

## Reflections on a JX Reclassification Project\*

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*Librarians from the University of California at Davis School of Law share their experiences with a relatively small JX reclassification project in the hope that others may learn some valuable lessons or, at least, enjoy a good laugh at their initial naivete.*

¶1 This article provides an up close and personal look at how librarians and staff at the University of California, Davis, School of Law reclassified over 3,100 titles from the Library of Congress subject classification of JX to the new JZ/KZ schedules. The account of the trials and tribulations encountered in this relatively small JX reclassification project is presented from the dual perspectives of cataloging (¶¶ 2–12, written by Katherina R. Lin) and space planning (¶¶ 13–19, written by Erin Murphy). A primarily chronological format for the two stories is used so as to best describe the various phases of the project as honestly as possible. In reflecting on the experience, we think Nietzsche anticipated it perfectly when he said: “What does not kill me makes me stronger.”<sup>1</sup>

### JZ? KZ? It’s Making Me Crazy!

¶2 On May 1, 1997 (Law Day), the Library of Congress began to use the new JZ (International Relations) and KZ (Law of Nations) schedules. These two schedules replaced the prior JX (International Law and Relations) schedule. The JX schedule was created in 1910 when public international law was not treated as “law” but as part of “political science” (class J). At this point, a classification scheme for class K had not been developed. Since then the world has experienced two world wars and seen the establishment of the United Nations and other international organizations as well as the creation of new rules to govern the conduct of nations. The JX schedule had become inadequate and outdated. Therefore, the Library of Congress decided not to revise the old JX schedule but instead to develop two new classes (JZ and KZ).

¶3 In principle, public international law materials should be classified as KZ and materials of international relations should be classified as JZ. As I was to find

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1. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS (1889).

out, however, the distinction between the two classes can be difficult to define when dealing with actual titles. Also, there were some topics such as genocide, piracy, right of asylum, etc. that were no longer to be regarded as part of public international law but instead to be considered private international law. Therefore, JX titles could be changed to JZ, KZ, K, or even regional class numbers. This was not going to be a simple and straightforward reclassification project.

¶14 At UC Davis, we follow the Library of Congress Classification System as closely as we can, so the day JX was given a death sentence, we immediately switched to the new schedules.<sup>2</sup> Copy catalogers were instructed to accept the new JZ/KZ call number from the LC record on any new acquisition and then forward a copy of the printout to my desk. This gave me the opportunity to look up the call number on the new schedule so I could get acquainted with the new schemes. At the same time, it would trigger the need to reclassify other JX materials already held in the collection that shared the same subject heading. Since the Cataloging Department was only 2.65 full-time employees (myself as the only professional librarian plus one full-time and another part-time library assistant), the processing phase was done as time permitted.

¶15 At this point in the project, the reclass involved only a few titles and mostly monographs. But a bigger problem was looming due to the library's physical layout and collection arrangement. The law library is housed in the law school building (King Hall). The building was originally built as three stories, but library space ran out quickly, necessitating remodeling of each story to contain two levels. A basement level was added later. Thus the collection is housed on seven floors. Nonlegal materials (classes A–J) are shelved on level 6. Materials of comparative, uniform law (K33–7720) and foreign legal materials (KD–KZZ<sup>3</sup>) are on the basement level. If a book with the old JX call number was reclassified to JZ, the book would still be shelved on level 6. However, if a JX book was reclassified to KZ, it would be moved six levels down. As I'll discuss later, this physical distance between the JZ and KZ classes would require customizing of the schedules.

¶16 The library administration wanted us to finish reclassifying those legal materials in the regions of Asia, Africa, and Pacific Area, etc. before we started on any major reclassification of the JX collection. Although the KL–KWX schedule was published in 1993, we had made very little progress due to our workload and small staff. These materials still carried our homemade KZZ call numbers. With the prospect of adding hundreds of KZ books, it was better to reclassify the materials in the regions of Asia, Africa, and Pacific to their new call numbers KL–KWX and to reshelve them first. This would avoid shifting the KZ titles

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2. In truth, the JX call number did not die a complete death in our online catalog as there are still some records showing JX numbers. Our older editions are stored in one of two storage facilities provided for University of California campuses and, for economy reasons, we don't reclassify items sent there.

3. KZZ was our local design before the Library of Congress developed the law classification schedules. For example, we used KZZ Chin for Chinese legal materials and KZZJ for Jewish law books.

twice. In spring 1998, a half-time staff position was added to help me work on these projects.<sup>4</sup> The delay in full conversion to JZ and KZ also gave me more time to learn about the two new schedules. In 1998, I went to a workshop at the AALL Annual Meeting called “New Schemes for New Regimes: Understanding and Implementing JZ and KZ.”<sup>5</sup> The 1999 AALL Annual Meeting offered an educational program on “Classifying International Legal Materials by Using the Library of Congress Classification.”<sup>6</sup> Both provided me excellent advice.

¶17 By summer 1999, we were ready to start our reclassification of the JX collection. My plan for reclassifying the JX materials was to take advantage of other people’s wisdom. There were several law libraries that had already begun their reclassification projects. The Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School was an especially good source since it is a much larger collection, had been using the JZ/KZ schedules since they were in draft form, and is a contributing member of Research Library Information Network (RLIN). I asked library assistant Jackie Hale to search RLIN using our JX call numbers in sequence. The hit rate was very good. When Jackie found a record with the new JZ/KZ call number, she would insert the printout in the book and forward it to me for a decision either to accept or reassign a new call number. She normally prepared one full cart for me to look over. I also made a conscious decision to start with reclassifying monographic titles only. Since we employ undergraduate student workers who can be hard to find during the summer, I did not want to make changes on big sets or serial titles yet. Once I made the call number decision, Jackie would make the change in the OPAC and do the relabeling, bar coding, and reshelving herself.

¶18 With 3,100 titles in JX, the question of the day was how many were going where. I still vividly remember my answer when I was asked during our first administrative meeting on space planning: “half of the JX collection was going to JZ and the other half to KZ.” By the time we started accepting LC’s new JZ/KZ call numbers, I revised the percentages to 40 and 60. However, during the first month of the reclassification project, I began to see that the KZ portion was going to increase even further. As mentioned previously, the JZ collection is on level 6 and the KZ collection is on the basement level. A further complication is that level 6 is on the west side of King Hall and the basement is on the east side. Patrons cannot reach these two sections by taking the same elevator. If a patron on level 6

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4. I was very lucky to have Jackie Hale arrive to work with me. Prior to her transfer to my department, she had worked in our Serials Department for twelve years. She knows both Research Library Information Network (RLIN) and Innovative’s OPAC very well. In addition, she is an excellent searcher.

5. WORKSHOP ON NEW HORIZONS: NEW SCHEMES FOR NEW REGIMES—UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTING JZ AND KZ, audiotape of workshop presented at 91st Annual Meeting, American Ass’n of Law Libraries, Anaheim, Calif., July 11, 1998 (Valencia, Calif.: Mobiltape, 1998).

6. CLASSIFYING INTERNATIONAL LEGAL MATERIALS BY USING LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CLASSIFICATION, audiotape of program presented at 92nd Annual Meeting, American Ass’n of Law Libraries, Washington, D.C., July 21, 1999 (Valencia, Calif.: Mobiltape, 1999).

determines that what he or she wants is not there anymore but has been relocated to the basement, the patron needs to take the elevator down to level 3, walk out the library lobby down the hall to take another elevator down to the basement. I tried to review every new JZ/KZ call number from an LC or Yale record for consistency with other JZ/KZ call numbers already assigned so two similar books would not be seven floors apart. Quite often our faculty and law students still like to browse the bookshelves when doing their research. Since this is a law library, most likely they are looking for legal materials rather than general materials. When titles are cross-disciplinary (having subject headings of both international law and international relations), I prefer to assign them to KZ, thereby enabling patrons to concentrate on the basement collection first. Luckily, when JZ and KZ were developed, the option of local customization was considered.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the schedules, parallel numbers are presented in parenthesis giving the option to deviate from the Library of Congress practice.

¶9 One good example to illustrate this involved two books in our collection by Edmund Jan Osmanczyk.<sup>8</sup> One day Jackie came into my office with a very puzzled look on her face. She had found a record with a JZ call number for Osmanczyk's 1985 edition of *The Encyclopedia of the United Nations and International Agreements* and a record with a KZ call number for the 1990 edition titled *The Encyclopedia of the United Nations and International Relations*. Although the titles vary slightly, these are actually two different editions of the same work. Checking my KZ schedule, I saw that the topic of "United Nations" showed that KZ 4968 should be assigned to encyclopedias—it even gave Osmanczyk's book as an example. Great! The definitive answer had been found. Or so I thought. Delving further, I found that the subject headings of the bib records were the same: "United Nations—Dictionaries." Looking at the KZ schedule under "Dictionaries," I found a reference to JZ 4969, *not* KZ 4968. So were these two books encyclopedias or dictionaries? All I knew is that both books would definitely be assigned the same call number. After many minutes of staring at the two books hoping for inspiration, I finally chose KZ 4968 on the ground that the title was specifically listed as an example of an encyclopedia in the schedule. The decision also was in accord with my general rule of choosing KZ when given an option so as to more accurately reflect the "legal" nature of our collection.

¶10 By fall 1999, our undergraduate students returned to campus, and we were able to hire student workers to help with the reclassification effort. The project was shifted to the big sets and serials. An administrative meeting was called

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7. JOLANDE E. GOLDBERG, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CLASSES JZ AND KZ: HISTORICAL NOTES AND INTRODUCTION TO APPLICATION 12–13 (1997).

8. EDMUND JAN OSMANCZYK, *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS* (1985); EDMUND JAN OSMANCZYK, *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS* (2d ed. 1990).

to get the other departments involved because teamwork was absolutely required. The big sets such as the United Nations Treaty Series needed new labels and bar codes before being moved to the basement level for reshelving. The Acquisitions Department would do new labels and bar codes for the active sets. The Cataloging Department would do the relabeling and bar coding of the dead sets, and the Public Services Department would do the moving and reshelving.<sup>9</sup> Even in the cataloging area, input from the Public Services Department was helpful. For example, I had a difficult time differentiating between law of the sea and commercial maritime law so I could choose between KZA and K. In one instance when I had several titles that all related to “seabed,” I found that the KZ schedule assigned general works on the topic of “common heritage of mankind regime over the ocean bottom and its subsoil” to KAZ 1390. So I felt comfortable in reclassifying books such as *Internationalizing the Seabed*,<sup>10</sup> *Seabed Politics*,<sup>11</sup> and *Seabed Regimes and the Limit of National Jurisdiction*<sup>12</sup> to KZA 1390. I wasn’t as sure, however, about assigning two other books—*Sea-bed 1968*<sup>13</sup> and *Sea-bed 1969*<sup>14</sup>—to the same classification because they both carried the subject heading of “marine resources conservation.” At page 109 of the KZ schedule, there was a reference to KZA 3841+ for “marine resources conservation and development in the ocean bottom.” When I turned to the appropriate page, there was another reference to “see K 3481–3485.4,” which indicated that LC preferred the K number over the KZA number. Should these two books be assigned to K 3485.7 or KZA 1390 or KZA 3485.7? I could not make up my mind. Fortunately, Peg Durkin, our head of public services, has an L.L.M. degree in maritime law. I had a long consultation with her regarding the distinction between maritime commercial law (K) and law of the sea (KZA), as well as the more specific topic of marine resources conservation. With her clear explanation and sound advice, I determined that the “marine resources conservation in the seabed” books should stay with the “seabed” call number (KZA 1390). Thus, these books with similar titles would be shelved together instead of several aisles apart.

¶11 Compared to other reclassification projects in which I have been involved, this one was the most unique and demanding because it involved the split of one schedule into two. Other projects had involved reclassifying foreign legal materials of particular countries or regions. Although there were varying characteristics between common law and civil law systems, most jurisdictions had similar subjects such as constitutional law, criminal law, law of persons, law of

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9. See *infra* ¶¶ 13–18 for a description of the planning involved in physically shifting materials once they were reclassified.

10. RODERICK OGLEY, *INTERNATIONALIZING THE SEABED* (1984).

11. BARRY BUZAN, *SEABED POLITICS* (1976).

12. BILLY J. LEGG, *SEABED REGIMES AND THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION* (1971).

13. *SEA-BED 1968* (1970).

14. *SEA-BED 1969* (1971).

properties, etc. Also, the schedules had systematic arrangements, which I quickly became comfortable applying. Finally, there were no requirements to disintegrate and redistribute an existing collection.

¶12 It was a different story with this project, however. When I started reclassifying our old JX collection, I was very overwhelmed and confused with the choices between JZ/KZ, K/KZA, KZ/KJE, and so forth. It was difficult to easily classify the books that were interdisciplinary in nature. Also, some subjects that had been “public international law” were now considered “private international law.” Books on the subject of the right to asylum were previously found under JX 4280+. Under the new schedules, a book that treated the subject generally would be assigned to K 3268.3, but a book about the right of asylum in Europe would go to KJC 5202. There were days when I had four or more classification schedules spread out on my desk simultaneously. As we reached the end of the project, about 75 percent of our old JX collection was reclassified to KZ, 15 percent to JZ, and 10 percent to K, KJC, KJE, and other call numbers. I was so glad to learn from workshops and also from reading the guidelines that I could customize according to our local needs. Looking back, this was a very challenging but interesting project.

### Doing the JX/KZ Shuffle

¶13 Near the end of 1999, I walked through the existing JX collection with Kathy and Peg Durkin to assess how much of the collection would eventually become KZ. My responsibilities as evening/weekend librarian include supervision of the undergraduate work-study students who would be doing the actual physical moving of the books, so I needed to start planning this phase of the project. However, because the students don't necessarily work the same hours and days as I do, any instructions would need to be very clear and allow them to work self-sufficiently. I listed the call numbers of the big sets and started planning a shift to accommodate the incoming sixty-four shelves plus the growth space to take us out five years. Initially I used large stick-on notes to label the shelves to reflect where the last book was going to end up, and then moved backward from there showing where the large sets would end and start. General instructions for the shift called for only filling up the shelves halfway to allow for the individual books that would also be joining the KZ family. Confident that the planning was complete, I put my most trusted work-study student, Sean DeLouche, on the job.

¶14 Oddly, all did not go as planned. I think it was the third time Sean was moving the *United Nations Treaty Series* (call number KZ 172 U54, in case you're wondering) that I heard cries of mutiny. Somehow other multivolume sets were coming down to the KZ area that had not been included in my original calculations. At that point, I called a halt to the shift so I could more accurately re-assess what exactly was going to be coming down from level 6. In talking with Kathy, I learned that a higher percentage of JX was going to be reclassified as KZ than originally

anticipated, and, more importantly for space considerations, 95 percent of the multivolume sets were coming down to the basement. I decided that the only way to obtain a more accurate count of shelves was to make a list and have Kathy review it. I walked through the JX collection noting every set that took up a minimum of one shelf. I then printed out the bibliographic records for Kathy and asked her to assign the call numbers to these sets as soon as possible. Eventually, this added up to an additional 60 shelves or a total of 125 shelves (multivolume sets only) that would need to be merged. How could this be diagrammed without Sean drowning in Post-its?

¶15 Also, at this point, Public Services was running into the problem of having a call number already changed on the bib record while the set either remained in its old location or sat on a cart for relabeling. It only took one occurrence of a patron going down to the basement to look for a book with a KZ number only to be told that it was still six floors up in the JX collection for us to realize there had to be a better way.

¶16 The key to solving the need to merge so many shelves while avoiding call number confusion was teamwork. Staff from the Acquisitions, Cataloging, and Public Services departments met and decided that an “all hands on deck” approach was the only way to get 125 shelves worth of material relabeled and bar coded quickly. Sean was moved from the shifting phase to this process along with other students and staff members from Acquisitions and Cataloging. I also spent a few quiet evenings bar coding. Only when a set was ready to be reshelfed as KZ would the bib record be changed. We also came up with the idea of a holding area a few aisles away from the KZ collection as the best way to physically house the new KZ volumes until all of these sets could be processed and the final merge could be accomplished. The processing phase was completed in about three weeks, thanks to the cooperation of staff from all three departments.

¶17 As the relabeling and barcoding were proceeding, we determined that our collection of superseded volumes totaling 480 shelves (consisting primarily of state codes) would need to be moved so that the KZ section could expand in that direction. I planned the necessary growth space for each set and whether the growth space would have to be on each shelf or at the end of the set, depending on how revised volumes of the particular state’s code were published. In other words, if a state just issues periodic replacement volumes, then six inches of space would be left on each shelf so that the various versions of title 3 could be housed next to each other. If a state reissues the entire code periodically, the growth space would need to be left at the end of the entire set. I then created a table with the call number, how the empty space should be left, and the total number of shelves that the set should occupy. Since Sean was still involved in the processing phase, I went over these instructions with a different work-study student who then began moving the superseded collection.

¶18 While the expansion area was being emptied and dusted, I created flags to be inserted in the KZ collections (the holding area and the “real” KZ area). Remember, think “backwards”! One flag would be inserted in the book that would come immediately *after* an incoming holding area set (i.e., KZ 4991 A2 1978) which would instruct Sean to go to the holding area and look in the last volume of KZ 4988.5 U55 for further instructions. There he would find yet another flag telling him how many shelves to leave empty *before* he moved the set, and the total number of shelves the set would eventually take up (empty + full). Again, I needed to strive for clarity and self-sufficiency so this seemed the best way to achieve both, especially with the further complication of shifting backwards.

¶19 The merge of the two KZ sections was completed in a little over three weeks with Sean putting in about twelve hours each week. Everything went smoothly, for which I give him a lot of credit. When attempting such a project involving many departments and employees of varying levels of knowledge and areas of specialty, communication is essential. Remembering that we were all working toward the same goal of providing the best access to the materials helped me get over the feeling that we were sometimes shuffling in one place.

### Conclusion

¶20 So how did this project make us stronger? Our ability to assess a situation, construct a strategy, and then revamp the plan as the project continues has definitely been improved. Next time we will have more confidence that we can weather the various phases that all projects go through with less stress. Also, the communication between departments is stronger. Ensuring user access while simultaneously completing the necessary processing can be a source of tension between the Public Services and Cataloging departments. Working so closely together during the reclassification of the JX collection has resulted in staff members across departments getting to know each other better and gaining a knowledge of each other’s work that previously did not exist. All of these benefits can only make future projects, not to mention daily tasks, go more smoothly.