

Add the month or month and day in the form *[year] [month] [day]* or *[year] [month]*. Record the month in a language and script preferred by the agency creating the data.

> <u>EXAMPLE</u>
> <u>1970 November 7-</u>

~~Indicate a probable date by adding a question mark following the year.~~

> ~~EXAMPLE~~
> ~~1816?~~
> ~~Probable year of birth~~

~~If the year is uncertain but known to be either one of two years, record the date in the form *[year] or [year]*.~~

> EXAMPLE
>
> ~~1666 or 1667~~
> ~~Year of birth uncertain; known to be one of two years~~
> ~~828 or 829~~
> ~~Year of death uncertain; known to be one of two years~~

~~If the year can only be approximated, record the date in the form *approximately [year]*.~~

> EXAMPLE
>
> ~~approximately 931~~
> ~~Approximate year of birth~~
> ~~approximately 680~~
> ~~Approximate year of death~~

~~Record a period of activity expressed as a range of dates in the form *[year]–[year]*.~~

> EXAMPLE
>
> ~~1623–1624~~
> ~~Period of activity~~
> ~~1378–1395~~
> ~~Period of activity~~
> ~~approximately 1479–1499~~
> ~~Period of activity~~
> ~~1687–approximately 1735~~
> ~~Period of activity~~

~~Record a period of activity expressed as a range of centuries in the form *[century]–[century]*.~~

> EXAMPLE
>
> ~~13th century–14th century~~
> ~~Period of activity~~
> ~~1st century B.C.–1st century A.D.~~
> ~~Period of activity~~

9.3.1.3.1 Known Dates

Record the actual date, if known.

> EXAMPLE
>
> 1875
> Year of death

9.3.1.3.2 Uncertain Dates

If the actual date cannot be identified, record an uncertain date, using one of the following methods:

a) For a probable date, record the date followed by a question mark.

> EXAMPLE
>
> 1816?
> Probable year of birth

b) For a date known to be one of two years, record the date in the form *[year] or [year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> 1666 or 1667
> Year of birth uncertain; known to be one of two years
>
> 828 or 829
> Year of death uncertain; known to be one of two years

c) For a date known to be between two years, record the date in the form *between [year] and [year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> between 1310 and 1319
> Year of birth uncertain; known to be between two years

d) For a date known to be before or after a particular year, record the date in the form *before [year]* or *after [year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> before 1685
> Year of birth uncertain; known to be before a particular year
>
> after 1802
> Year of death uncertain; known to be after a particular year

e) For a date known to be not before or not after a particular year, record the date in the form *not before [year]* or *not after [year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> not before 1799
> Year of birth uncertain; known to be not before a particular year
>
> not after 1606
> Year of death uncertain; known to be not after a particular year

f) If the year can only be approximated, record the date in the form *approximately [year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> approximately 931
> Approximate year of birth
>
> approximately 680
> Approximate year of death

…

9.3.4 Period of Activity of the Person

CORE ELEMENT

Period of activity of the person is a core element when needed to distinguish a person from another person with the same name.

9.3.4.1 Scope

Period of activity of the person▾ is a date or range of dates indicative of the period in which a person was active in his or her primary field of endeavour.

9.3.4.2 Sources of Information

Take information on period of activity of the person from any source.

9.3.4.3 Recording Period of Activity of the Person

If a person's date of birth and date of death are both unknown, record a date or range of dates indicative of the person's period of activity. Apply the basic instructions on recording dates associated with persons at 9.3.1.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> 1705
>
> <u>1883?</u>
>
> ~~1687–1709~~
>
> ~~1682–1723?~~
>
> ~~11 B.C.–12 A.D.~~
>
> approximately 1400
>
> ~~approximately 494 B.C.–approximately 467 B.C.~~
>
> ~~1688–approximately 1712~~
>
> jin shi 1499
>
> Date at which a Chinese literary degree was conferred

<u>Record a period of activity expressed as a range of dates in the form *[year]–[year]*.</u>

> <u>**EXAMPLE**</u>
>
> <u>1623–1624</u>
>
> <u>11 B.C.–12 A.D.</u>
>
> <u>1378–1395</u>
>
> <u>approximately 1479–1499</u>
>
> <u>1687–approximately 1735</u>

If it is not possible to establish specific years of activity, record the century or centuries in which the person was active.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> 19th century
>
> ~~13th century–14th century~~
>
> 7th century B.C.
>
> ~~1st century B.C.–1st century A.D.~~

<u>Record a period of activity expressed as a range of centuries in the form *[century]–[century]*.</u>

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Add the month or month and day in the form *[year] [month] [day]* or *[year] [month]*. Record the month in a language and script preferred by the agency creating the data.

EXAMPLE

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> **EXAMPLE**
>
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> 1883?
>
> approximately 1400
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> Date at which a Chinese literary degree was conferred

Record a period of activity expressed as a range of dates in the form *[year]–[year]*.

> **EXAMPLE**
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>
> 11 B.C.–12 A.D.
>
> 1378–1395
>
> approximately 1479–1499
>
> 1687–approximately 1735

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