Knowledge Organization and Nations

How do you know if a country is real? Izzard (1998) famously paraphrased the British Empire's test as, "Do you have a flag?" but we may as well ask, "Do you have a classification?" National library systems, the management of educational standards, and the need to articulate a nation's vision of society through shared heritage all play a role in the proliferation of knowledge organization systems alongside changes in borders and governance.

Historical work on knowledge organization systems has shaped our understanding of how standardized documentation and classification systems are entangled with the establishment of national consciousness (Anderson 1991; Adler, 2020; Carra, 2021; Higgins, 2012). Further, studies of Indigenous knowledge organization schemes reveal the reciprocal influence between systems and sovereign worldviews (Bardenheier et al., 2015; Cherry & Mukunda, 2015; Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015). While methods of studying these systems differ, they share an understanding of the interplay between the imagined nation and its conceptual information infrastructure. This special issue will bring together scholars who examine the standards and classifications that set borders and (re)build nations. How and when did these normalized systems arise, and how did they lend to the formation of national boundaries today?

Topic scope

As managing borders and creating informational boundaries are structuring and world-building activities (Anderson, 2016); we are seeking a range of perspectives that illuminate case studies from different historical periods and parts of the world. We welcome submissions from students, practitioners, and researchers of all stages working on:
- Histories of the development of national or anti-colonial knowledge organization systems
- Close readings of knowledge organization systems against state politics
- Comparative studies of knowledge organization across borders
- Land-based classification practices, including border control and establishing claims to land

Submissions

We welcome full length research articles (5,000-8000 words); and Book Reviews(1,000- 2,000 words) in line with CJILS accepted submissions.

Please submit manuscripts through the [submissions portal (OJS)](#) of the Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science (CJILS) and select "Special Issue - Knowledge organization and nations" from the section drop-down. The submission should include:
- The anonymized manuscript.
- A brief cover letter describing your work and its fit to the scope of this call for papers
- A separate contact information sheet with the names, email addresses, affiliations, and ORCID ID (if available) of all authors of the manuscripts.
- Optionally: Please consider including suggested reviewers for your manuscript and include their email addresses.

For questions about the submission process, please contact us at hannah.turner@ubc.ca and julia.bullard@ubc.ca.

Key dates

Manuscript submission deadline	Monday February 26th 2024
Peer reviews returned	May 2024
Revised manuscript due	July 2024
Issue publication	December 2024

Editors

Julia Bullard is an Assistant Professor at the UBC School of Information where she examines how communities instantiate their values in infrastructure, particularly through the design of knowledge organization systems. Her current work focuses on how catalogues can more fully represent LGBT2QIA+ identities (Bullard et al. 2020) and how colonial subject description represents Indigenous topics (Bullard, Watson, & Purdome 2022).

Hannah Turner is an Assistant Professor at the UBC School of Information. She researches the historical classification and categorization of material culture. Currently, she is investigating histories of museum classification and documentation in Canadian museums. She is particularly interested in how tools and technologies of data collection can reinforce legacies of colonialism, and is curious about institutional and community-driven projects for return and repair.

References

Adler, M. (2017). *Cruising the library: Perversities in the organization of knowledge*. Oxford University Press.

Adler, M. (2020). Afterword: The Strangeness of Subject Cataloging. *Library Trends*, *68*, 549–556. https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2020.0005

Anderson, B. R. O. (2016). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Revised edition). Verso.

Bardenheier, P., Wilkinson, E. H., & Dale, H. (2015). Ki te Tika te Hanga, Ka Pakari te Kete: With the Right Structure We Weave a Strong Basket. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *53*, 496–519. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1008716

Bowker, G. C., & Star, S. L. (1999). *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*. MIT Press.

Bullard, J., Watson, B. & Purdome, C. (2022) Misrepresentation in the Surrogate: Author Critiques of "Indians of North America" Subject Headings, *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly, 60*:6-7, 599-619, DOI: 10.1080/01639374.2022.2090039

Bullard, J., Dierking, A., & Grundner, A. (2020). Centring LGBT2QIA+ Subjects in Knowledge Organization Systems. *Knowledge Organization*, *47*, 393–403. https://doi.org/10.5771/0943-7444-2020-5-393

Carra, R. (2021). DJK: (Re)Inventing Eastern Europe in the Library of Congress Classification. *Slavic & East European Information Resources*, *22*, 6–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/15228886.2021.1874291

Cherry, A., & Mukunda, K. (2015). A Case Study in Indigenous Classification: Revisiting and Reviving the Brian Deer Scheme. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *53*, 548–567. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1008717

Christie, M. (2005). Words, Ontologies and Aboriginal Databases. *Media International Australia*, *116*, 52–63.

Duarte, M. E., & Belarde-Lewis, M. (2015). Imagining: Creating Spaces for Indigenous Ontologies. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *53*, 677–702. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1018396

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford University Press.

Higgins, C. (2012). Library of Congress Classification: Teddy Roosevelt's World in Numbers? *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *50*, 249–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2012.658989

Izzard, Eddie. (1998). *Dress to Kill.* United States: Anti.

Lee, T., Dupont, S., & Bullard, J. (2021). *Comparing the Cataloguing of Indigenous Scholarship: First Steps and Findings*. North American Symposium on Knowledge Organization.

Leroux, D. (2019). *Distorted descent: White claims to indigenous identity*. University of Manitoba Press.

Liboiron, M. (2021). *Pollution Is Colonialism*. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1jhvnk1

Schneider, T. D., & Hayes, K. (2020). Epistemic colonialism: Is it possible to decolonize archaeology? *American Indian Quarterly*, *44*, 127–148.

Shatanawi, M. (2021). Museum narratives of Islam between art, archaeology and ethnology: A structural injustice approach. In *Islam and Heritage in Europe* (pp. 163–182). Routledge.

Todd, Z. (2016). An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word For Colonialism. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, *29*, 4–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12124

Turner, H. (2017). Organizing Knowledge in Museums: A Review of Concepts and Concerns. *Knowledge Organization*, *44*, 472–484. https://doi.org/10.5771/0943-7444-2017-7-472

Turner, H. (2020). *Cataloguing culture: Legacies of colonialism in museum documentation*. UBC Press.