Getty Vocabularies
New Concepts, Equivalents, and Cultural Context in the Art & Architecture Thesaurus
(+ Contribution Workflow in AAT)

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Getty

AAT

Art & Architecture Thesaurus

Over 500,000 terms in 180 languages
Over a million annual page views

- Multi-lingual and Multi-cultural.

- Accommodates divergent data from contributors to AAT (with caveats).

Introduction

- This presentation focuses on AAT translations, equivalents, and new concept records.

- We intend to break down a monocultural perspective and accommodate terminology derived from vastly differing cultural contexts, where the semantic functions of objects, roles, physical attributes, activities and materials, etc. may diverge significantly.

- The issues involve not only language differences but differing cultural contexts.

- Users may designate their own Preferred Descriptor apart from AAT Preferred.

- Note that Preference flags indicate a default for a term, source, or contributor, not an absolute judgement on usage.

Notes on "Preference"

4.4.2.4.4.2.2. Language-preferred term

The AAT prescribes that there should be a term preferred for each language represented in the record. The values for the language-preferred flag are preferred, non-preferred, and undetermined. The preferred term for a language is the term used most often in authoritative, scholarly literature in the given language. And depends upon the rules of the language. In the example below, the language-preferred terms for English are plural nouns, while for German they are singular nouns.

1. diptychs (Record-Preferred) (English-Pref,Descriptor,Plural Noun)
2. diptych (English,Alternate Descriptor,U,Singular Noun)
3. Diptychen (German,Descriptor,Plural Noun)
4. Diptychon (German-Pref,Alternate Descriptor,Singular Noun)
5. Diptycha (German,Used For,Plural Noun)
6. 雙聯畫 (C,U,Chinese (traditional)-Pref,Descriptor,Noun)
7. 雙聯畫屏 (C,U,Chinese (traditional),Used For,Noun)

4.4.2.4.4.2.3. Contributor-preferred term

Contributors may flag the term that is preferred by their institution.

1. diptychs (Record-Preferred) (English-Pref,Descriptor,Plural Noun)
   Contributor: Avery-preferred
   Contributor: GCI-preferred
   Contributor: VP-preferred
2. diptych (English,Alternate Descriptor,U,Singular Noun)
   Contributor: VP-non-preferred
3. Diptychen (German,Descriptor,Plural Noun)
   Contributor: IfM-SMB-PK-non-preferred
4. Diptychon (German-Pref,Alternate Descriptor,Singular Noun)
   Contributor: IfM-SMB-PK -preferred

4.4.2.4.4.2.4. Source-preferred term

The term preferred by a given published source should be flagged.

1. diptychs (Record-Preferred) (English-Pref,Descriptor,Plural Noun)
   Contributor: Avery-preferred
   Contributor: GCI-preferred
   Contributor: VP-preferred
   Source: Grove Art Online (2008-)-alternate preferred
   Source: Oxford Companion to Art (1984)- alternate preferred

Term Equivalents

Translation equivalents between languages in a single record in the AAT should be exact synonyms. Equivalence relationships are the relationships between synonymous terms for the same concept. Many concepts lend themselves to direct translation for a generic concept. Paintings (visual works) = peintures (oeuvres visuelles) = pinturas (obras visuales).

- The method of translation and mapping described here is a direct mapping, which refers to the matching of concepts one-to-one in the source and target languages. This technique assumes that there will be the same meaning and level of specificity between the two terms representing the concept in each language. (AAT Editorial Guidelines 4.4.2.4.1)
- Equivalent terms in the AAT are "terms representing a concept." When translating or mapping, it is the concept that is translated or mapped. (AAT Editorial Guidelines 4.4.2.2)
- Correction of non-synonymous used-for terms: When a record in the legacy AAT contains terms or a scope note that describe non-synonymous terms, the manual division of the record into multiple concepts occurs. The original hierarchical position is maintained for the descriptor; any non-synonymous used-for term is deleted. A new record is made for the former used-for term, which is now usually a descriptor. Translations for the new descriptors should be supplied by the translating projects. (AAT Editorial Guidelines 4.4.2.3.3.3.10.3)

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Semantic View (JSON, RDF, N3/Turtle, N-Triples)

ID: 300033618
Page Link: http://vocab.getty.edu/page/aat/300033618

Record Type: concept

⛓ **paintings (visual works)** (<visual works by material or technique>, visual works (works), ... Visual and Verbal Communication (hierarchy name))

Note: Unique works in which images are formed primarily by the direct application of pigments suspended in oil, water, egg yolk, molten wax, or other liquid, arranged in masses of color, onto a generally two-dimensional surface.

Terms:
paintings (visual works) (**preferred**,C,U,English-P,D,U,PN)
painting (visual work) (C,U,LC,English,AD,U,SN)
لوحات (C,U,Arabic -P,D,U,U)
schilderingen (C,U,Dutch-P,D,U,U)
schildering (C,U,Dutch,AD,U,U)
schilderstukken (C,U,Dutch,AD,U,U)
schilderstuk (C,U,Dutch,AD,U,U)
schilderijen (C,U,Dutch,UF,U,U)
schilderij (C,U,Dutch,UF,U,U)
peintures (oeuvres visuelles) (C,U,French,D,U,PN)
ouvrage peint (C,U,French-P,AD,U,MSN)
peinture (oeuvre visuelle) (C,U,French,AD,U,SN)
Malereien (visuelle Werke) (C,U,German,D,SN)
Gemälde (C,U,German-P,AD,B)
Malerei (visuelles Werk) (C,U,German,AD,SN)
ציור (C,U,Hebrew,D,N)
maleri (C,U,Norwegian (Bokmål)-P,AD,U,SN)
       (Norwegian (Nynorsk)-P,AD,U,SN)
pinturas (obras visuales) (C,U,Spanish-P,D,U,PN)
        (obras visuais) (Portuguese-P,D,U,PN)
pintura (obra visual) (C,U,Spanish,AD,U,SN)
        (obra visual) (Portuguese,AD,U,U)

Facet/Hierarchy Code: V.VC

https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/guidelines/aat_4_4_appendix_d_contributors.html

New concept records based on cultural specificity

- Based on context: concepts that may have literal translations that appear equivalent, but that exist within a cultural context that is not applicable to all other cultures.

- No new hierarchical structure in the AAT is (generally) needed for culturally specific concepts.

- Terms that may appear as a literal translation or otherwise equivalent are often designated as the immediate parent of the new concept and removed from the record (with caveats), to minimize the proliferation of homographs.

- New records in AAT do not always conform exactly to the data as it appears in the databases of contributing institutions, particularly hierarchical structure.

New Concepts based on cultural context

- New concept placement must converge with meaning based on the immediate parent, continuing up the hierarchy.

- If meaning diverges in any sense from the parent record(s), then the new record cannot be properly placed under a concept parent.

- While hierarchical placement can be challenging, the AAT usually allows for the unique meaning of culturally specific concepts to be placed within the existing hierarchical structure.

- English preferred terms may be marked as 'loan term', 'literal translation,' or 'translation not available' under Language Status in VCS, when an exact equivalent cannot be found in published sources in the target language.

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Semantic View (JSON, RDF, N3/Turtle, N-Triples)

ID: 300445424
Page Link: http://vocab.getty.edu/page/aat/300445424

Record Type: concept

⛓ cuicatl (song) (chants, songs (musical compositions), ... Visual and Verbal Communication (hierarchy name))

Note: Songs or chanted poetry in Nahua culture, frequently performed during public ritual ceremonies as well as more private rituals and those related to healing.

Terms:
cuicatl (song) (preferred,C,U,English-P,D,L,B)
(Classical Nahuatl-P,D,U,B)
(Spanish,UF,L,U)
huicanih (C,U,Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl,UF,U)
huicatl (C,U,Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl,UF,U) .... alternate term
tlatzotzontli (C,U,undetermined,UF,U)

Hierarchical Position:
⛓ Objects Facet
⛓ .... Visual and Verbal Communication (hierarchy name) (G)
⛓ .... Literary and Performing Arts Works (hierarchy name) (G)
⛓ .... musical compositions (G)
⛓ .... songs (musical compositions) (G)
⛓ .... chants (G)
⛓ .... cuicatl (song) (G)

Additional Notes:
Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl ..... Huicatl zo xochitlahtolli tlahuicalli pan tlaneltoquilli tlen nahuatl, tlen ahachica mochihua quemman oncah ce tlaneltoquilli ica nochi, nouhquiya tlen tlaneltoquilli tlen tlahuel axneci huan tlen pahtli.
Spanish ..... Canciones o poesías cantadas en la cultura nahua, que se realizan con frecuencia durante ceremonias rituales públicas, así como rituales más privados y curativos.

Sources and Contributors:
cuicatl (song)............ [GRI-FloCo Preferred, VP Preferred]
.... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)
.... Karttunen 1992 71
.... Molina 1571 (2) 26v
.... Simeon 1992 136
.... Wimmer 2020
huicanih............ [GRI-FloCo]
.... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)
huicatl........... [GRI-FloCo]
.... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)
tlatzotzontli............ [GRI-FloCo]
.... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)

Subject: .... [GRI-FloCo, VP]
.... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)

Note:
English   .... [GRI-FloCo]
                              .... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)
Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl.......... [GRI-FloCo]
                              .... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)
Spanish   .... [GRI-FloCo]
                              .... GRI, FloCo terminology (2019-)

Architectura Sinica example record

- There is not always a 1/1 relationship between a database source record and the corresponding AAT record (or hierarchy).
- In this example, the concept from Architectura Sinica is evaluated for equivalents that are appropriate for AAT.
- Translation equivalents are reviewed in relation to current AAT hierarchy.
- Loan terms (dié) are preferred where the context (Chinese traditional architecture) suggests a unique concept apart from an AAT generic equivalent (ie: battlements).
- The new culturally specific record is created as a child of the broader concept **300002595 battlements**
- It is recommended to avoid proliferation of literally translated homographs throughout the AAT in favor of the unique context of the new concept.
- Contributor data sets and the AAT are separate but equal in structure and expression. Unique ID numbers allow for correspondence between data set records for equivalent concepts.
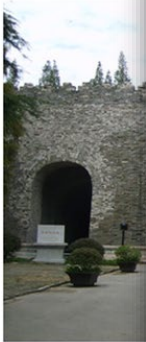
ARCHITECTURA SINICA   DYNAMIC SITE ARCHIVE   ARCHITECTURAL TERMINOLOGY   BIBLIOGRAPHY   ABOUT   search

DIÉ 堞

URI https://architecturasinica.org/keyword/k000016

Battlements 堞, Nanjing city wall, Ming dynasty 明南京内城城墙 (photo: JIA Tingli 賈亭立, 2009)

Meridian gate, Nanjing pala

Terms

- die (Pinyin without tones)
- 堞 (Traditional Chinese)[1]
- 堞 (Simplified Chinese)
- dié (Pinyin)
- tieh (Wade-Giles)
- battlements (lit.) (English)
- battlements (ATTCAT preferred) (English)[2]
- parapets (English)[3]
- merlons (English)[4]

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Semantic View (JSON, RDF, N3/Turtle, N-Triples)

ID: 300443517

Record Type: concept

Page Link: http://vocab.getty.edu/page/aat/300443517

dié (battlements, <battlements and battlement components>, ... Components (hierarchy name))

Note: In traditional Chinese fortifications, die refers to the battlements built on the top of a city wall constructed to protect defenders from missile fire. This term already appears in the literature of the Pre-Qin period (e.g. "In the standards of city wall building, the wall should be [built to the] height of 30 feet, die should be added to the top, and the width should be ten feet 行城之法。高城三十尺。上加堞。廣十尺," from Mozi, Chapter 14, Beiti). The element is also referred to as zhidie 雉堞, nütouqiang 女頭墙, and duokouqiang 垛口墙 in different traditional textual sources.

Terms:
dié (**preferred**,C,U,English-P,D,L,N) .... battlements
(Chinese (transliterated Pinyin)-P,D,U,N)
堞 (C,U,Chinese (traditional)-P,D,U,U)
(Chinese (simplified),UF,U,U)
die (battlements) (C,U,Chinese (transliterated Pinyin without tones),UF,U,U)
tieh (C,U,Chinese (transliterated Wade-Giles),UF,U,U)

Facet/Hierarchy Code: V.PJ

Hierarchical Position:
Objects Facet
.... Components (hierarchy name) (G)
.... components (objects parts) (G)
.... <components by specific context> (G)
.... architectural elements (G)
.... <architectural elements by building type> (G)
.... fortification elements (G)
.... <defensive walls and defensive wall components> (G)
.... defensive wall components (G)
.... <battlements and battlement components> (G)
.... battlements (G)
.... dié (G)

Additional Notes:
Chinese (traditional) ..... 堞在先秦文獻中就有出現，如《墨子備梯卷十四: 行城之法。高城三十尺。上加堞。廣十尺。指修築於城墻頂面外邊緣的齒形矮墻。起遮護守城士兵的作用，是城墻頂面的主要防禦設施之壹。

Special cases for detailed cultural references

- Some legacy AAT records need review and updates to reflect nuance.
- New concept records may conflict with existing AAT records, where the scope is too broadly stated to represent conceptual differences, requiring addition of new records to more accurately represent cultural concepts.
- Some sources may be biased, requiring research to illustrate nuance fully. Review of scholarly literature is required to illuminate evolving or inaccurate representation of culturally distinct concepts.
- AAT relies on contributors, sources, and translators in the aggregate for guidance.
- Use flags as appropriate for outdated or historically bound terms (Current; Historical; Deprecated; Pejorative).

EXAMPLE: "voodoo"

AAT 300054591 voodoo (generalized religious reference)

- Legacy AAT concept scopes do not always adequately represent the variety of historical and cultural detail available.
- In this case the original record is retained but scope is amended to highlight historical usage and to reflect context more accurately. Translation equivalents remain but may be impacted and require review.
- Historical sources may conflate concepts, minimize or overlook cultural differences, or offer conflicting information. Terminology (ex.: 'voodoo') may be used broadly in sources to refer to multiple concepts.
- These instances require diligence in disambiguation (including qualifiers and associative relationships in AAT).

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Semantic View (JSON, RDF, N3/Turtle, N-Triples)

ID: 300456586   Record Type: concept
Page Link: http://vocab.getty.edu/page/aat/300456586

⬡ voodoo (Mississippi River Valley) (religions (belief systems, cultures), <religions and religious concepts>, Associated Concepts (hierarchy name))

Note: Term used to designate the syncretic Afro-Creole religion developed along the lower Mississippi River and its tributaries, most notably New Orleans. The evolution of Voodoo was strongly influenced by Haitian immigration to Southern Louisiana in the early 19th century; the diaspora melded its Vodou practices with elements of neo-African counterculture religions, Native American traditions, and traditional folk healing. Voodoo practitioners centered spirits of the dead, embodied by the almighty God figure Li Grand Zombi. While variations of Voodoo are still practiced today, it is widely understood to be a historical religion that died out by the 1940s due to increased persecution of worshipers. Nonetheless, it continues to be associated with the culture and identity of the Southern Louisiana region. In addition to its usage in the specific context of southern Louisiana, the term 'voodoo' is often used as a racialized and pejorative umbrella term for all Black peoples' religious and spiritual practices. When used outside the context of the Mississippi River Valley, voodoo represents a colonial misunderstanding of Black religion that ignores the distinct histories of Vodún, Vodou, and Voodoo. For the Afro-Creole religion of Haiti, use "Vodou." For the traditional religion of the Fon and Ewe people in Dahomey (modern-day Benin), use "Vodún."

Terms:
    voodoo (Mississippi River Valley) (preferred,C,U,English-P,D,U,U)
    Voodoo (Mississippi River Valley) (C,U,English,UF,U,U)
    Mississippi River Valley Voodoo (C,U,English,UF,U,U)
    New Orleans Voodoo (C,U,English,UF,U,U)
    Louisiana Voodoo (C,U,English,UF,U,U)
    voodooist (Mississippi River Valley) (C,U,English,UF,U,U)

Facet/Hierarchy Code: B.BM

Hierarchical Position:
    ⬡ Associated Concepts Facet
    ⬡ .... Associated Concepts (hierarchy name) (G)
    ⬡ .... <religions and religious concepts> (G)
    ⬡ .... religions (belief systems, cultures) (G)
    ⬡ .... voodoo (Mississippi River Valley) (G)

Related concepts:
    distinguished from .... Hoodoo (religion)
    .... (religions (belief systems, cultures), <religions and religious concepts>, Associated Concepts (hierarchy name)) [300451771]
    distinguished from .... Vodou
    .... (religions (belief systems, cultures), <religions and religious concepts>, Associated Concepts (hierarchy name)) [300451766]
    distinguished from .... Vodún
    .... (African religions, religions (belief systems, cultures), ... Associated Concepts (hierarchy name)) [300451768]
    distinguished from .... voodoo (generalized religious reference)
    .... (religions (belief systems, cultures), <religions and religious concepts>, Associated Concepts (hierarchy name)) [300054591]

- Scholarly literature indicates new records that add necessary detail to what was previously a broad (and inaccurate) representation of a cultural concept (voodoo).
- Scope Notes elucidate specific cultural context for similar but distinct practices or (mis-) understanding.
- Qualifiers disambiguate homographs ('voodoo') where sources conflate terminology.
- Associative relationships highlight differences and correspondences.

Associated records

- False equivalencies may be highlighted in seemingly related records.

- Common or popularized parlance for specific objects may be misleading (ex.:voodoo dolls).

- Consider whether an associative relationship remains appropriate.

CONCLUSIONS

- Translation equivalents are complex and bound to cultural differences in many cases.

- Consideration of cultural context is always advised (preferring usage of loan terms is often in order in these cases).

- Evaluate whether a term is synonymous in an existing record or requires a new concept record to accurately represent the sense of a term within any historical or cultural established rule, tradition, or custom.

CONTRIBUTIONS WORKFLOW
Getty Vocabularies

Current contributions workflow for the Getty Vocabularies

- The current workflow involves contributions as spreadsheets.

- Vocabularies editorial team creates a new versioned spreadsheet, first processed through OpenRefine to clean data and reconcile with existing Vocabularies records.

- Vocabularies editorial team members run this new versioned spreadsheet through a Python Jupyter notebook to create a fresh XML file.
    - Review resulting error report and correct issues in latest spreadsheet.
    - Re-run spreadsheet until errors are cleared.
    - Post XML file in JIRA for Getty Digital to load into the Vocabularies test environment, where new records are evaluated for consistency and further errors.
    - New records are run through a publishing routine, after which they appear publicly on the Web.

1. New spreadsheet to OpenRefine

2. Edit and reconcile, create new spreadsheet version

3. Process spreadsheet through Jupyter notebook

4. Generate new XML file and error reports

5. Review errors, correct, re-run in Jupyter notebook for clean XML, which is loaded to VCS test environment for evaluation

7. Data is run through a publishing routine and appears on the Web.

Future Vocabularies system

- The Vocabulary Coordination System (VCS) was developed by Gregg Garcia and Vocabularies Editorial staff (ca.2001).

- Requires complex workarounds for loading new data and is bound to Windows environment.

- VCS is established, and functions for editorial staff but is decades old and does not allow access to contributors.

- A future system should be designed to be Web-based, providing access from anywhere, and potential elimination of spreadsheets and intermediate steps.

- Potentially simpler access for contributors.

- Should offer a more collaborative interface for Getty Vocabularies staff and global contributors.

Thank you.

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