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# From the President

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

While we prefer to dismiss the notion that catalogers catalog for other catalogers, in reality we are bound by AACR2 and other official "rules" and "interpretations" which are difficult for laymen to understand. We do not want anarchy, but we need rules which are simple and logical.

Rules are certainly not carved on stone. I entered library school before AACR2. At that time, the rule was to use a person's real name no matter how obscure it might be. A tiny bit of information library school students learned quickly was that Mark Twain was Samuel Clemens in disguise. It was the librarians' duty to unmask him and use his real name in our catalog although few people had that knowledge and would use that name to search library catalogs. Likewise, East Asian libraries used Tsao Chan and Chou Shu-jeu instead of the better known Tsao Hsueh-chin and Lu Hsun. AACR2 saw through this folly, and in most cases pseudonyms are now used.

Pseudonyms are preferable to real names because 1) they are the authors' choice and 2) they are better known. However, these sound principles are ignored when romanization is involved. With few exceptions, libraries have to use Wade-Giles Chinese romanization although the person may prefer another form or is generally known by another form. A good example is that libraries will continue to use the form Teng Hsiao-p'ing until Wade-Giles is replaced by Pinyin. Another example: although the Chief Executive of Hong Kong is known in Hong Kong and elsewhere as Tung Chee-Hwa, libraries will call him Tung Chien-hua. (Of course, librarians can cite their reasons, but these reasons just sound hollow to library users.)

Both OCLC and RLIN allow CJK display in some key fields. However, when libraries use "irregular" romanization, they cannot provide the original CJK scripts in headings. Thus, while we can use Chinese characters to search works by and on most Chinese, we cannot do the same for Lee Tsung-Dao, Pei Ieoh Ming, Tsien Tsuen-hsuei, Leo Ou-fan Lee and many others. Why should one be deprived of this "right" ("privilege?") just because one does not use Wade-Giles?

More recently many authors from China are appalled to find out that their names in library catalogs are in some romanized form foreign to them even for their works written in English with their names in their preferred form. Not only are these authors insulted, it is also very confusing to library users.

This column is not about romanization. It is about how headings should be established. The simplest and best principle is to respect the person's choice. This principle should apply also to place names. Ceylon is now Sri Lanka, and Peking Beijing. Why should we continue to call Northeast China Manchuria?

We commend the Library of Congress for planning not to apply Pinyin romanization uniformly for place names in Hong Kong and Taiwan. It should take the same lead in personal names.

Tai-loi Ma  
President, CEAL