The object of subjects:
Some common theological subject heading problems.
Part One : Places and names

Philip Harvey

Theological subject cataloguers are faced with perennial challenges of interpretation. And the increasing number of rules, far from settling matters, often only invite more opinion and conjecture. Internet discussion lists have revealed just how different the interpretations of cataloguers can be about a certain rule, and nearly always within the realms of common sense. This series of articles is intended to name these hardy perennials, to present the rules in all their manifest variety, the possible differences that cataloguers bring to those rules, and a practicable way forward wherever possible. I will, of necessity, have to be brief.

Place names
a. Important rules to remember about place names are that the English name takes precedence over the vernacular name wherever possible (Mount Fuji, rather than Fujiyama), and that elements of the name are inverted so the distinctive portion occurs in the initial position (Eyre, Lake, rather than Lake Eyre; also, therefore, Fuji, Mount, rather than Mount Fuji).

b. Australian place names. There continues to be debate at the National library about authorities for Ausralian place names. No one can agree. Two reference works are or were meant to be used: (I) *Australian master names gazetteer*, now produced by Nat Map so I understand, and (ii) *BMR earth science atlas*, for geological formations. Neither of these resources is readily available or easy to consult, and I am afraid I must advise that when in doubt it is as easy to consult the postcode book. The reason often given for this impasse, but rarely put in print, is that a uniform authority for place names would mean changing great stretches of pre-existing headings. Any standard firmly declared is going to displease a majority of libraries.

c. Abbreviations of states are put in brackets after the place name, e.g. Auchenflower (Qld.) Australia is one of only six countries in the world where this jurisdiction division occurs. All other place names are followed simply by the name of the country in brackets. The Australian qualifications are (A.C.T.), (N.S.W.), (N.T.), (Qld.), (S. Aust), (Tas.), (Vic.), (W.A.)

d. Subdivisions. The general rule to remember is to "construct headings with no more than two levels of geographic subdivision, using the country as the collecting level". What that means is you can say "Church buildings – New Zealand – Auckland", but not "Church buildings - New Zealand - Auckland – Remuera". Australia complicates matters because you can subdivide by state first. An example would be "Church buildings - Queensland – Brisbane", but not "Church buildings - Queensland - Brisbane – Auchenflower", which requires an additional heading for "Auchenflower (Qld.) – Buildings, structures, etc." Subdivision is not permitted to go lower than city names.

With all these rules there are exceptions, of course, and I would direct people to read the Subject Cataloguing Manual published by Library of Congress Cataloguing Distribution Service, (5th ed., 1996, 4 vols.) if they are in doubt. One other way is to browse through existing catalogues, your

own or others', to see how things have been arrayed. An immediate grasp of the rule is made by example, so long as the records you are viewing are recent ones.

Personal names

Personal name headings follow the pattern set down in AACR2. This is why there are so many name variations on a database like ABN. Any names following spelling in AACR1 may be different from those of its successor. A great deal of checking, merging and grinding of teeth goes on to get these uniform. Added to this is the dilemma of inconsistency in interpretation of AACR2, where special anomalies can be created when agencies have the mind to it. For example, exceptions, options and other variations riddle the Library of Congress rule interpretations.

Another thing to keep in mind about LC, is that it will not update its name authority files because this would mean taking on many trained staff who would have to spend their whole time double-checking references by authors with more than one authority on the database. Global change facilities are not available. As a result at Joint Theological Library we have to update and merge name authorities regularly, also doing the same when records are downloaded on to our system. This is why CIPs have names that do not fill all the particulars you may have on your catalogue, or in it. Some believe LC is likely to get around to this enormous authority update about when hell freezes over; however, it is possible to say now, closer to the millennium. The LC integrated system is porposed to be up and running in September 1999. Nevertheless, the message is to keep doing the necessary authority work now.

Especially tricky are personal forenames and the order of precedence for titles. As an example of given names and their challenges, we might look at saints.

There is a precedence of rules.
The first rule is that you must "include in the name any words or phrases denoting place of domicile, occupation, or other characteristic that are commonly associated with the name". (22.8A) Thus we have :

> John, the Baptist
> Paul, Diaconus
> Marie de l'Incarnation

We then have the rule for saints who, as my colleague Hal Cain remarked the other day, "are now being treated like any normal person" :
"Add the word Saint after the name of a Christian saint, unless the person was a pope, emperor, king, or queen." So then :

> Alban, Saint
> Teresa, of Avila, Saint
> John, Climacus, Saint

Notice that Saint therefore comes after the name and any other details that follow the first rule,

> Francis, of Assisi, Saint, and not
> Francis, Saint, of Assisi

Complications begin, however, when we must deal with what I call the Irish Question. When in Ireland in 1996 I discovered that the number of St Colmans, real, mythical or other were at least in double figures. There is a school of thought says there was probably more than one St Patrick.

And the number of St Kevins that might have been about the place doesn't bear thinking about! Hence the need for 22.13B.

"Add any other suitable word or phrase necessary to distinguish between two saints." The Rule Interpretations go further advising that you "determine the uniqueness of the name of a saint from a reference source" and, if the name is not unique, that this added word or phrase be used even if dates are available. The examples in AACR2 are :

> Augustine, Saint, Archbishop of Canterbury
> Augustine, Saint, Bishop of Hippo

Oddly, this doesn't seem to apply to the Apostles, who defy all the rules by having their title first and sainthood mentioned later. LC is very quiet in the Rule Interpretations about why Apostles get special treatment, and I can only suppose that Apostleship is "a characteristic by which they are commonly associated", as spelt out in the first rule (22.8A).

This whole business is only complicated further by people like bishops. The rule interpretation for 22.17C reads: "For bishops, etc., who are also saints, apply the following: (1) Add only "Saint" if there is no other saint with the same name, and (2) Add both "Saint" and "Bishop", etc. if there is more than one saint with this name." The niceties start becoming too nice altogether, and it is no wonder some cataloguers plead confusion, mystification or something even worse.

Finally there is the question of saint with surnames. Quite simply, if the saint has a surname commonly used then the name must be inverted :

> Fisher, John, Saint, Bishop of Rochester, 1469?-1535

Should you find in your travels saints represented with their Christian name first followed by surname, they are examples of unreconstructed AACR1 practice and should be reversed when time permits. They are one more piece of evidence to prove that LC is not a fully autonomous unit, that old and new cataloguing exists side by side, and that the amount of work required to change these headings into something near uniformity is a very long task for someone. It remains to say, we should be grateful to those cataloguers who regularly go in and straighten out St Augustine or one of the other regulars from time to time on the national database.

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This article is Part 1 of an ongoing series which Philip is writing on Subject problems. His paper on Cataloguing presented at the Brisbane Conference 1997 is available form Philip at the Joint Theological Library.
Philip invites your responses – address to the Editor.

A few lines from **Beth Prior** :
I am the librarian of the Adelaide Theological Library, a wonderful, exciting and challenging new ecumenical venture between the Anglican, Catholic, and Uniting Churches in South Australia. (Wendy Davis and Val Canty are working with me.) We have become a branch library of Flinders University, piggybacking onto their Dynix library automation system. Flinders have done a great job downloading our collected records from ABN and this forms the basis of our OPAC.