Welcome to C&I 183,

In this issue we are focussing on RDA and the cataloguing of rare materials. We are featuring papers that were given at the CIG Scotland hosted international seminar on RDA and rare materials, that was held in conjunction with members of the Association of College & Research Libraries’ Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS), the European RDA Interest Group (EURIG), the CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Group (RBSCG), the CILIP Cataloguing & Indexing Group (CIG), IFLA and JSC and took place on November 6, 2015 in Edinburgh, Scotland.

We also have a review of the Introduction to RDA event that was given to the Association of Pall Mall Libraries earlier this year.

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The Descriptive Cataloging for Rare Materials Task Force of the Association of College and Research Libraries/Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (ACRL/RBMS) is charged to create an RDA-compatible set of guidelines for cataloging rare materials. This project, which will be called the RBMS Policy Statements, builds upon a legacy of rare materials cataloging standards developed primarily by RBMS and the Library of Congress, in collaboration with library colleagues throughout the Anglo-American cataloging community.

Current guidelines published by RBMS are collectively known as *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials* (DCRM), and include manuals for Books, published in 2006, Serials, published in 2008, Graphics, published in 2013, and Cartographic materials, published in 2016. The final manuals in this series—*for Music and Manuscripts*—will be published in the year to come. All DCRM guidelines, including those not yet published, are interpretations and extensions of AACR2. This means that they are, in places, not wholly compatible with RDA.

In 2013, the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee charged the present task force to undertake a complete revision of the DCRM manual for books, in order to make it compatible with RDA. Early on, however, the task force decided the revision should not be limited to books alone. Instead, the task force would attempt to consolidate the instructions for all formats currently included in the DCRM suite. This consolidated treatment of varying formats follows the principles of RDA itself, but it also drastically expands the immediate scope of the project. The task force decided that the new RDA-compliant and consolidated rules for rare materials would not be a true revision of DCRM, but would instead be considered an altogether new text.

Manuscripts were originally considered to be within the scope of formats for this project. However, as we began drafting the new guidelines, it became quickly apparent that the instructions for manuscripts were frequently outliers, requiring policies that differed from those for published material. Because of this, the task force has decided to defer treatment of manuscript material until after an initial version of our work is complete. The RDA Steering Committee (RSC) may soon establish a working group to consider treatment of archival materials. If such a group is formed, it will inform any RDA-DCRM treatment of manuscripts.

**Structure: from DCRM to RBMS Policy Statements**

In form and function, the RBMS Policy Statements will closely resemble existing policy statements available in the “Resources” section of the RDA Toolkit. RBMS Policy Statements will extend and refine RDA guidelines, with a network of links connecting corresponding rules, and will not repeat guidelines in RDA that are valid for the description of rare materials. This form of instructions represents a significant change from the existing DCRM manuals, in which guidelines from AACR2 are integrated with guidelines for rare materials. The DCRM manuals can, in large part, stand alone for guidance on the portions of a record concerning descriptive cataloging.

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Accustomed to this form of DCRM, the task force had originally proposed the creation of workflow documents that would weave together the texts of RDA and of the RBMS Policy Statements to create something similar to the experience of using the existing version of DCRM. The task force abandoned plans for this kind of workflow in the spring of 2015 following discussions with the JSC, who cited concerns about reproducing large amounts of RDA text within a separate set of guidelines. Instead, the new version of DCRM will take the form of a set of policy statements that extend RDA. Most instructions will be broad enough to be applied to all rare materials; as in RDA proper, some policy statements will specify exceptions or alternatives depending on format.

In the existing versions of DCRM, Library of Congress Rule Interpretations of AACR2 serve as the base text for the guidelines. For the forthcoming RBMS Policy Statements, the task force has decided not to use the Library of Congress-PCC Policy Statements as our default position. We made this change in order to remove an additional dependency from a system of guidelines that is already multi-layered. The decision was also made with an eye to setting up the RBMS Policy Statements for a more international user base. Additionally, we are working with an assumption that all or most of our instructions concerning music should be in line with the Music Library Association Best Practices.

The scope of our present work corresponds primarily to the RDA sections on recording attributes of Manifestations and Items (chapters 1-4) and relationships of Manifestations and Items (chapters 21-22 and 27-28). Systematically, we compare each instruction in RDA with the corresponding guidelines in the existing DCRM modules. Where there are differences, we consider whether there is a rare materials reason to differ. A rare materials reason to differ should be justified by the slightly different user tasks specific to rare materials. We apply the same analysis to the examples provided by RDA, asking whether there is a need for rare materials examples, even if the RDA guideline does not require a modification. Where our policy statements differ from RDA, we will almost always provide examples.

Broadly, there are three categories of policy statement content:
1. Guidelines for recording information differently than as instructed by RDA.
2. Guidelines that build upon the RDA instruction with additional details useful for rare materials cataloging.
3. Guidelines that treat a topic not covered by RDA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3.3.2 Sources of Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[RDA]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RBMS PS]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the example above, the RBMS Policy Statement differs from RDA, because the user of rare materials expects title and statement of responsibility information to represent text that is on the title page, without the addition of text from other sources.
Here, the RBMS PS adds additional guidance to the RDA instruction. The addition reflects the importance of recording a justification for supplied dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.9.2.1 [Supplied Dates] Actual Year Known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>[RDA]</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the actual year is known, record the year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAMPLE**

[2003]

**EXAMPLE**

[1876]

**Note on Publication Statement:** Publication date from Bibliography of American

This RBMS Policy Statement -- on the treatment of rebuses -- is an example of a topic not explicitly covered in RDA.

RDA contains about a dozen instructions for “Early Printed Resources,” mostly in the form of exceptions or alternatives. Where these instructions are acceptable as is, the RBMS policy statement says only to apply the alternative or exception. In some cases, the RBMS policy statement is compatible with the exception, but provides more information. In a few places, our draft policy statement is not compatible with an RDA exception for early printed resources.
For example, RDA provides this instruction in Sources of Information (2.2.2.2):

**Exception**

**Early printed resources.** If an early printed resource (or a reproduction of it) lacks a title page, title sheet, or title card (or an image of it), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that has a title:

a) a colophon (or an image of a colophon)
b) a cover or jacket issued with the resource (or an image of a cover or jacket)
c) a caption (or an image of a caption)

The current draft of the RBMS policy statement suggests that the preferred source (for resources lacking a title page) should vary based on the type of material (monographic text, serial, music, etc.).

Ultimately, all RBMS Policy Statements should be compatible with RDA’s instructions for early printed resources. If an RDA instruction is unsatisfactory, then our community needs to make a compelling case for revision. Review and revision of RDA’s guidelines concerning early printed resources should take place with all stakeholders in mind. The RSC has recently appointed a rare materials working group composed of international membership. This group will limit the scope of its work to the guidelines in RDA proper, assisting the RSC in developing the treatment of rare materials in RDA. Maintenance of RBMS Policy Statements will remain the purview of RBMS -- in the immediate term, at least.

As the DCRM task force reviews RDA, there are areas -- including areas outside of the exceptions for early printed resources -- where we feel strongly that what is needed is not a policy statement, but a revision to RDA proper. In such cases, we will submit revision proposals through the North American representative to the RSC.

RDA consists of a set of guidelines and a formally defined element set. To fully accommodate the description of rare materials, the task force is likely to propose a modest number of extensions or refinements to the RDA element set. For example, it may be useful to articulate a separate data element for signature statements; at the moment, such data is included with other notes on the extent of the manifestation. The RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee has charged a separate task force to explore the issue of data elements for rare materials description. The DCRM task force is working with that group by suggesting data elements that we see as candidates for addition to RDA.

**Objectives of DCRM and the RBMS Policy Statements**

The objectives of DCRM have remained consistent since their inception 35 years ago. They will not change much in the forthcoming policy statements. DCRM shares the general objectives of base standards such as AACR2 and RDA, with additional objectives that are important for users of special collections:

- Users must be able to distinguish clearly among different manifestations, and among variations within a manifestation.
- Users must be able to perform most identification and selection tasks without direct access to the materials.
- Users must be able to investigate the physical processes that produced the material, as well as post-production alterations.

These user tasks will be explained in greater detail in Chapter 1 of the RBMS Policy Statements.

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To fulfill these objectives, a description of a resource requires:
- full and accurate transcriptions,
- precise descriptions of the physical carrier, production processes, and post-production manipulations of the resource,
- detailed information on provenance and custodial history.

Fulfilling these objectives requires a modest number of significant differences between DCRM and RDA.

The first significant difference concerns sources of information. DCRM guidelines place a strong emphasis on representing what appears on the preferred source of information (which for rare materials, is usually a title page). In a DCRM description, it is never appropriate to record title or statement of responsibility information that does not appear in the preferred source. The notable exception is a devised title proper. For edition statements and imprint statements, DCRM requires the cataloger to make a note if information comes from anywhere other than the title page. RDA permits a much wider array of sources of information. For some elements, RDA allows us to transcribe information from anywhere within the resource, without making a note on the source.

For example, in the view of DCRM, King James I’s *Daemonologie* (1597) lacks a statement of responsibility, because this information does not appear on the title page. However, RDA permits us to take the statement of responsibility from anywhere within the book. Because of this, “Iames Rx.” can be recorded in this element in an RDA description; in the DCRM description, the information is recorded in a note.
A second significant difference concerns the issue of transcription. In many respects, RDA and DCRM principles for transcription are similar. In both, letters are generally transcribed as they appear, capitalization is normalized, and abbreviations are used only if found on the source. DCRM, however, provides much finer guidance on issues commonly found within rare materials, such as normalization of early letterforms (especially I/J and U/V) and treatment of symbols and spacing.

The imprint from the earlier *Daemonologie* example exemplifies the difference in treatment of transcription for the early letterforms u and v. In converting the “V” of “EDINBVRGH” to lowercase, DCRM instructs us to follow the pattern of usage in the text, in which the letterform “u” is used in this context. RDA, however, has us convert the uppercase “V” to a lowercase “v”.

Guidelines for transcription of punctuation have proven tricky. The task force feels that RDA’s guidelines on transcription of punctuation are inconsistently principled. When the RDA guidelines are applied and combined with ISBD punctuation -- as is still common -- punctuation in transcribed elements serves as an unreliable aid to representation of the resource. The draft of the RBMS Policy Statements permits normalization of punctuation, as needed; this approach is in the spirit of an alternative that RDA introduced in a 2016 update.

DCRM and RDA deal with misprints quite differently. As with AACR2, DCRM guidelines say to follow an inaccuracy “either by [sic] or by the abbreviation ‘i.e.’ and the correction within square brackets.” In RDA, the misprint is not corrected or acknowledged within the transcribed element itself. The cataloger does not insert an interpolation. Instead, corrections can be made in related notes. If the misprint affects title information, the cataloger makes a variant title for the corrected form.

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3 *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*, 0G7.
In older material, such inaccuracies and variant spellings occur more frequently. The task force is currently divided on whether our users are better served by the RDA approach or the existing DCRM approach. Both attempt to serve the principle of representation. In DCRM, the “[sic]” or “[i.e.]” introduces an interpolation, which is generally undesirable, but it serves to alert the user that this is really how the information appears on the source. RDA’s approach succeeds in leaving the transcribed text free of interpolations; but for users to be certain that the inaccuracy is not the fault of the cataloger, they must locate related information in a separate data element, and such data may not be prominent.

In DCRM, there are numerous guidelines that instruct the cataloger to make a note on transposition when information on the title page appears in an order that differs from the norm (which is to say, in ISBD order). RDA is mostly indifferent to the order of data elements, so the concept of transposition is almost entirely absent, and completely so for attributes concerning Manifestations and Items. That said, making notes on transposition does not violate any RDA principles.

Any discussion of differences between RDA and DCRM would be remiss without a consideration of pagination and foliation statements. One of the most controversial changes introduced by RDA is the new form of syntax for recording extent in resources issued as volumes. RDA has abandoned the system of using square brackets to record unnumbered pages, etc. Instead, RDA uses a verbose system for making distinctions between numbered and unnumbered pages.

The DCRM Task Force is confident that the earlier practice, which is also used internationally by bibliographers and the antiquarian book trade, better serves the needs of our community -- that is, for those who require such information to identify a resource.

Next Steps

The task force’s goal is to complete an initial version of the RBMS Policy Statements by June 2017. At that point, the work will be reviewed by the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee and by the American Library Association’s Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access. We will solicit review from format specialist communities, such as the Music Library Association (MLA), the Map and Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT), and the Cooperative Serials Program of the PCC (CONSER). We hope that we may also count on input from the international community of rare materials catalogers. There will also be a degree of review by the RSC, to ensure that the guidelines are in harmony with the principles of RDA. Additionally, we expect that descriptions made in accordance with our forthcoming policy statements will be flagged with a code in the descriptive conventions field (in MARC field 040, subfield e).
The task force will be disbanded after it publishes the first version of the RBMS Policy Statements. At that time, the guidelines will be maintained and enhanced by the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee. In the long term, we may wish to explore the benefits of broader international collaboration in development of cataloging guidelines for rare materials. Working together on a common standard may present logistical challenges -- not least of which, the need for multilingual implementation -- but the benefits are potentially immense. Our course of action should be made with users in mind. Researchers today may now easily consult online catalogs across the world; we render a service to such users when we describe an item in a consistent manner. If consistency is a worthwhile goal, then perhaps we should aim to have a standard for rare materials description that is at least as widely adopted as RDA itself.

References


Introduction: The Metadata Team and rare books cataloguing at Edinburgh University Library

The Metadata Team at Edinburgh University Library (EUL) comprises 18 individuals making up 15.2 full time equivalents, including the Metadata Co-ordinator, four supervisors and thirteen cataloguing and classification staff. All cataloguers are highly skilled, including seven staff who are trained in Descriptive Cataloguing for Rare Materials (Books) (DCRM(B)) and most staff undertake both core and project work. Rare books cataloguing is supervised by the Assistant Rare Books Librarian, with staff supplied from the Metadata Team, including one member of the team currently seconded to work on rare books full time.

Rare books cataloguing is currently focussed on new acquisitions and donations, addressing backlogs of uncatalogued and poorly-catalogued material, and an externally funded project to catalogue part of an estimated 36,000 uncatalogued items from the divinity collections in New College Library. There are an estimated 150,000 uncatalogued rare books and music scores, both antiquarian and modern, located in the Main Library building of the central campus and the University Collections Facility, which is located on the outskirts of the city. In addition there are around 104,000 poorly catalogued items. The New College project has seen a very high number of unique items catalogued with EUL contributing nearly 400 new records to the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) since the project started.

RDA implementation

EUL adopted Resource Description and Access (RDA) as the in house cataloguing standard for modern materials in 2014. In order to achieve this, a working group was established in April 2014, who received training from an external trainer in June. Documentation and in house policies were then developed over the summer, with RDA training cascaded down to all cataloguing staff in October 2014.

Although RDA would be used for modern materials, there was an impact on rare books work in the areas of policy and authority control. At this time, the need was identified for clear guidelines on which standard to use and for what type of material. Previously, the reasoning behind the policy had not been made explicit and rare books cataloguers were not always clear about when to use the DCRM(B) standard, especially when dealing with exceptional examples of otherwise routine publications post 1800. The new policy attempted to address this issue, and empower the cataloguers to use their discretion.

The following principles were established and included in the EUL Rare Books cataloguing manual:

- In general we will catalogue to full DCRM(B) level:
  - All items printed up to about 1850, which are, or appear to be, the products of the hand press, i.e. everything printed up to 1820, and later items with the features of hand-press printing, e.g. traditional bibliographical signatures.
  - Later items with special characteristics which demand fuller bibliographical description, e.g. modern hand-press books, items with special physical features which are to be fully described (e.g. bindings or illustrations), items which are the subject of close bibliographical analysis.
  - Later items which complete a set or run which started in the hand-press period and has otherwise been catalogued to DCRMB.
In line with current UoE policy all other items will be catalogued using RDA. Binding descriptions and provenance information may be included in RDA records where appropriate.

Although work planning for rare books cataloguing is focused on tackling specific collections, allowing cataloguers to consistently use one standard or the other, the need does often arise for cataloguers to switch between the two standards throughout the course of a working day.

**Authority control**

Cataloguing for the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF) changed from Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition (AACR2) to RDA in April 2013, meaning that many AACR2 and DCRM(B) records were now associated with RDA Authorised Access Points (AAPs) for names and titles. No changes to creating local authority forms had been implemented at EUL and an outsourced catalogue re-authorisation project in July 2013 had updated AACR2 forms associated with LCNAF authorities as well as local authority headings. This meant that there was divergence in the catalogue between recently created local authority forms and those which had been passed through the re-authorisation process.

This problem was of particular relevance to rare books cataloguers. Although improving, coverage of historical persons engaged in the production and distribution of printed materials, especially pre-1800, is limited on LCNAF and other authority databases, requiring libraries to create local forms in the absence of international authority records. In addition, the changes to the syntax of how unique forms for individual persons are created in RDA were particularly relevant to rare books cataloguing, where precise dates of birth and death are often unknown and dates of activity are used to establish a unique form of name. Across many areas of cataloguing, RDA has moved from a system of abbreviations, often for Latin terminology, to using natural modern language. For example, the “fl.” abbreviation (floruit) for dates describing a period of activity was changed to the term “active”.

All cataloguers were briefed on the changes in syntax and expected to use the new forms in advance of full RDA transfer training, with detailed documentation for rare books cataloguers on using and creating RDA AAPs. Any local forms created between the main catalogue re-authorisation and re-training of cataloguers would be picked up by future rounds of re-authorisation.

In addition to the syntax for names, another significant change in RDA is the approach to the intellectual content of the item and the use of authority metadata to describe it, leading to a different structure for authority controlled MARC fields. Changes in how collected works, translations and works issued together are treated were all potentially relevant to rare books work. The decision was made to adopt these structures for all cataloguing and to always use LCNAF records relating to the item in hand. Although these policy decisions would result in hybrid records coded as AACR2/DCRM(B) format but with RDA authority forms, there would be no impact on the descriptive elements of rare books work.

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**Fig. 1:** Example from training documentation showing the changes in syntax for constructing personal name AAPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate year of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AACR2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, John, fl. ca. 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RDA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, John, active approximately 1795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationship Designators

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Relationship Designators were already in use for DCRM(B) cataloguing, but with the change to RDA they became a new element for cataloguers dealing with modern materials. Relationship Designators are important in establishing the relationships between the entities responsible for the intellectual content and the results of their endeavours, and it was a positive development to extend this practice to the cataloguing of modern materials.

The two standards each have their own list of designator terms, but there is considerable overlap in terminology. In addition, RDA Appendix I lists a clear hierarchy of how the RDA Group 1 and Group 2 Entities relate to each other based on the Work/Expression/Manifestation/Item (WEMI) hierarchy. The decisions was taken that cataloguers should consult the appropriate thesaurus for the standard that they were using at the time and only consult the other thesaurus if no appropriate term can be found.

Use of family name AAPs for establishing provenance

Perhaps one of the most radical changes in authority cataloguing was the decision to allow specific families to be treated as Group 2 Entities along with individual persons and corporate entities. These authority records would be distinct from Library of Congress Subject Headings for families, which may be used for works on any family with a particular surname or its variant forms. This would then allow a specific family to be assigned the role of author for collected family papers or correspondence, with qualifiers such as dates, location or a prominent family member used to establish the unique AAP
In 2013, Andrew Malkiewicz, a retired lecturer in history, donated his collection of rare books and manuscripts to the University, many of which date from the French Revolution. Among these, one book entitled “Dialogue du Royaume”, shelfmark Malk. 36, provided the opportunity to use a family AAP to establish provenance.

The book contained a nineteenth-century book label for Kimbolton Castle, which caused some initial problems with regard to establishing provenance. The authority record for Kimbolton Castle is appropriate only for subject use, despite the 110 corporate entity tag.

Kimbolton Castle is located in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and is most famously known as the final home of Katherine of Aragon. The first buildings date from the medieval period and the castle came into the ownership of Sir Henry Montagu, 1st Earl of Manchester, in 1615. Charles Edward Montagu, 1st Duke of Manchester, undertook considerable reconstruction work on the building between 1690 and 1720, and the building remained as the family seat of the Dukes of Manchester until 1950 when it was sold by the 10th Duke.
It is now the home of Kimbolton School.\(^1\)

This then provided the basis for establishing the Montagu family as the former owners. It was not possible to associate the book with any individual, so a heading was needed to reflect the family’s collective ownership. At the time there were few family authority records in the LCNAF and the RDA rules for establishing family names required careful consideration before the AAP could be constructed. The rules for establishing the name elements are clear, and we chose “Montagu (Family)”. Qualifiers of date and place are core elements in RDA for distinguishing between families with the same name. Although no Montagu family was established in LCNAF, the decisions was taken to include these elements as the AAP would be meaningless otherwise and the situation is different to the practice of adding dates to a personal name as a conflict breaker.

The form for the family AAP was created as follows:

Montagu (Family : 1615-1950 : Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire, England)

The form used for the location is the LCSH form for Kimbolton, which is for the town not the castle. The addition of Cambridgeshire distinguishes it from Kimbolton in Herefordshire. The dates reflect guidelines in RDA Toolkit:

10.4.1.1 Scope

A date associated with the family is a significant date associated with the history of the family.

A family rarely ceases to exist and there is a current Duke of Manchester, so the time period was chosen to represent the period when the family had wealth, influence and an association with Kimbolton Castle. Along with the sale of the castle and its contents the 10\(^{th}\) Duke also spent much of the family fortune and, according to Wikipedia, the 12\(^{th}\) Duke was ‘variously engaged as a clothes salesman, a barman, and a crocodile wrestler’.\(^2\) Thus, the decision on forming the AAP was taken on the basis of the history of the family rather than the need to fit the form of name to the task in hand.

Finally, the family was assigned the relator term of “former owner” in our bibliographic record, which is common to both lists of relationship designators, but relates to the Item in the WEMI hierarchy. Although the use of the family AAP provided a sensible and meaningful way to record provenance of the book, this is only one item from the library of a former stately home and, as for historical persons active in the book trade, the problems of dissemination and standardisation remain.

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In 2013, the University of Kent transitioned to RDA from AACR2 across its entire lending collection. However, only some elements of RDA were introduced to our rare book bib records. These were the content, media and carrier fields, and the move from the 260 to the 264. This was done on a macro level, meaning that our Special Collections records were left predominantly in AACR2. Moving forward, this would not be sustainable, and to unify our regular book stock with our rare book material, we needed to create a cataloguing process to encompass RDA and DCRM(b).

Adapting our existing records and ongoing cataloguing of our standard stock has been straightforward, but implementing this to our rare book cataloguing has been an uphill struggle. The main reason for this is that no real decision has been made in the wider library community about how to move forward with RDA and DCRM(b). Another reason for this difficulty was that our multiple collections had all been catalogued inconsistently in the past, so we had very little to work from to form a functional and sustainable process.

Special Collections and Archives at Kent consist of a variety of material from nationally and internationally significant collections. We only use RDA to catalogue our book material however, so this affects our British Cartoon Archive and Special Collections the most. The BCA is largely made up of original artwork, but has a library of books about cartoon and caricature attached to it. Special Collections contains a selection of book and archive based material, our strengths lying in Victorian and Edwardian theatrical history, the history of science and literature.
Recently, Kent has had a new lease of life within its archives, from the inception of new collections, to brand new storage and reading room facilities. But discoverability isn’t just about a physical presence; part of enabling discoverability of our collections involves the effective use of cataloguing. Our users would be most familiar with the way RDA surfaces through our regular stock, so it made sense for us to work with RDA to improve the discoverability of our rare material.

We deliberated for some time about whether we should create a policy and guide to provide a clear outline of how we would undertake this. We held off in the hope that a final decision would be made that would have a wider community impact.

**Rochester Cathedral Cataloguing Project: a catalyst for change**

A high-profile collaborative project between the University of Kent and Rochester Cathedral was on the horizon, requiring us to make a decision sooner rather than later.

In early 2013 the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the Cathedral a grant of £3.55 million to make its “hidden collections” more accessible to the public and researchers and to refurbish the medieval library. With its collection of approximately two hundred pre-1701 and 2,500 volumes dating 1701-1901 that had never been catalogued to currently recognised standards, part of the deliverables of the project were to create and add catalogue records for these books and manuscripts using standards MARC21 and RDA/DCRM(b).

With a projected period of six months to complete cataloguing of the collection, and significantly less time to develop and implement a cataloguing policy for it, we felt the urgency of such a decision bearing down on us.
Kick-starting the process for change

We started by forming a working group of colleagues from across the metadata and special collections and archives teams. We felt this collaborative approach would complement the aims of developing a bespoke policy for such a culturally significant collection, due to the range of specialisms being brought to the table. The team consisted of the Senior Library Assistant from Special Collections, bringing knowledge of the University’s special collections; the Senior Library Assistant from Metadata, contributing cataloguing advice; the Librarian from Canterbury Cathedral, with expertise in rare and ecclesiastical books and manuscripts; and Josie and Rachel, who specialise in cataloguing the rare and special book collections at the University of Kent. Initial discussions centred on the impact of RDA across all collections, including affiliated cathedral libraries, and how this would affect the standard of cataloguing required for these, whilst keeping in mind our recent move to the Resource Discovery System Primo, and the affect this would have on our global discoverability.

After much discussion between all those involved, we decided that a practical approach would be to divide all valid MARC21 values, from the leader, right up to tag field 994, into thirds, sharing an entire bibliographic record between the three cataloguers. We began to build the ultimate bibliographic record template to cover every eventuality. We considered every field, looking at the potential use within our cataloguing. This helped us to decide whether the field would be necessary, how we could use it to support a hybrid standard, and how to implement this at a practical level so that it would be beneficial to users searching through our specialist material. This involved all three of us learning new information, as prior to our work, Kent had never had a specific rare book cataloguing expert.

We each produced a set of guidelines for the sections we took, and then we amalgamated them to form one document, set out numerically with examples. The goal was for the final draft of this to be used for training new staff in the art of rare book cataloguing in the future.

We regrouped with the original task force to present this work, inviting the manager for the Rochester Cathedral Cataloguing Project to join us.
We had faith in our own work, but we asked the group for brutal honesty in order to establish if our guidelines were feasible, achievable and sustainable, all the while keeping the timescale of the Rochester Cathedral project in the forefront of our minds. The feedback was very positive, and with some minor adaptations, the three sets of guidelines were edited into one staff user manual. This was expanded to include appendices and glossaries to improve understanding of rare book terminology and to support future staff training.

From our initial discussions, through to the last day of editing and printing our guidelines, we spent around three months on the whole process, which was undertaken around all other business.

Implementation

We began to implement our decisions into cataloguing the collection of former Prime Minister David Lloyd George, which was partially catalogued some decades ago. It felt like a good place to start because it lacked essential metadata, as well as the additional detail required for rare book cataloguing. We then ran comparisons between what had existed before and the improvements that had been made as a result of this process. We found some very clear benefits to using an RDA and DCRM(b) hybrid.

Replacing the 260 with the 264, which allows repetition with relevant indicators, has led to clearer labelling of specific elements of the book production process. Used in collaboration with Primo, it has allowed our users to better identify the information they need, thus limiting unnecessary handling of our items.

The 264 can be used effectively in conjunction with 700 fields. The ability to use limitless 700 fields alongside a wide range of relator terms, is a huge benefit for rare book cataloguing. We are able to freely express any relationship to the work from booksellers, printers and binders, to illustrators, engravers and cartographers. A user searching for a specific engraver would not have benefited from previous practice as this would not have been included in the metadata. We can also use it to trace former owners as far back as we evidence for, tracing the journey the book itself has made through its lifetime.

Extension of abbreviations as well as replacement of Latin terms such as ‘et al’ is often viewed contentiously. However, user experience should always take precedence, and this change has been beneficial to students not only searching our catalogue, but extracting metadata for citation purposes. With the inception of Primo, it has also been hugely beneficial to our external and potentially global audiences, with whom we can share clear metadata that doesn’t require specialist knowledge of cataloguing practice. In an age of clear and instant information, this element of RDA allows straightforward communication of key facts.

Taking inspiration from RDA, we also made changes to how terms such as ‘polyglot’ were used at Kent. Although we still use these terms, we now expand them to include to the specific languages and how these are structured within the text. This is particularly useful when the 008 language field limits you to specifying only the term ‘multiple languages’ without further descriptive options.
Additionally, we now code the 040 to reflect the cataloguing standards we have developed for our special and rare book collections which appears as ‡a UkCyUK ‡b eng ‡c UkCyUK ‡e rda ‡e dcrmb

We followed on from implementation by inviting rare book cataloguers from Lambeth Palace Library to meet with us. The aim of this was to share our work and seek review of it through the experience and expertise they hold in this field. Their positive feedback about our improvements was extremely welcome. It is great when, after a period of concentrated effort, the result is ratified. Suggestions they made have been added to our policy and are now being implemented across all collections, including the Cathedrals.

Our vision is ambitious, but why not?

We want to continue to review and improve all metadata, and not rest on how we do things today. We should always be thinking of tomorrow and how the metadata we create will benefit future library users and rare book cataloguers. For instance, we are already reviewing our recent work and are creating a series of wiki pages which allows improved access for staff training and support resources.

We want to continue to build-upon all existing relationships with our partners. The next phase of the Rochester Cataloguing project will see us training volunteers at the Cathedral in basic cataloguing. This is necessary as these volunteers will run the library without the support of an in-house librarian. The end of the project will not signal the end of Kent’s relationship with the Cathedral, we will continue to support the volunteers in their work.

Ultimately, we want to be a centre that’s known for good practice and excellence, a place from which we can reach out and offer support to other institutions, much like the support we have received from Canterbury Cathedral and Lambeth Palace.
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1. University of Kent Special Collections books and ephemera © University of Kent
2. Rochester Cathedral: ‘Rochester Cathedral -2,’ by bvi4092 (Flickr) [https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)
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4. Bookplate from a the collection of the former Prime Minister David Lloyd George © University of Kent
5. 15th century Book of Hours from the collection of Rochester Cathedral © University of Kent
Alignment between special materials and RDA in the German-speaking countries

Christian Aliverti, Swiss National Library & Renate Behrens, German National Library (adapted by Paul Cunnea)

Please note, this article has been adapted from speaker notes for the original presentation, with permission from the speakers.

Abstract: Austria, Germany and German-speaking Switzerland are about to implement RDA for data cataloguing. The transition has been prepared in an extensive cooperative project in the three countries over the past three years. The experts have already started to consider the cataloguing of special materials such as rare books and have joined together to create new working groups. These already extend beyond the circle of libraries; representatives of other cultural institutions are also taking part. Existing cataloguing codes and standards in the archive and museum fields will be aligned with RDA for the first time. Currently, RDA contains no or not enough rules for the cataloguing of special materials such as rare books and manuscripts; however these are being introduced in the international review process.

Representatives from literary archives and libraries have joined forces to form a working group. The aim of the working group is to align the "Regeln zur Erschließung von Nachlässen und Autographen" (RNA, Cataloguing rules for literary estates and autographs) used in the German-speaking world with RDA.

The paper describes how the RDA project is organised in the German speaking countries. It reports on the working groups concerned with the cataloguing of special materials. It also provides an insight into how the cooperation with galleries, archives and museums is organised with respect to RDA.

Summary

In this paper we provide a short overview of the structure of the RDA implementation project in the German-speaking countries; the first steps we have taken concerning special materials and cooperation in the cultural sector; we will point out some topics concerning special materials and how to deal with them; and we will give you an example of an existing working group for Literary Archives.

The Implementation Process

The entire implementation process in the German-speaking countries is a cooperative process of 16 partners in Austria, Germany and German-speaking Switzerland. For this region we have a well proven system of collaboration. The Committee for Library Standards is a consortium of national libraries, large academic libraries, regional networks and public and special libraries. The Committee for Library Standards is a coordinating body and contributes a professional opinion in decision-making processes. Its aim is to ensure the use of uniform standards for cataloguing, formats and interfaces of regional networks.
Groups of experts support special tasks by advising, discussing and passing resolutions. The Committee for Library Standards has the following expert groups:

- Expert group for Authority data
- Expert group for Data Formats
- Expert group for Descriptive cataloguing
- Expert group for Subject cataloguing

The expert groups are generally made up of delegates from the institutions represented in the Committee for Library Standards.

A RDA Working Group was established to prepare the introduction/implementation of RDA. The implementation of RDA is a cooperative project, with the project lead and management of the German National Library. Additionally, the national libraries of the three countries have built up a separate working group for the special requirements of national libraries. There is no similar organisational structure for archives and museums in the German-speaking countries.

The main responsibility for the RDA project is the Committee for Library Standards. The entire cataloguing policy for the implementation of RDA in the German-speaking countries has been worked out by the RDA Working Group. If required, the RDA working group sets up working groups for specific topics, like cartographic resources, old and rare books, and music resources. At the moment only librarians are members of these committees or working groups.

The Alignment between special materials and RDA in the German-speaking countries has just started. To continue this work we have to establish, together with other cultural institutions, a modified project organization. There have to be members from other cultural institutions, such as archives, museums or publishers.

For special materials this process started in 2014 with a Joint Working Group between libraries and literary archives. This year the Working Group for old books has been established. We are also planning alignment between the cataloguing guidelines for manuscripts and graphic and other visual material.

**What are the topics concerning rare or special materials and RDA?**

We now turn our attention to rare or special materials and RDA. What does the integration of other communities in the organizational environment of RDA mean? Talking with metadata specialists from other cultural organisations, such as archives, we often notice that our colleagues think that librarians want to take over archival standards. They think RDA claims the lead in the metadata world. That’s why we had several discussion sessions to clarify the question, do the literary archives want to collaborate with libraries?
Working groups for special cataloguing have to be a bridge across the communities on every level, a bridge which joins the literary archives standards with RDA and vice versa. The Working group acts on behalf of the RDA Committees and the Committees of the literary archives. Powerful arguments for continuing to develop cooperation in the cultural sector are i) more cost-effective and efficient production of metadata, and ii) benefits for the users.

RDA contains many rules on more than 1,000 pages. However, RDA currently contains no or not enough precise rules for the cataloguing of special materials, such as the personal papers of authors, or prints and drawings. Even if RDA wants to be a cataloguing standard for every kind of resource, reading the rules we can feel RDA's origin: cataloguing rules made for libraries in an Anglo-American context, and for libraries who mainly catalogue published books and published serials with these rules.

**Cooperation in the cultural sector**

In the German speaking countries authority data and authority control are important. The classical three tasks of an authority file are:

1. To bring together what belongs together;
2. To separate what does not belong together, and;
3. To identify the entity described in the authority record.

Experts from non-library communities, for example archivists, art historians, or producers of research metadata, want to reuse the data recorded in our authority files, but they are not keen to adopt our rules, and are not very interested in implementing RDA in their databases. Most especially, they want to reuse the identifiers of our authority records. These identifiers make it possible to link over different databases, and the use of the identifiers for the authority records makes it possible to link a library catalogue with a database of a literary archive, or with Wikipedia, or a catalogue of drawings, etc.

**Artist:** Johann Ludwig Bleuler, Authority ID (GND) 11851170X ([http://d-nb.info/gnd/11851170X](http://d-nb.info/gnd/11851170X))
**Place:** Rheinfall (Rhine Falls), Authority ID (GND)4076698-6 ([http://d-nb.info/gnd/4076698-6](http://d-nb.info/gnd/4076698-6))
Cataloguing cooperation in the cultural sector is the savior of the hour. The users of our collections and metadata need consistent data. We are happy that the RDA Committee of Principals announced in 2014 that they want to “expand the use of RDA by the wider cultural sector” and the Committee wants to “reflect different communities in line with the strategic plan”.

Cooperation in the cultural sector means working together for a common benefit, and the common benefit could be cost-effective production of metadata. Cooperation also means acting together for the benefit of our users. The users who do not understand why different actors in the cultural sector use different standards for recording names, the users who do not understand why libraries still produce metadata in closed silos.

We are also happy that the Committee of Principals has recognized the need for cooperation. The Committee wants to open RDA to other communities, to make possible the harmonization of the existing different standards. We have to operate in two fields: one is the integration of other standards and the other is rebuilding the organizational structure.

Integration of other standards in RDA

We started with a view of the Rhine Falls. We now continue with the Fall of the River Aare at its upper course in the Alps. It is a print by Jakob Samuel Weibel, early 19th century. As a cataloguer, what do you see?

![Picture](Pictures: Jakob Samuel Weibel, Chute de l’Aar à la Handeck vallée d’Oberhasli. 1823. Swiss National Library)

Three pictures, of course.

- On the left: in colour, with a printed caption. This printed text could be used as a title in a cataloguing record.

- In the middle: in colour, but is it still the same work? Pay attention to the tree on the right. And no printed text, only text written by an unknown hand.

- On the right: no colours, but the same printed caption as in the picture on the left.
Is this one work, three expressions? Three works? The RDA toolkit does not provide the answer. We know some of you will have an answer to my question. A cataloguer in a prints and drawings collection deals with this question daily. But it is difficult to express the answer in a general, universal rule.

This image of the waterfall is a print, we find this print in several collections. There are many copies. But nearly every copy of this print has unique characteristics. If we formulate a detailed general rule we are sure we will have many, many situations where the rule will not be applicable. Among us, there are several experts for prints and drawings – we try to formulate a general cataloguing guideline! We are sure there will be many good answers to the question.

Now what do you see? A work of art? A portrait of William Tell? Or a postage stamp? The description of this resource will not be the same in the William-Tell-Museum or in Prints and Drawings Department of a library or in a philatelic collection or in collections of letters.

Now we see two postage stamps, the colour and the denomination of the stamp have changed. And to make it more difficult, there is a wartime overprint by the Swiss post on the stamp at the right.
Now we see a tête-bêche with a postmark from a postage stamp block. Is it a new work? And what about the postmark? Do we need the postmark for the dating of a letter? Or are we collecting postmarks?

And it doesn't end. We could show you William Tell on postage stamps all day …

RDA does not have a solution for every cataloguing challenge for every resource. There are not enough rules for cataloguing personal papers of authors, prints, postage marks or typewriters.

But there is no need to integrate all of the special rules in the RDA toolkit. We should continue to use other standards than RDA to describe our collections.
Special Material Working Groups in the German speaking area – the Literary Archives Working Group

We mentioned the Working Groups for special materials in the German speaking area. We both are members of the Working Group “Literary Estates and Autographs Rules RNA”. The goal of this group is not to bring these German rules into the Toolkit. The RNA is optimized for the need of literary archives in the German language context. Using these rules the Literary Archives describe the estates and the personal papers of authors. The Literary Estates and Autographs Rules" ("Regeln zur Erschließung von Nachlässen und Autographen", RNA) consist of 84 pages, the core of the rules consists of only 20 pages.

Our goal is that the guidelines of the literary archives should be interoperable with RDA. This means that we must develop the descriptive part of the instructions; we want to avoid any contradiction to RDA. The access points are constructed according to RDA guidelines and according to the rules of the Integrated Authority File GND.

We think this is the most important part of the work. For us, it is important that access points are controlled by the same authority file; access points with identifiers will provide easier access to our collections.

Here is the organisational structure of this working group for Literary Archives. It consists of:

- A team of experts from archives, museums and libraries;
- An editorial team which works out the papers for the commentary phase of the experts;
- An organisation team;
- Special guests for punctual support, when needed.

Conclusion

To conclude on the requirements for further work with rare and special materials. There is no need for full integration with special rules. On the contrary, a full integration of all special rules would inflate the RDA Toolkit. So a better solution is to cross-reference between the RDA Toolkit and the guidelines and rules of other communities to cover the needs of cataloguers.

To achieve this objective we will have to build up an organisational structure for all cultural institutions that guarantees that rules are interoperable. So the Joint Working Group of Libraries and Literary Archives can be viewed as a sort of a pilot project. This group is responsible for ensuring that the Rules for Estates and Autographs remain compatible with RDA rules. The foundation for developing acceptance of other standards is that the RDA Committee is open to the needs of the special communities.

The minimum requirement for all activities in the field of describing materials from all cultural institutions is the alignment of standards to build up a linking point for a global data exchange which makes our materials visible and usable. The standardisation of metadata gives us the opportunity to work with our metadata much more efficiently. In a type of data value chain, we will be able to provide much wider services than we can at the moment. The interaction of metadata coming from different communities, which are unable to work together at the moment, will represent a dramatic increase for science and technology. Europeana is an example of such an approach, but the lack of consistent, standardised, high-quality metadata shows very well the difficulties faced by such a project.

How this should be done, and what problems we will have to solve for this approach to be successful will be a subject of a future presentation.
The speakers

Christian Aliverti is a librarian and member of the Management Board of the Swiss National Library. He is Head of the Section of Bibliographic Access which includes the subdivisions Cataloguing, Subject Indexing and the Bibliography on Swiss History, and he is in charge of the cataloguing principles of the Swiss National Library. He is a member of the Committee for Library Standards and EURIG representative for the Swiss National Library, as well as lecturer at the University of Zurich and at the University of Applied Sciences HTW Chur.

Renate Behrens is a librarian at the German National Library working actually in the Office for Library Standards. She is Head of the RDA-Project in Austria, Germany and German-speaking Switzerland and head of the Office for Codes for descriptive and subject indexing. She is member of the IFLA Cataloguing Section, member of the EURIG and is the European Regional Representative to the RDA Steering Committee (RSC).

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Before we look at our rare materials I would like to tell you something about the history of the RDA implementation process in the Netherlands.

Before we implemented RDA in the Netherlands we used the 10 booklets you see above, containing cataloguing rules according to FOBID (Federatie van Organisaties op het gebied van Bibliotheek-, Informatie-, en Documentatiewezen = Federation of Organisations regarding Book, Information and Documents)

The Dutch university libraries and the national library have a union catalogue, requiring joint decisions. This is managed by the GII Consortium (Gemeenschappelijke Informatie-Infrastructuur voor Nederlandse bibliotheken, i.e. the Joint Information Infrastructure for Dutch Libraries), which is the national umbrella organisation and forum for co-operation between national library organisations in the Netherlands.

Before diving straight into RDA, GII produced the SLIM report (Sluit Nederland aan op Internationale Metadata-standaarden), which asked the question: Are the Netherlands in line with international metadata standards. The final SLIM report consisted of a record of the work that was carried out, and the results of two projects: i) implementation of MARC21 as the exchange format, and ii) implementation of RDA.

The SLIM report was necessary for two reasons: i) RDA offers cataloguers choices, and alternative options and ii) we work within a union catalogue. As such it was necessary to make the same choices for all libraries in cases where RDA allowed an option or choice. Decisions were made by the Werkgroep Richtlijnen (Workgroup Guidelines), which provided unambiguous and uniform guidance for RDA within the Netherlands Union Catalogue.

But why adopt RDA? This decision was taken well before cataloguers had any involvement. As such, library management had to explain to cataloguers the reasons behind the decision to implement RDA.
It was introduced as something not just for the sake of change, but a development that:

i) would make it easier to share metadata and catalogue description, both nationally and internationally;
ii) make the cataloguing of music, film, objects, maps, e-books, PDF’s and archival material easier to incorporate into library systems; and
iii) make material easier to find for our customers.

So what did it mean in practice? Quite often, not a lot. Sometimes it is more a change of attitude, such as changes to describing content, medium and carrier, cataloguing language, relationship designators, absence of abbreviations (no ill. or p., etc) or Latin terms (no s.l. or et al), and providing annotations in the cataloguing language. Sometimes the change in attitude and practice is more significant, especially in relation to the cataloguing of modern books, with the instructions ‘each manifestation its own record’ and ‘transcribe exactly’ having a significant impact. Before adopting RDA, for instance, a microfilm and the original were described in a single record, with the information on the material type held at copy level. With the adoption of RDA is no longer the case. And for the digital copy? This will have its own record too. Transcribing ‘as is’ was everyday practice for rare books, but not necessarily for modern books, so this also took some getting used to.

To help other institutions implement RDA, especially smaller ones who may not have the expertise or time available to research every detail, we have set up a website (www.kb.nl/nda) with - we hope - helpful hints and links, as well as a dedicated e-mail helpdesk.

Now let me return to the main theme of today, Rare Materials and RDA, which for us covers books up to 1800, book bindings, paper, manuscripts, and archival material. As I have said, the people who catalogue rare material are used to transcribing sources and as an example I am using a recent acquisition:
Points to note:

- the code for cataloguing language and RDA is important because the university libraries catalogue in English while the national library catalogues in Dutch
- the author gets a designation code for relationship
- the imprint is transcribed exactly
- pages are noted in a different way
- the format is as well
- the GMD codes are added according to a table or macro, so all the cataloguer has to do is choose the relevant material from a list, so for instance sheet music, text, single sheet text, etc. and the correct codes are added to the record from the table. This saves time and prevents mistakes. You can imagine what might happen if you had to add these three lines of text by hand (336, 337 & 338).

We have been doing this now for well over a year and it is definitely sinking in. We are now moving towards other things such as book bindings. This is a tiny book which we have had in our possession since 1991.

In the past, using the FOBID cataloguing rules, all our readers would see was the description of the content, but we have now added a link to the description of the binding.
This binding information used to be entered in a separate database, only accessible to the curator of book bindings, which was a shame. So the KB has decided to convert this database into catalogue records, and we have carried out some tests with one of the results being the record above. Please note that we have not re-described the binding in autopsy, so no full RDA, but I wanted to show you what the result of the conversion would be and invite comments. Adding the GMD codes is easy, but the relationship designators are more challenging.

As this was a test case I looked more closely at the record with the curator. Silvia Rennie, who is both the binder and the designer of the binding, required two designators, bdd and bnd. However, it is impossible to do this for all records in the database without going through them one by one, and this is not a feasible option at the moment. So binders that are named in the database will just get the code for binder - bdd = designer / bnd binder.

So what can we do with title and place of production? For books RDA has the very simple rule that if you add information, you place it between square brackets. With bookbindings, and as we will see with paper sheets as well, almost everything is supplied by the cataloguer. Should we put everything in square brackets? You can see the result in our catalogue below, with the link to the content.
I will now move on to other examples from our paper collection. Below you can see marbled paper with a pansy, along with its record. This is one from a collection of 10 sheets all with flowers.

This is a Turkish paper and the same question arise applies as with bookbindings. Do we use square brackets? In this case we have additional issues with the provenance data. What to do with them? This question is particularly relevant because of the imminent move to WorldCat/Share. You don’t want this information to disappear, but neither do you want the provenance data of other libraries to appear in your catalogue as a result of FRBR.

Below is another example from our paper collection; this is a sample book. We are in the process of adding these to the catalogue as ‘books’. These sample books are usually in book format (and so have a proper ‘title’) although there are a few peculiarities that need to be accommodated, such as in this case, where we have a fold-out section with the paper samples.
And because Xmas was coming when this paper was original presented, here is a sample book with wrapping paper. My colleague was busy describing it when I asked her for an example that I could show you, so she had not yet had time to count the sheets, hence the dots, but you will see that the square brackets are out in force again as the publisher did not supply a regular imprint. [prn = production company]

And finally, two special cases. The first example is a set of miniature books - in a bookcase - in a binding. (The binding is by Seunonius Mandelgreen – more information in Dutch and English available at https://www.kb.nl/themas/boekkunst-en-geillustreerde-boeken/boekbanden/boekbanden-van-suenonius-mandelgreen ).
The second example is a recent acquisition of ream wrappers. This is made of thick paper, usually with a stamp, sometimes supplying the name of the maker, sometimes just a motto or device (again, more information in Dutch available at https://www.kb.nl/nieuws/2015/zeldzame-aanschaf-verrijkt-papierhistorische-collectie).

Just how do you describe these examples according to RDA? I invite comments, questions, and answers.

So, to come back to my initial question: Are book bindings and paper fit for RDA? Yes, but ...

Marja Smolenaars is a specialist cataloguer of rare materials at the National Library of the Netherlands. She is a book historian with wider experience in researching and cataloguing rare books up to 1800, both for library catalogues and for the Short-Title Catalogue, Netherlands.
Firstly, for those unfamiliar with the Association of Pall Mall Libraries (APML), here is a brief explanation of its history and purpose as it appears on the organisation’s website. Founded in 2004, APML “grew out of an informal gathering of librarians working in the gentlemen's clubs of London, but has grown to incorporate other club libraries, and also a number of independent and subscription-based professional libraries, both at home and abroad. The APML aims to promote the sharing of skills, knowledge and resources between members, and to increase knowledge of the collections held by their respective institutions and, in doing so, to develop its potential as a lively, multi-talented and innovative group.” For further information please see [http://www.apmlibraries.org](http://www.apmlibraries.org).

A key aspect of APML's work is in its organisation of training for its constituent members, co-ordinated by the Training Subgroup. Such sessions cover a broad range of subjects reflecting the broad range of issues that librarians of APML institutions, often solo librarians or members of small teams, are faced with. These circumstances typically require librarians to be all-rounders rather than experts in one field such as cataloguing, and so training sessions delivered by those who are experts, such as Alan Danskin, are very helpful.

Sian Prosser, Librarian and Archivist at the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS), kindly organised and hosted this session. For those who have not visited, RAS is situated in Burlington House, Piccadilly, alongside institutions such as the Royal Academy, the Geological Society and the Linnean Society. On this occasion we were stationed in a lecture theatre on the ground floor, though we were lucky enough to be able to take tea in the Council Room and also pop in to the Library itself before we began, where there was a small but interesting display featuring books, photographs and models of the moon. Highlights included the map of the moon in Giovanni Battista Riccioli’s *Almagestum novum* (1653) and Johannes Hevelius’ *Selenographia* of 1674.

Thirty people filled the lecture theatre for Alan’s session, mainly members of APML and/or the London Learned & Professional Societies Librarians' Group (LLPSLG - similar in purpose to APML and with some cross-membership), with CIG contributing eight attendees. In an afternoon, three hours to be precise, Alan covered a great deal of ground.

As I found whilst studying for my library qualification at UCL, an understanding of the theory and background to the technical skills of our profession such as cataloguing are extremely helpful when later attempting to put said skills into practice, and so Alan’s initial points regarding the origins of RDA, its governance, purpose and FRBR origins were all very useful. The working through of examples to show the practical implications of FRBR and concepts such as attributes, entities, the distinction between Works, Expressions, Manifestations and Items and so on, was particularly welcomed. In order to be able to adequately apply ‘cataloguer judgement’ an understanding of this information is essential.

The next section covered the implementation of RDA, beginning, inevitably, with cost. Alan spoke here from personal experience at the British Library, and so it was difficult to imagine how implementation of RDA in a library such as my own or a similar institution within APML or LLPSLG might be achieved. Naturally the ambitions, collections and resources of the BL are vastly different from our own and so the potential benefits and pitfalls of RDA implementation are equally different. However, as indicated in his title Alan’s intention was to provide an introduction to RDA rather than a targeted analysis of its suitability for APML and LLPSLG libraries, so this is not a criticism. The business case benefits of RDA listed by Alan, increased discovery, interoperability within and outside of the library community, embracing web technologies etc., are more universally applicable.
A significant undertaking in an implementation would be the necessary training and re-training of staff. A demonstration of the RDA toolkit was given which was perhaps the first time that some attendees had seen it, and it was interesting to note the possibilities that such a toolkit provides in comparison with traditional documentation. Translations, workflows, policy statements and full examples were all appealing, and there is interest among some attendees in trying the month-long free trial and subsequently comparing notes. Sadly, there appears to be little hands-on RDA training available in the UK, and so users are reliant on interpretation of the materials provided by the Library of Congress and the toolkit itself.

Alan’s third section dealt with ‘Application’, in essence, actually cataloguing in RDA. He provided a quick primer to act as a guide to the terminology and concepts used in RDA, before moving on to the core elements, pointing out that “core is the floor, not the ceiling.” Two key points delivered here were firstly, the absence of the ‘Rule of Three’ that appears in AACR2 regarding iteration (i.e. one or more instances of an attribute), as RDA allows the cataloguer to record all, some, the first or none of the instances (unless core). The second point was the concept in RDA of ‘preferred sources’ rather than the ‘chief source’ outlined in AACR2. Though RDA’s preferred source of information is still the source containing the title proper it allows the cataloguer to consult other sources as dictated by an order of priority outlined in instructions (not rules) 2.2.2.2 - 2.2.2.4. These were what I considered to be the two key points, though Alan also covered transcription choices (language, script, capitalization) and authorized access points.

It is over fifteen years since it was first declared that ‘MARC Must Die’ (http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2002/10/ ljarchives/marc-must-die/) and yet it still remains. In the final section, ‘Future Developments and Strategy’, Alan covered the problems of accommodating RDA records in MARC, such as the conflation of information related to a work, expression, manifestation and item, before discussing the future. Bibframe was proffered as a possible replacement for MARC, with ‘possible’ emphasized, and a demonstration of an RDA record without MARC was given as we were shown an RDA record in RIMMF (RDA in Many Metadata Formats). Alan also explained the potential application of RDA in the semantic web as linked data, but due to time constraints there wasn’t an option to fully investigate these aspects, which was unfortunate given their fundamental importance. They are of course all works in progress also.

In sum, in a three hour session a lot was covered and certainly a good introduction to RDA provided. I left with lots of questions which I consider to be a good sign, and Alan provided some links at the end for further research. Many thanks to Alan for his talk, and to Sian for organising.
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CIG website: http://www.cilip.org.uk/cataloguing-and-indexing-group/catalogue-index

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