

## Classification and Power: Filipiniana and the Shape of Library Space

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Library classification structures are both abstract and material ordering machines. As texts, they can be read as ideological statements. For example, the decision to shelve materials about transgender lives in HQ or RC in the Library of Congress Classification scheme reflects dominant beliefs about whether gender is a socially negotiated characteristic or a psychological illness. As blueprints, these documents determine where books sit on shelves and what they are close to and far from. In this way, knowledge organization schemes include a spatial dimension, determining the literal flow of intellectual traffic through the spaces they determine.

This paper addresses the spatial dimension of ordering systems through an analysis of Filipiniana collections in academic libraries in the Philippines. The use of LCC is widespread in Philippine libraries. As a former U.S. colony, the islands trace much of their library practice to U.S. colonial intervention, including the implementation of LCC to order collections. At the same time, Philippine libraries have developed and deployed Filipiniana as a category to collate materials by Filipino writers or about the Philippines as a special collection. These collections are not only marked in the cataloging system, but organize the space of libraries. In the case of the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Filipiniana is both marked as different and spatially positioned as central: it is the first collection a patron encounters when entering the library.

When libraries designate materials as “special,” they mark those materials as both the same (as each other) and as collectively different from the materials gathered under the dominant organizing scheme. Filipiniana collections can thus be understood in two ways: as collective formations that oppose the hegemony of U.S. knowledge organization structures and as expressions of the excess that cannot be contained by the colonial extension of U.S. global power. Through an analysis of the Filipiniana designation, this paper seeks to open up conversations around critical classification studies to include broader understandings of the ways that U.S. global power continues to shape the ways that physical space is rendered and experienced across the globe in the ostensibly postcolonial era.