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Harnessing the Power of Provenance in Archival Description: The Second Edition of the ISAAR (Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families)

Adrian Cunningham

Stefano Vitali

Nils Brübach



From the first
to the second
edition of ISAAR (CPF).

STEFANO VITALI

*International Council on Archives
Committee on Descriptive Standards*

ISAAR (CPF) revision process: first phase

- ⌘ Announced in January 2001: deadline for comments and proposals July 2001;
- ⌘ By August 2001 the Secretariat of the ICA/CDS had received 18 submissions;
- ⌘ First draft produced in Brussels (October 2001), revised in Madrid (June 2002), licensed in Rio de Janeiro (November 2002);
- ⌘ Published on the Web January 2003.

Call for comments on the second edition of ISAAR (CPF)

“National Archives or equivalent institutions and Professional Associations of Archivists, (..) are (...) invited to send their comments to the Secretariat of the Committee (...). In addition, other professional associations, including organisations, and individuals from international archival community or from other professional communities, who have an interest in ISAAR (CPF) are invited as well to respond with their comments on the standard”

ISAAR (CPF) revision process: second phase

- ⌘ July 15 2003: deadline for comments on Rio draft;
- ⌘ The submissions received were 28 (ten more than in 2001): almost all agreed with the new structure and with the most part of the changes;
- ⌘ Canberra, 27-30 October 2003: approval of the final version of ISAAR (CPF) 2nd edition;
- ⌘ August 2004: publication of ISAAR (CPF) 2nd edition at the Vienna Congress of ICA

The main aspects of continuity between ISAAR1 and ISAAR2

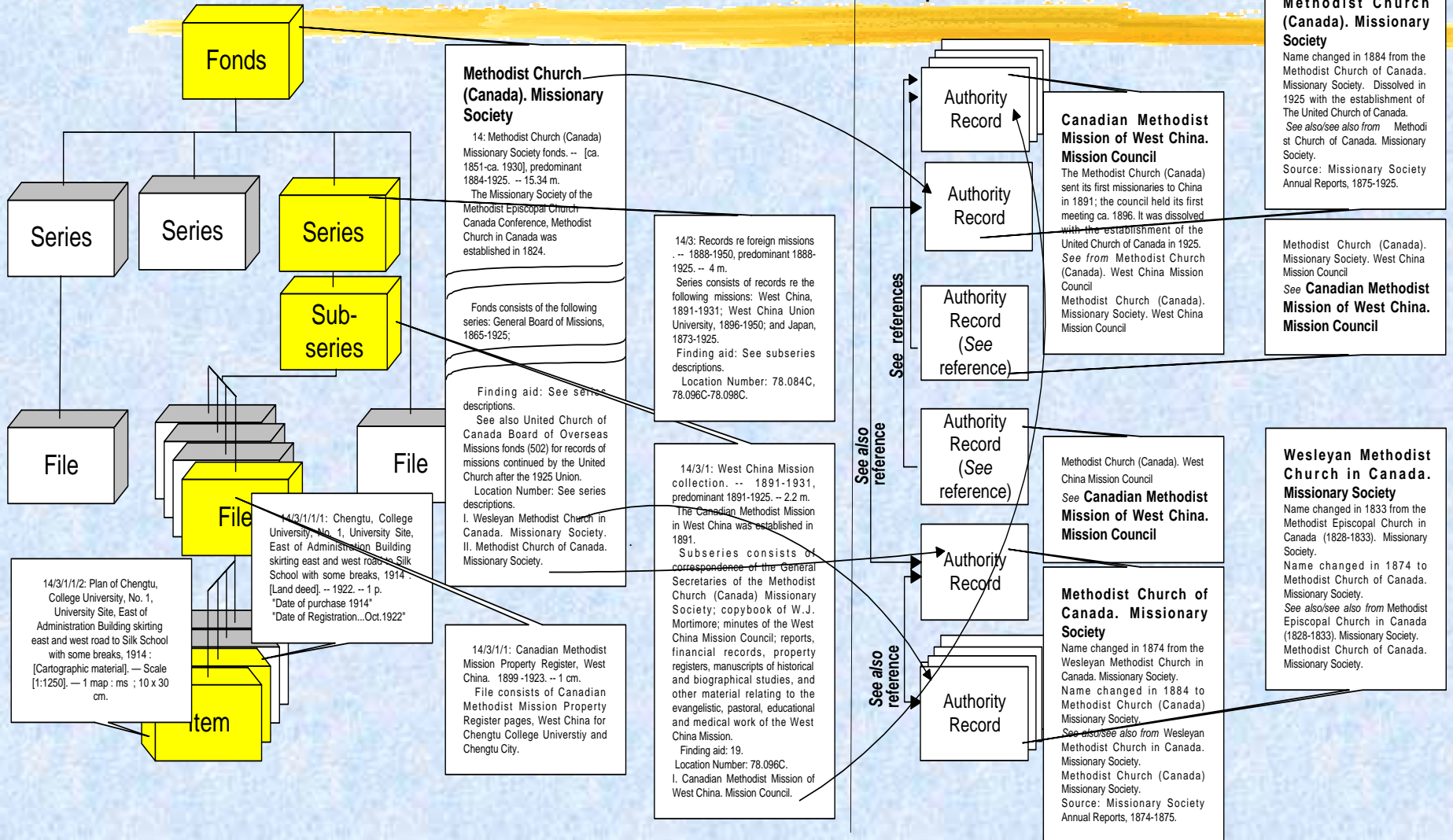
- ☆ the model for separate and linked description of creators and archival material for representing the complex and multidimensional relationship between archives and records and their creators;
- 🕒 the authority control of names of creators;

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DESCRIPTIVE AND AUTHORITY RECORDS

Illustrated with an example

Standardized archival description(s) according to ISAD(G) or compatible national rules

Archival authority records according to ISAAR(CPF) or compatible national rules



ISAAR (CPF), 1.5

⌘ “There are many reasons why separate capture and maintenance (...) of contextual information is a vital component of archival description. The practice enables the linking of descriptions of provenance entities to descriptions of records from the same creator(s) that may be held by more than one repository and to descriptions of other resources such as library and museum materials that relate to the entity in question”.

ISAAR (CPF), 1.6

✂ “Where a number of repositories hold records from a given source they can more easily share or link contextual information about this source if it has been maintained in a standardised manner. Such standardization is of international concern when the sharing or linking of contextual information is likely to cross national boundaries. The multinational character of past and present record keeping creates the incentive for international standardization which will support the exchange of contextual information”.

Authority control of name of creators

- ⌘ ISAAR (CPF) does not define any specific rule for the creation of the “authorised form(s) of names”;
- ⌘ it simply refers to national or international rules or conventions;
- ⌘ national agencies will adopt already existing rules or will develop new ones;
- ⌘ multiple forms of the name for the same entity are permitted in order to deal with changes of names of the same entity over the time.

ISAAR (CPF)2: what's really new (I)

- ☆ authority control is not the main scope of ISAAR (CPF);
- 🕒 the focus is more on the entities description:
ISAAR (CPF) provides rules for “descriptions of entities (corporate bodies, persons and families) associated with the creation and maintenance of archives” (1.1) ;
- 🕒 the stress is on the “thing” (the real entity), rather than on the “name of the thing” (the authorised or controlled name).

ISAAR (CPF)2: what's really new (II)

- 🕒 suggests ways for dealing with relationships between entities;
- 🕒 provides guidance on linking authority records to archival description and other information resources;
- 🕒 fosters the sharing of authority records between different domains;
- 🕒 takes into account the parallel development of EAC.

Relationships between entities



⌘ While in the first edition, relationships were managed mainly as relationships among authority entries (headings), by "see" and "see also" references, in the second edition there is a special area whose purpose is to represent the actual relationships of a given creator with other corporate bodies, persons, families

Relationships Area (5.3)

⌘ Element for describing the relationships between entities:

- ★ Names/Identifiers of related corporate bodies, persons or families (5.3.1);
- 🕒 Category of relationship (5.3.2) (hierarchical, temporal, family, associative)
- 🕒 Description of relationship (5.3.3);
- 🕒 Dates of the relationship (5.3.4).

Interoperability across systems and domains

- ⌘ Sharing and/or exchanging authority records is a very efficient way to navigate between systems and to allow for retrieval of meaningful information across domains;
- ⌘ ISAAR (CPF) indicates various means to establish connections between systems and across domains.

Sharing authority information



- ⌘ Including in archival authority records "Standardized forms of name according to other rules" (5. 1. 4.), for example bibliographic cataloguing rules, "can facilitate the sharing of authority records between different professional communities".

Chapter 6: relating CPF to archival materials...

- ⌘ Chapter 6 provides guidance on how linkages between authority record and relevant information resources can be established;
- ⌘ First of all, the Chapter confirms the model of separate and linked description for creators and archival material within an archival descriptive system;

...and other resources

- ⌘ It suggests as well a way to link archival authority records to information resources related to them, to be found in libraries catalogues, museums descriptive systems or in Web sites accessible through the Internet;
- ⌘ It indicates which information are to be provided in establishing such linkages.

Elements in chapter 6 (I)

- ☆ Identifiers and titles of related resources (6.1);
“Where appropriate also provide the identifiers of any separate description of the related resource”
- 🕒 Types of related resources (6.2);
“archival materials (fonds, record series, etc), archival description, finding aid, monograph, journal article, web site, photograph, museum collection, documentary film, oral history recording”

Elements in chapter 6 (II)

- 🕒 Nature of relationships (6.3);
“e.g. creator, author, subject, custodian, copyright owner, controller, owner”
- 🕒 Dates of related resources and/or relationships (6.4).
“any relevant dates for the related resources and/or the relationship between the corporate body, person or family and the related resources”

Other significant features of ISAAR (CPF)2

- ☆ In the Description Area (5.2) the elements have been reorganised regardless of the type of entity to which they can be applied;
- 🕒 The Control Area (5.4 previously Note Area) has been improved, including various elements to document the drafting process of authority records;
- 🕒 Information can be in general provided as free text narrative and/or as structured text and/or with links to the external resources.

Archival description systems on the Internet and ISAAR (CPF)

✂ Archivists are more and more convinced that the new technologies can but greatly change many features of archival descriptions. Creating archival descriptions in a digital environment and communicating them through the Internet is not the same as doing it on paper. In this case too, as in other cases, the medium greatly influences structures and contents of information and leads to reassess the forms of organizing knowledge and the ways to acquire it

Archival descriptive systems and ISAAR (CPF) (I)

⌘ *Bright Sparcs* developed by the *Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre*

☒ it contains over four thousand biographies of persons who have played a role in various branches of science, technology and medicine in Australia;

☒ The biographies are linked to the descriptions of archival materials created by them or related to them, as well as to bibliographic and other information resources;

<http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/bsparcshome.htm>

Archival descriptive systems and ISAAR (CPF) (II)

⌘ *On-line guide to the State Archive of Florence*

- ☑ based on the model of separate and linked description of archival material;
- ☑ it is a complex information system which includes the description of a large number of entities (fonds and series, creators, states etc.);
- ☑ there are links to information resources on the Web related to fonds and creators described in the system;

guida on line dell'Archivio di Stato di Firenze

Archival descriptive systems and ISAAR (CPF) (III)

⌘ *Catalogo unico del Museo d'Arte contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto*

- ☒ it allows for a simultaneous research in four different databases (art collection, libraries, documents, archival fonds);
- ☒ the simultaneous research is based on the authority file of authors;
- ☒ with the same query you can retrieve a book written by an author, the fonds he created, documents related to him, pictures he painted and so on
- ☒ <http://194.105.50.132/private/welcome.jsp>



Thank you very much

Stefano Vitali

s_vitali@archiviodistato.firenze.it