

**BACKGROUND:** *Because ancient or medieval cities that went out of existence before the creation of modern states seldom produced official publications of their own, headings for these cities are only rarely assigned as descriptive access points. Therefore headings for all cities that ceased to exist before 1500 are established in the subject authority file, except for those that are established at the request of a descriptive cataloger for use as a main or added entry. The authority records for the latter reside in the name authority file (cf. H 405). Until 1991 these headings were established with the qualifier (**Ancient city**) or (**City**) depending on the time of existence. In 1991 both of these qualifiers were replaced by the qualifier (**Extinct city**). This instruction sheet provides guidelines for establishing extinct cities as subject headings. For guidelines on establishing archaeological sites, see H 1225.*

**1. Extinct cities established as subject headings.** Generally, establish as a subject heading the name of any city, town, village, etc., that ceased to exist by the year 1500, unless it has already been established as a name heading.

*Note: Treat cities of the Americas that ceased to exist by 1500 as archaeological sites rather than as early cities, following the provisions of H 1225.*

If it is necessary to assign as a subject heading the name of a city or town that existed beyond 1500, or that still exists, establish it as a name heading or request a descriptive cataloger to do so.

Since extinct cities that are needed as main or added entries are established in the name authority file, before establishing such a heading for subject cataloging purposes, search the name authority file to ascertain whether it already exists as a name heading. Then proceed as follows:

- *If the heading is in the name authority file and is coded AACR2 or RDA, assign the heading as established.*
- *If the heading is in the name authority file but is not coded AACR2 or RDA, establish it as a subject heading. Notify the Policy, [Training, and Cooperative Programs Division](#) of the existence of the invalid heading in the name authority file so that it can be cancelled.*
- *If the heading is not in the name authority file, establish it as a subject heading according to the guidelines presented in this instruction sheet.*

## H 715 Extinct Cities

**2. Early versus modern name.** Do not establish or assign as a subject heading the early name of a city if it is clear that the exact original site of the city in question has been continuously occupied until modern times. Instead, apply the general rule for a jurisdiction with name change, using only the latest form of the name established as a name heading. *Examples:*

London (England) [*not* Londinium]  
Vienna (Austria) [*not* Vindobona]

Establish an extinct city as a subject heading, however, if a modern village is simply located near or over the extinct city, but has no direct connection with it except the incidental one of proximity.

**3. Form of heading.** Use the form of the name most commonly applied to the city in standard encyclopedias, gazetteers, etc. Justify this form in 670 fields in the subject authority record. It is not necessary to request the BGN decision.

Generally choose the form of name that is the *most common* ancient form. For example, establish **Larsa**, not **Tall Sankarah**, its modern name.

Add to each name the qualifier (**Extinct city**).

Do not qualify by the name of the current larger jurisdiction in which the city would be located today unless it is necessary to resolve a conflict. For example, the heading **Soli (Cyprus : Extinct city)** includes **Cyprus** as part of the qualifier because there were two ancient cities named Soli, one in what is now Cyprus and one in what is now Turkey.

Do not add the word **Site** to the heading for the city.

**4. References.** Make the following references when establishing the heading:

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451 #0 $a [alternate early name(s)] (Extinct city)
451 #0 $a [alternate modern name(s)] ([modern country])
550 #0 $w g $a Extinct cities $z [modern country]
551 #0 $w g $a [modern country] $x Antiquities
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*Note:* For extinct cities in Great Britain the term [**modern country**] in the above model refers to the appropriate constituent country.

**5. Use of extinct city names as subjects.** A heading for an extinct city may be treated as either an archaeological site heading or as a city heading, depending on the nature of the work to which it is assigned.

**a. Archaeological site treatment.** If the work discusses the city in its present-day manifestation as an archaeological site, treat the city heading as a site name, following the provisions of H 1225.

**b. Cities treatment.** If the work discusses the city from the viewpoint of its having been a living city, assign the heading in the same manner as headings for modern cities are assigned. For comprehensive works on the city, assign the name of the city without subdivision. For works that discuss special aspects of the city (other than archaeological aspects), use topical subdivisions under the city name, as appropriate.  
*Example:*

651 #0 \$a Carthage (Extinct city) \$x Social life and  
customs.

Do not use the subdivision –**Antiquities** under headings for extinct cities.

Use this type of heading both for works limited to the city itself and for those that discuss both the city and its surrounding region. Do not construct headings of the type [ . . . ] **Region (Extinct city)** or [ . . . ] **(Extinct city) Region**.

**6. Geographic subdivision.** As a geographic subdivision, the heading for an extinct city is divided through the appropriate modern jurisdiction. *Example:*

650 #0 \$a Coins, Roman \$z Bulgaria \$z Abrittus (Extinct  
city)

**7. Use of extinct city names as qualifiers.** When the name of an extinct city is used as a qualifier for another heading, for example, for the name of a building, drop the term **(Extinct city)** from the heading. *Example:*

*Form of heading for city:* Knossos (Extinct city)

*Form when used as qualifier:* Palace of Knossos (Knossos)