Editorial

World Problems and Knowledge Organization

The year 1994 already saw the 4th Edition of the impressive UAI publication: *The Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential*[1] (so far 2 volumes, in all, almost 2,300 pages); (see the book review section of this issue) and we are happy to include once again an article by its proficient compiler, A.J.N.Judge in this journal. Earlier contributions by Judge include *Knowledge-representation in a computer-supported environment*[2] (the title remarkable for its wording at this early date!) in 1977; it was *Representation, comprehension, and communication of sets: the role of number*[3] in 1978; and *Functional Classification*[4] in 1984. He was also the keynote speaker at ISKO's recent conference on *Environmental Knowledge Organization and Information Management*, Bratislava, Sept.1994 with an address on *Spherical Configuration of Categories to Reflect Systemic Patterns of Environmental Checks and Balances*[5] (the Recommendations of this conference can be found under ISKO News in this issue). In his present contribution he confronts us with another challenge: *Envisaging the Art of Navigating Conceptual Complexity - in search of software combining artistic and conceptual insights*. The word *Art*, as he explained in his paper at the recent ISKO-sponsored conference in Darmstadt on *Conceptual Knowledge Processing* (see the report in this issue) was employed purposely by him in full awareness of its ambiguity in the English language (Handicraft and Art).

Considering the admirable task he accomplished by compiling the aforementioned *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential* we can be sure that the software he is now searching for – although he states that it „*examines the possibility of combining software functions that facilitate conceptual ordering from both a logical and an aesthetic perspective*" – might also serve to still better organize, represent, and make user-accessible the many facets and relationships contained in this Encyclopedia and in the other UAI publications, such as the *Yearbook of International Associations* (in 3 volumes) and might also help to break the vicious cycles of aggravating world problems on which he spoke at Bratislava (an example of such a cycle is given in the book review mentioned above).

We were surprised at not finding in the index to its Vol. 2 on *Human Potential – Transformation and Values* an entry on *Knowledge Organization*. Was it just forgotten or neglected? We would like to ask: What about the capabilities of human beings to create order in their thinking and doing, in their environments and their affairs? Is not a given person's capability of a human being to organize what he knows a possibility to overcome his own problems of recognition as well as those of others lacking that insight? Nor was there any entry in the index of Vol.2 on *Classification*, although its negative counterpart, *Misclassification*, was included as a World Problem in Vol.1. To be able to classify is indeed a wonderful human potential, it corresponds to making judgments – our daily activity, hopefully always the right and true ones! The book review of Satija on the D. Langridge title *Classification: Its Kinds, Systems, Elements, and Applications* in this issue tells us more about this in a very lucid fashion.

We did find, in Vol. 2, however, an entry on *Artificial Intelligence* with an explanation of Karl Popper's *Three World Concepts*. And here we were reminded of the overemphasis, if not ideological acclaim, which this concept has met with in the mind of many a computer enthusiast of today. In his Ernst Schröder Lecture (*Artificial Intelligence as an Ideology* Joseph Weizenbaum elaborated last January on this subject before a crowd of most interested listeners filling the largest auditory available at the Technical University of Darmstadt. At an Ernst Schröder Seminar on the following day the development and contents of Artificial Intelligence were thematized and discussed in a number of presentations with Weizenbaum present. We are happy to include one of these – by Michael Huth – in this issue (*Symbolic and Subsymbolic Knowledge Organization in the Computational Theory of Mind*), as it shows convincingly the limitations of exaggerated AI dreams. Today's computers can do a great many things indeed. They can replace many an employee and even make trains go by themselves, but their science is neither a superscience dominating every other kind, nor will they ever replace human creative thinking.

The world problems of today seem to become unsolvable. But they must be recognized as human creations and could, as such, also be overcome by human insight and activation of the right „human potential" implanted in everybody's soul and spirit. The positive thinking of every single person counts and his radiating of peace and harmony will change his environment effectively. May everybody who can understand and accept this, use his inherent mental powers to transform his own little world into a heavenly one! Knowledge Organization – in my opinion – is one of these powers!

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1 Union des Associations Internationales: Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential. 4thed. 2 vols. München: K.G.Saur Verlag 1994. 1258+929p.

2 Judge, A.J.N.: Knowledge-representation in a computer-supported environment. Int.Classif. 4(1977)No.2, p.76-81

3 —Representation, comprehension, and communication of sets: the role of numbers. Int.Classif. 5(1978)No.3, p.126-133, 6(1979)No.1, p.16-25, 6, No.2, p.92-103.

4 —Functional classification: a review of possibilities. Int.Classif. 11(1984)No.2, p.69-76, No.3, p.139-150.

5 — Spherical configuration of categories to reflect systemic patterns of environmental checks and balances. In: Stancikova, P. et al (Eds.): Environmental Knowledge Organization and Information Management. Proc.1st Europ.ISKO Conf., Bratislava, 14-16 Sept.1994. Frankfurt: INDEKS Verl.1994. p.1-21