

To: American Library Association
ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging:
Description and Access

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Subject: Revision of AACR2 Appendix A, Capitalization, A.40. German.

Background: After several decades of work by an international commission of representatives from the German-speaking nations, a new set of rules for German orthography, including capitalization, was officially accepted by the governments of these countries at a meeting in Vienna on July 1, 1996. The rules were officially introduced on August 1, 1998. A period of transition, during which both the old and the new orthography are valid, is scheduled to end on August 1, 2005.

Although the new orthography cannot, of course, be imposed on private persons, it becomes the de facto standard for German orthography, since it must now be taught to all schoolchildren in German-speaking countries and must be adhered to in all government publications.

The intent of the new rules is to make German orthography more consistent and reduce the number of exceptions to the rules, so as to make German orthography easier to learn. With regard to capitalization, the intent of the rules is to apply as consistently as possible the principle that nouns and words that function as nouns are capitalized, and to make the remaining exceptions to this principle easier to understand.

One consequence of the spelling reform is that the guidelines for German capitalization given in Appendix A, rule A.40, no longer accurately reflect correct German capitalization according to the new rules. To correct this situation, the following revision of A.40 is offered.

Proposed Revisions:

A.40. GERMAN¹

A.40A. Nouns

A.40A1. Capitalize all nouns and words used as nouns: *das Buch; das Geben; die Armen; das intime Du* (reference to the word *du*); *Not tun; ausser Acht lassen; aufs Neue; fürs Erste; im Voraus; die Übrigen; heute Mittag; im Grossen und Ganzen; das*

¹ Authoritative guidance on German capitalization can be found in the current volume of *Duden : die deutsche Rechtschreibung*. The 22nd edition, published in 2000, incorporates the changes mandated by the spelling reform officially introduced on August 1, 1998.

Hundert; das Tausend (but *hundert* or *tausend* when used as cardinal numbers; see A.40D1b).

A.40B. Proper names and their derivatives

A.40B1. In general, do not capitalize proper adjectives: *die deutsche Sprache*.

A.40B2. Capitalize adjectives derived from personal names when used in their original meaning: *die Lutherische Übersetzung; die Platonischen Dialoge*. Do not capitalize them when they are used descriptively: *die lutherische Kirche; die platonische Liebe*. Capitalize adjectives that consist of a personal name followed by an apostrophe and the ending *-sche* (including its inflected forms): *die Darwin'sche Evolutionstheorie; das Wackernagel'sche Gesetz; die Goethe'schen Dramen*. Otherwise, do not capitalize adjectives containing a personal name: *die platonische Liebe; eine kafkaeske Stimmung*.

A.40B3. Capitalize indeclinable adjectives derived from geographic names: *Schweizer Ware; die Zürcher Bürger*.

A.40B4. Capitalize adjectives, pronouns, and numerals used as parts of a name or title: *Alexander der Grosse; das Schweizerische Konsulat; Seine Excellenz; Friedrich der Zweite; Bund der Technischen Angestellten und Beamten; der Erste der Klasse* (expressing rank). See also A.40D1b.

A.40C. Pronouns

A.40C1. Do not capitalize *ich*.

A.40C2. Capitalize *Du, Ihr, Dein, and Euer* and their inflected forms when used in correspondence.

A.40C3. Capitalize *Sie* and *Ihr* and their inflected forms when used in formal address.

A.40D. Miscellaneous

A.40D1. Do not capitalize the following:

- a) pronouns (see also A.40C): *jemand, ein jeder, der eine . . . der andere, etwas anderes, die übrigen die beiden, die meisten*
- b) numerals (see also A.40B4): *die beiden, alle drei, der vierte* (indicating numerical order) cardinal numbers under one million: *hundert; tausend; an die zwanzig; wir zwei; alle drei; bis drei zählen*
- c) adverbs: *mittags, anfangs, morgen, montags, aufs neue, fürs erste, im voraus*
- d) verbal phrases: *not tun, schuld sein, haushalten, preisgeben, teilhaben, wundernehmen, ausser acht lassen, zuteil werden, zumute sein preisgeben,*

teilhaben, wundernehmen, zuteil werden, zumute sein (but zu Mute sein), schuld sein (words such as schuld or leid are considered to be adjectives when used in conjunction with the verbs sein, werden, or bleiben)

- e) adjectives modifying nouns that are implied if the noun has been expressed elsewhere in the same sentence: *Hier ist die beste Arbeit, dort die schlechteste.*
- f) fractions, when they directly precede a noun or a cardinal number: ein viertel Kilogramm; drei viertel acht (but um ein Viertel vor acht).

Clean Copy of Revised Rule:

A.40. GERMAN¹

A.40A. Nouns

A.40A1. Capitalize all nouns and words used as nouns: *das Buch; das Geben; die Armen; das intime Du* (reference to the word *du*); *Not tun; ausser Acht lassen; aufs Neue; fürs Erste; im Voraus; die Übrigen; heute Mittag; im Grossen und Ganzen; das Hundert; das Tausend* (but *hundert* or *tausend* when used as cardinal numbers; see A.40D1b).

A.40B. Proper names and their derivatives

A.40B1. In general, do not capitalize proper adjectives: *die deutsche Sprache.*

A.40B2. Capitalize adjectives that consist of a personal name followed by an apostrophe and the ending *-sche* (including its inflected forms): *die Darwin'sche Evolutionstheorie; das Wackernagel'sche Gesetz; die Goethe'schen Dramen.* Otherwise, do not capitalize adjectives containing a personal name: *die platonische Liebe; eine kafkaeske Stimmung.*

A.40B3. Capitalize indeclinable adjectives derived from geographic names: *Schweizer Ware; die Zürcher Bürger.*

A.40B4. Capitalize adjectives, pronouns, and numerals used as parts of a name or title: *Alexander der Grosse; das Schweizerische Konsulat; Seine Excellenz; Friedrich der Zweite; Bund der Technischen Angestellten und Beamten; der Erste der Klasse* (expressing rank). See also A.40D1b.

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A.40C. Pronouns

A.40C1. Do not capitalize *ich*.

A.40C2. Capitalize *Sie* and *Ihr* and their inflected forms when used in formal address.

A.40D. Miscellaneous

A.40D1. Do not capitalize the following:

- a) pronouns (see also A.40C): *jemand, ein jeder, der eine . . . der andere, die beiden, die meisten*
- b) cardinal numbers under one million: *hundert; tausend; an die zwanzig; wir zwei; alle drei; bis drei zählen*
- c) adverbs: *mittags, anfangs, morgen, montags*
- d) verbal phrases: *preisgeben, teilhaben, wundernehmen, zuteil werden, zumute sein* (but *zu Mute sein*), *schuld sein* (words such as *schuld* or *leid* are considered to be adjectives when used in conjunction with the verbs *sein, werden, or bleiben*)
- e) adjectives modifying nouns that are implied if the noun has been expressed elsewhere in the same sentence: *Hier ist die beste Arbeit, dort die schlechteste.*
- f) fractions, when they directly precede a noun or a cardinal number: *ein viertel Kilogramm; drei viertel acht* (but *um ein Viertel vor acht*).

Assessment of impact: The above guidelines will replace the current guidelines in governing how one should transcribe written German in areas of the bibliographic description involving transcription from the item in hand. It is possible that there may be German words used in examples in the text of AACR2 that are not correctly capitalized according to the new rules; however, we have not so far noted any. If any are found, they could be corrected in future revisions of AACR2.

We expect minimal, if any, impact on authorized headings, as the rules for capitalization of titles, personal names, and names of corporate bodies have not changed. These guidelines should, of course, be applied to any authorized headings established from this point on. It will presumably be felt unnecessary to apply the new guidelines retroactively to headings already established.