

Report of the Special Committee to Propose a Chinese Place Names Policy for RDA

Prepared by Sarah S. Elman, May 19, 2012

Because of the size of China's territory, the existing cataloging practice for establishing place names (i.e., using the name of country "China" as qualifier unless two different places have identical names, in which case the name of province will be added as well) is considered by many, especially users and public services librarians, as inadequate. In order to address this issue during the transitional period from AACR2 to RDA, the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) Committee on Technical Processing (CTP) conducted a survey in August 2011 among CEAL and PCC/CONSER members. The majority of those surveyed (ca. 93%) supported adding the name of province or its equivalent to the country name as a place name qualifier for Chinese locations.

Responding to the strong support of the community expressed in the survey, CTP submitted a proposal to the CEAL Executive Board to form the "Committee to Propose a Chinese Place Names Policy for RDA" and it was approved in early November 2011. Sarah S. Elman of Columbia University was appointed to organize and chair the committee, who then recruited librarians representing technical as well as public services to be committee members. (An attempt was also made to recruit librarians from non-CJK areas as well. However, it was not successful because those approached all expressed their unfamiliarity of the issues involved.) In early December 2011, the committee was formed with the following members:

Robert R. Britt
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Shi Deng
Head, CJK Acquisitions/Cataloging Unit
University of California at San Diego Library
sdeng@ucsd.edu

Vickie Doll
Chinese and Korean Studies Librarian
University of Kansas
vdoll@ku.edu

Sarah Elman, Chair
Head of Technical Services
C.V. Starr East Asian Library
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Lauran Hartley

Tibetan Studies Librarian
C.V. Starr East Asian Library
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Zehua Sun
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The Committee reviewed the survey responses, relevant RDA rules, examples of proposals being submitted to ALA CC:DA, as well as “Submitting a Proposal to Revise RDA Interim Guidelines”, etc. Zehua Sun also shared some internal documents regarding the policy for Chinese place names at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

After some discussions within the committee as well as consultation with John C. Attig (ALA Representative to the Joint Steering Committee), the Committee established the following guiding principles:

1. The proposal would cover provinces, autonomous regions, as well as special municipalities directly under the government.
2. Instead of proposing it as an alternative rule, the Committee decided to propose a new section within Chapter 16, to be numbered as 16.2.2.11, under the header “Places in China.”

The first draft of the proposal was prepared in mid-February 2012. After a few revisions, it was sent to the CEAL Executive Board for approval in late March. On April 2, 2012, the proposal was finalized and forwarded to the Chair of CC:AAM Hikaru Nakano who in turn submitted it to CC:DA for consideration. The Committee is waiting for response from CC:DA and will take necessary actions accordingly.

Attached below is the proposal, consisting of the cover letter, the proposal with tracked changes, as well as the clean version.

To: ALA/ALCTS/CaMMS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access
From: Council on East Asian Libraries, Committee on Technical Processing
Subject: Recording Chinese Place Names in RDA 16.2.2

Background

The territory of China is among the largest in the world, and its first-level jurisdiction is divided into 22 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 2 special administrative regions, and 4 special municipalities directly under the Central Government. Under current cataloging rules, place names in China below the first-level jurisdiction are entered directly with the qualifier "(China)." The name of the province, special administrative regions, or autonomous region is not included in the qualifier unless another place with the same romanized name exists in a different jurisdiction. Because of the size of its territory, it is often difficult to identify the exact location of a place without the name of province or its equivalent to distinguish it. While name authority records may contain additional identifying information in the 670 field, it takes additional steps to get the information, and library users often are not aware of the hidden information. Public services librarians in East Asian collections have expressed concern about this issue over the years. Similarly, it is time-consuming for catalogers to establish and/or assign geographic name headings, as it often requires extensive research.

In August 2011, a survey of CEAL (Council on East Asian Libraries, a professional organization under the Association for Asian Studies) and of PCC/CONSER members was conducted by the CEAL Committee on Technical Processing (CTP). The majority of those surveyed (ca. 93%) supported adding the name of province or its equivalent to the country name as a place name qualifier for Chinese locations, in order to address this problem.

Advantages of the proposed change include:

- Makes it quick and easy to distinguish identically romanized place names.
- Less ambiguity in search result displays.
- Provides accurate and precise Chinese geographic subject headings.
- Reduction in material processing time.
- Patrons find what they need more quickly.

Responding to the strong support of the community expressed in the survey, CTP formed the "Committee to Propose a Chinese Place Names Policy for RDA" in December 2011, and charged it with studying the issues and drafting a proposal.

The committee first considered two options: either proposing it as a new section within RDA or as an alternative rule. After consulting with related parties, the committee decided to propose it as a new section (the same as the sections for Australia, etc.), to be placed after the section for "Places in British Isles." If approved, "Places in China" will be in section 16.2.2.11 and the existing instructions will be re-numbered accordingly.

Proposed revision:

16.2.2.4 Recording the Preferred Name

Record the name of a place in the form most commonly found in gazetteers or other reference sources used in choosing the name, unless the instructions given under [16.2.2.8](#)–[16.2.2.13](#)~~14~~

Record as part of the name of a place (other than a country or a state, etc., listed in [16.2.2.9.1](#) or [16.2.2.10.1](#)) the name of the larger place in which it is located or the larger jurisdiction to which it belongs applying the instructions given under [16.2.2.9](#)–[16.2.2.13](#)~~14~~.

[remainder of instruction unchanged]

...

16.2.2.11 Places in China

Record the preferred name for a place in China as instructed under [16.2.2.11.1](#) (provinces, autonomous regions, special administrative regions, and special municipalities) or [16.2.2.11.2](#) (places in a province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality), as applicable.

16.2.2.11.1

Provinces, Autonomous Regions, Special Administrative Regions, and Special Municipalities

Include the name of the country as part of the name of the place.

EXAMPLE

Anhui Sheng (China)

Beijing (China)

Guangdong Sheng (China)

Hong Kong (China)

Inner Mongolia (China)

Macau (China)

Shanghai (China)

Tibet Autonomous Region (China)

16.2.2.11.2

Places in a Province, Autonomous Region, Special Administrative Region, or Special Municipality

If a place is in a province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality, record the name of the province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality in which it is located, as well as the name of the country, as part of the name of the place, applying the instructions given under [16.2.2.4](#).

EXAMPLE

Aba Zangzu Qiangzu Zizhizhou (Sichuan Sheng, China)

Coloane Island (Macau, China)

Dongcheng Qu (Beijing, China)

Dongsheng Shi (Inner Mongolia, China)

Dongxiangzu Zizhixian (Gansu Sheng, China)

Hangzhou Shi (Zhejiang Sheng, China)

Huangshan Shi (Anhui Sheng, China)

Jiading Qu (Shanghai, China)

Lhasa (Tibet Autonomous Region, China)

New Territories (Hong Kong, China)

Qianxi Xian (Guizhou Sheng, China)

Qianxi Xian (Hebei Sheng, China)

Wutang Zhen (Fujian Sheng, China)

16.2.2.11 Places in Other Jurisdictions

For places in jurisdictions not covered by [16.2.2.9](#) (places in Australia, Canada, Malaysia, United States, U.S.S.R., or Yugoslavia), or [16.2.2.10](#) (places in the British Isles), or [16.2.2.11](#) (places in China), record the name of the country in which the place is located as part of the name of the place. Abbreviate the name of the country as instructed in Appendix [B \(B.2\)](#), as applicable.

[examples unchanged]

16.2.2.12 Places with the Same Name

If recording the name of the larger place or jurisdiction as part of the name as instructed in [16.2.2.9–16.2.2.11](#) is insufficient to distinguish between two or more places with the same name, include as part of the name of the place a word or phrase commonly used to distinguish them.

[examples unchanged]

If there is no such word or phrase, record the name of an appropriate smaller place before the name of the larger place.

[existing examples unchanged; add these additional examples:]

Xi Cun (Dali Baizu Zizhizhou, Yunnan Sheng, China)

Xi Cun (Fumin Xian, Yunnan Sheng, China)

16.2.2.13 Places within Cities, Etc.

When recording the name of a place within a city, etc., record the name of the city, etc., and the larger place within which the city,

etc., is located, as prescribed in the instructions given under [16.2.2.9–16.2.2.13](#).

[existing examples unchanged; add these additional examples:]

Dongcheng Qu (Chengdu Shi, Sichuan Sheng, China)

Gulou Qu (Nanjing Shi, Jiangsu Sheng, China)

Index:

Add:

Chinese place names 16.2.2.11

Revise:

Cities and towns See also [Political jurisdictions](#)
places within, [16.2.2.14](#)

Countries See also [Political jurisdictions](#)
place names, added to, [16.2.2.12](#)

Clean copy:

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Record the name of a place in the form most commonly found in gazetteers or other reference sources used in choosing the name, unless the instructions given under [16.2.2.8–16.2.2.14](#)

Record as part of the name of a place (other than a country or a state, etc., listed in [16.2.2.9.1](#) or [16.2.2.10.1](#)) the name of the larger place in which it is located or the larger jurisdiction to which it belongs applying the instructions given under [16.2.2.9–16.2.2.14](#).

[remainder of instruction unchanged]

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Record the preferred name for a place in China as instructed under [16.2.2.11.1](#) (provinces, autonomous regions, special administrative regions, and special municipalities) or [16.2.2.11.2](#) (places in a province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality), as applicable.

16.2.2.11.1 Provinces, Autonomous Regions, Special Administrative Regions, and Special Municipalities

Include the name of the country as part of the name of the place.

EXAMPLE

Anhui Sheng (China)

Beijing (China)

Guangdong Sheng (China)

Hong Kong (China)

Inner Mongolia (China)

Macau (China)

Shanghai (China)

Tibet Autonomous Region (China)

16.2.2.11.2 Places in a Province, Autonomous Region, Special Administrative Region, or Special Municipality

If a place is in a province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality, record the name of the province, autonomous region, special administrative region, or special municipality in which it is located, as well as the name of the country, as part of the name of the place, applying the instructions given under [16.2.2.4](#).

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When recording the name of a place within a city, etc., record the name of the city, etc., and the larger place within which the city,

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[existing examples unchanged; add these additional examples:]

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