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**Special Issue: ‘Paradigms of Knowledge  
and its Organization: The Tree, the Net and Beyond,’  
edited by Fulvio Mazzocchi and Gian Carlo Fedeli**

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Mazzocchi, Fulvio. **Images of Thought and Their Relation to Classification: The Tree and the Net.** *Knowledge Organization*. 40(6), 366-374. 28 references.

**ABSTRACT:** This article takes a look at how images have been used through history as metaphors or models to illustrate (philosophical) ways of thinking with a special focus on figures of the tree and the net. It goes on to look at how classificatory thought depends on the epistemological framework in which it originates. Also examined is the Western model of classification and how it has favoured the logic of the tree, whose limitations are becoming increasingly apparent. The image of the net is then used to portray (as a pluriverse) the cognitive space of human knowledge, and a culturally-biased view of classification is upheld. Finally, some arguments are put forward to reformulate this view on the basis of an approach that combines epistemic and conceptual pluralism with a weak realism.

Fedeli, Gian Carlo. **Metaphors of Order and Disorder: From the Tree to the Labyrinth and Beyond.** *Knowledge Organization*. 40(6), 375-383. 34 references.

**ABSTRACT:** By means of historical-critical analysis of the evolution of metaphors for indicating the structure of knowledge, I will try to identify common themes and differences in the transition from a semantic domain expression of confusion or uncertainty (labyrinth, map) to a semantic domain in which metaphors express ordering systems of knowledge, or more generally of large masses of information (Semantic Web, Small World). The study of this evolution is particularly important because it tends to highlight some conceptual networks which today are protagonists of a real scientific revolution in the work of abstraction and application of theories to the domain of knowledge. We will see that there are some concepts underlying this transition, which are common to both domains and that we can identify with the concepts of space for the organisation and linguistic-dynamic structure. The reason for this can be traced to the change in signified and often in signifier of various metaphors, which keep the connection to the same subject, knowledge organisation, and which were initially adopted, especially during the early modern period, to highlight the impossibility of building a reference system capable of guiding a user through the complex encyclopedic order; object of these metaphors were the world map, the labyrinth, the ocean waters.

Hansson, Joacim. **The Materiality of Knowledge Organization: Epistemology, Metaphors and Society.** *Knowledge Organization*. 40(6), 384-391. 29 references.

**ABSTRACT:** This article discusses the relation between epistemology, social organization and knowledge organization. Three examples are used to show how this relation has proven to be historically stable: 1) the organization of knowledge in 18th century encyclopedias; 2) the problem of bias in the international introduction of *DDC* in early 20th century libraries in Scandinavia; and 3) the practice of social tagging and folksonomies in contemporary late capitalist society. By using the concept of ‘materiality’ and the theoretical contribution on the documentality of social objects by Maurizio Ferraris, an understanding of the character of the connection between epistemology and social order in knowledge organization systems is achieved.

Marras, Cristina. **Structuring Multidisciplinary Knowledge: Aquatic and Terrestrial Metaphors.** *Knowledge Organization*. 40(6), 392-399. 31 references.

**ABSTRACT:** In my paper, I will discuss which metaphors appear to be an appropriate conceptual model capable of interpreting and capturing the implicit theoretical and methodological pluralism of knowledge organization. I will propose the use of “aquatic metaphors” for structuring and representing the “new” scenario of knowledge as “open landscape.” To this end, I will compare the “aquatic” metaphorical model to the more traditional “terrestrial” one. I will trace back the use of these two metaphorical domains for knowledge organization to the XVII century. A diachronical view will allow us to see how the complexity of the different historical scenarios always requires categories more adequate and capable of describing and interpreting (and organizing) a multilayered knowledge. Multiple approaches and tools for transferring and organizing, as well for distributing and sharing knowledge, are therefore needed. The paper aims at showing how, referring to aquatic metaphors as a model for knowledge organization, we can open the possibility of access to “transversal” points of view, and, in addition to the authoritative knowledge, how they facilitate the creation of entirely new types of interconnections that generates a multi-hierarchical and multidisciplinary knowledge structure.

López-Huertas, María. **Reflexions on Multidimensional Knowledge: Its Influence on the Foundation of Knowledge Organization.** *Knowledge Organization.* 40(6), 400-407. 39 references.

**ABSTRACT:** The theories that underlie multidimensional knowledge (multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity) are revisited. The objective of this part is to analyze some proposals in order to arrive to the main features characterizing inter- and transdisciplinarity. A reflection on this thinking, with special reference to transdisciplinarity, follows, in the belief that this model can be of interest to the foundations of the organization of knowledge. Two aspects are approached: how concepts and categories in information science can be seen under this perspective and how this change might affect knowledge organization.

Burnett, Kathleen and Bonnici, Laurie J. **Rhizomes in the iField: What Does it Mean to be an iSchool?** *Knowledge Organization.* 40(6), 408-413. 18 references.

**Abstract:** In 2005, several North American information schools dedicated to advancing the information field (iField) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century announced the formation of the iSchools organization. The purpose, subsequent growth, and internationalization of this effort might be described as rhizomorphic. This article deploys Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor of the rhizome to describe and analyze recent trends in the development of education for the iField. Characteristics of the iSchools organization are compared to those delineated by Duffy and Cunningham (1996), and conclusions are drawn regarding the applicability of this metaphor to describing the future of the iSchools and the advancement of the iField.

Tredinnick, Luke. **Each One of us was Several: Networks, Rhizomes and Web Organisms.** *Knowledge Organization.* 40(6), 414-421. 31 references.

**Abstract:** This paper develops a conceptual analysis of hypertext and the World Wide Web by exploring the contrasting metaphors of the network and the rhizome. The idea of the network has influenced the conceptual thinking about both the web, and its wider socio-cultural influence. The paper develops an alternative description of the structure of hypertext and the web in terms of interrupted and dissipated energy flows. It concludes that the web should be considered not as a particular set of protocols and technological standards, nor as an interlinked set of technologically mediated services, but as a dynamic reorganisation of the socio-cultural system itself that at its inception has become associated with particular forms of technology, but which has no determinate boundaries, and which should properly be constituted in the spaces between technologies, and the spaces between persons.

Fóris, Ágota. **Network Theory and Terminology.** *Knowledge Organization.* 40(6), 422-429. 38 references.

**ABSTRACT:** The paper aims to present the relations of network theory and terminology. The model of scale-free networks, which has been recently developed and widely applied since, can be effectively used in terminology research as well. Operation based on the principle of networks is a universal characteristic of complex systems. Networks are governed by general laws. The model of scale-free networks can be viewed as a statistical-probability model, and it can be described with mathematical tools. Its main feature is that "everything is connected to everything else," that is, every node is reachable (in a few steps) starting from any other node; this phenomena is called "the small world phenomenon." The existence of a linguistic network and the general laws of the operation of networks enable us to place issues of language use in the complex system of relations that reveal the deeper connections between phenomena with the help of networks embedded in each other. The realization of the metaphor that language also has a network structure is the basis of the classification methods of the terminological system, and likewise of the ways of creating terminology databases, which serve the purpose of providing easy and versatile accessibility to specialised knowledge.