

Principles of Serials Cataloging Some Observations and Tips

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Description

The basis of description for serials is the first issue or the latest issue in hand. Most data in the catalog record comes from this issue and subsequent information from later issues is added as it becomes available. This is called successive entry cataloging. If the first issue is not in hand when creating a new serial record, the cataloger uses the earliest issue available. For example, if numbers 1-3 are not in hand, but all following are (nos. 4 through 10), the cataloger uses no. 4 for the description, not no. 10.

Information describing the actual serial must be taken from the issue in hand. If the first issue is in hand, then this information is recorded in 360 0:

360 0 Dai 1-kan dai 1-gō (2001-nen 1-gatsu)-

We do not use a “description based on” note when the first issue is in hand. If the title is taken from any source other than the title page, such as the cover, this is indicated in a 500 note:

500 Title from cover.

In serials cataloging, the term “Title from cover” is used. In monographs cataloging, the term “Cover title” is generally used.

If the record is based on any issue other than the first, the cataloger will provide the beginning date (if known) in a 362 1 field and indicate the issue used to create the record in a 500 “description based on” note. In the case of annual publication the two fields could appear as follows:

362 1 Began in 1996.

500 Description based on: 2000; title from cover.

362 1 is used to provide information on the beginning or ending date of a serial when the first or last issue is not in hand. This information can come from standard reference sources. 362 0 is used to describe the actual issue in hand.

In the descriptive areas of the record, all information must be taken from the issue in hand. Even if the cataloger knows for a fact that the first issue of a serial came out in January 1995 as no.1, but has only no. 3 for March 1995 in hand, he/she cannot just put the first issue in 362 0. 362 1 must be used instead. Likewise it is not

allowed to “count back” from issue 3 to issue to determine a beginning date. This information must come from the issues themselves.

The Title

The title of a print serial is taken from the title page. If there is no title page, then the next usual source is the front cover. A title page can only have title, issuing body, publication, and date information. If it contains a table of contents, a list of the editorial staff or other “non-title” information, it is not a title page and the next source, usually the cover, is selected for the basis of the description.

A title on the back cover in English or other language, with or without a table of contents, is designated as other title (246 13). This is not treated as “title on p. [4] of cover” which is a monograph cataloging convention. In order for the English title to be considered an “added title page” title, there must be a physically separate title page and this is coded as 246 15.

The rules governing parallel titles will be changed in the revised Chapter 12 which will appear sometime in September 2002.

Issuing Bodies

An issuing body refers to the group that is responsible for the content or compilation of a serial. Individual persons are referred to in a 500 note as editors: 500 Editor: Tamura Norio. Corporate bodies responsible for compilation and editing functions are recorded in a 550 note as: 550 Issued by: Nihon Chiri Gakkai. The corporate body recorded in the 550 note always receives a 710 field.

Collation

The number of “volumes” in a serial comes from the bibliographic volumes, not the number of physical volumes. A monthly serial that consists of vol. 1 no.1-vol. 20 no. 12 is complete in 20 volumes, not 240 monthly issues. At this point in time, “v.” is the preferred designation in the 300, not “no.”

In the record for a ceased serial, the cataloger must have the first and last issue of a title in hand in order to record the total number of volumes in the 300 field. Again, it is not allowed to “count back” from the last issue to get a total number of volumes.

Frequency

The current frequency is recorded in the 310 and former frequencies in 321 fields. Although it takes time to verify former frequencies, this information can be very helpful to reference librarians and ILL staff. If time permits, it is worth the effort to have the major frequency changes noted in the catalog record.

Numbering and Dates

The Library of Congress at one time preferred to select the most prominent numbering designation appearing on the cover for the catalog record. This was done to promote efficiency in the serial check-in process so staff would not have to look through each current issue for the right numbering. As a rule, catalogers will usually select the most complete form of the date for the 362 field. The controversy arises when the cover has a prominent continuous numbering designation (dai 1-go) and there is a volume and issue designation on the table of contents page or buried in the colophon. Some catalogers like to use the volume and issue designation as the main numbering system and the continuous numbering as the auxiliary designation because they regard it as the more “complete” numbering system. The rules for numeric and chronological designations will change somewhat in revised Chapter 12.

However, it remains important to record *all* numbering systems in the catalog record (both volume/issue and continuous numbering). This information can be essential in sorting out “incomplete” citations from scholarly sources and ILL requests which contain one numbering system, but not the one you need.

Sections and Parts.

Some serials are issued in sections or parts. The definition may not be universally agreed upon, however, I offer the following for your consideration.

Sections are distinct, named or numbered units of a common “parent title.” A made-up example of this situation is:

KyōtoDaigaku kenkyū hōkoku. Bungaku hen. Vol. 1, no.1

Kyōto Daigaku kenkyū hōkoku. Gogaku hen. Vol. 1, no.1

Kyoto Daigaku kenkyū hōkoku is the main, or parent, title. Bungaku hen and Gogaku hen are section titles. They are considered two distinct titles and should be cataloged separately. Although such titles were combined in some older catalog records, this is a practice I would not recommend.

Parts are non-distinct or of little significance as independent titles. Another made-up example:

Tōkei bunseki nenkan. Kaisetsu hen

Tōkei bunseki nenkan. Shiryō hen

I consider “Kaisetsu hen” and “Shiryō hen” as parts and catalog them on one record with the note: Issued in parts: Kaisetsu hen, and: Shiryō hen.