

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: John Attig, ALA Representative
Subject: Musical arrangements – Revision of RDA 6.18.1.4 and 6.28.3.2.1

ALA thanks EURIG for its discussion of arrangements as new expressions of a work. ALA is sympathetic to the issues raised, but we are not convinced of the need to identify each particular expression in the ways proposed. We are particularly skeptical of the utility of identifying each particular expression in a unique authorized access point; see also 6JSC/EURIG/1/ALA response, which makes similar arguments.

According to FRBR (p. 21): “On a practical level, the degree to which bibliographic distinctions are made between variant *expressions* of a *work* will depend to some extent on the nature of the *work* itself, and on the anticipated needs of users and on what the cataloguer can reasonably be expected to recognize from the *manifestation* being described.” FRAD (p. 10) adds: “Variations that would be evident only from a detailed analysis and comparison of expressions would normally be reflected in authority data only if the nature or stature of the work warranted such analysis, and only if it was anticipated that the distinction would be important to users.”

These passages take a practical stance and could serve as justification for continuing past practice of creating “super-expression” records and access points (using just the generic term *arranged* for all arrangements of the same work, regardless of differences in medium of performance or arranger).

The EURIG proposal goes beyond FRBR in making a distinction among arrangements, transcriptions, and orchestrations. This doesn’t seem particularly worthwhile, especially since transcriptions and orchestrations are types of arrangements. What would be the implications for our legacy data? What would be the implications for linked data?

As for medium of performance and name of arranger, these are definitely useful pieces of information, but would be coded as distinct elements in expression *records* in a pure WEMI environment. Expression *access points* aren’t the only means of identifying “expressions of expressions” (i.e., arrangements for specific mediums of performance by specific arrangers), and in fact, such detailed expression access points could wreak havoc in the database.

On the details of the proposal, we do not agree with the Alternative instructions at 6.18.1.4 or 6.28.3.2.1. Why would the content of the authorized access point be determined by the content of the *descriptive* data? The Alternative might make sense when looking at a single bibliographic record, but would not make sense when looking at the WEMI “records” as a whole. Perhaps the Alternative should be to simply add “arranged” instead – regardless of the content of the description.

If the proposal is accepted, instructions will be needed on how to record the specification of the nature of the expression, the medium of performance, and the name of the arranger.

If the proposal is accepted, examples will be needed for all the new instructions. Examples were not needed with the current text of 6.18.1.4, as only the single term *arranged* was to be used. The new instructions should be illustrated by examples such as

Transcription
Concert band
Schuller

etc.

The examples at 6.28.3.2.1 should follow the punctuation guidelines in Appendix E. The individual additions should be given as:

Berlioz, Hector, 1803-1869. Corsaire (Transcription : Concert band : Schuller)