EPC Exhibit 138-15.1

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THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Dewey Section

To: Jonathan Furner, Chair

Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee

Cc: Members of the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee

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Dewey Decimal Classification

OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.

Via: Michael Panzer, Editor in Chief

Dewey Decimal Classification

OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.

Re: Malcolm X, the Black Muslim movement, and African American political ideologies

Malcolm X has a certain Janus-like presence in the DDC, with the LCSH “X, Malcolm, 1925-1965” mapped to 320.546092 Black nationalism--biography, while the RI “X, Malcolm” is indexed to 320.558092 Black Muslim movement—biography.

The LCSH mapping is based on the entry for Malcolm X in the LC name authority file in the Dewey Section, and we have received a request from a classifier in the Dewey Section to switch the indexing of the RI to match the mapping of the LCSH.

The following chart shows changes in this area over the past several editions (the discontinuation of T1—0924 Individual treatment that took place in DDC 20 occurs silently below):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Edition | Schedule development | Treatment of LCSH in Dewey Section name authority file | Treatment of RI |
| DDC 20 | 320.54 Nationalism  320.55 Religiously oriented theories and ideologies | 320.54092 |  |
| DDC 21 | 320.54 Nationalism  320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies | 320.54092 | 320.54092 |
| DDC 22 | 320.54 Nationalism  320.546 Black nationalism  320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies  320.558 Black Muslim movement | 320.546092 | 320.558092 |
| DDC 23 | 320.54 Nationalism, regionalism, internationalism  320.546 Black nationalism  320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies  320.558 Black Muslim movement | 320.546092 | 320.558092 |

The indexing of Malcolm X has traversed the following arc:

* Prior to the expansions for 320.546 Black nationalism and 320.558 Black Muslim movement, the indexing of the RI and the practices of the Dewey Section agreed in using 320.54092 Nationalism—biography for Malcolm X, even though, as a Black Muslim, Malcolm X could have been considered to be in standing room in 320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies.
* When the expansions for 320.546 Black nationalism and 320.558 Black Muslim movement were developed, the indexing of the RI moved to 320.558092 Black Muslim movement—biography, but the Dewey Section name authority file reflects a decision to associate Malcolm X with Black nationalism—biography.

On the surface of the matter, the question before us is whether Malcolm X’s most noted contribution in the context of the 320s lies with black nationalism or with the Black Muslim movement. But further consideration has led us to question whether the expansion for Black Muslim movement under 320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies was a wise move from the outset. First, while the Black Muslim movement was involved politically, does it constitute a political ideology per se? Second, if the Black Muslim movement does qualify as a political ideology, should it be treated as a religiously oriented ideology, or should it follow the same pattern as Zionism, which is drawn off by a class-elsewhere note from 320.55 Religiously oriented ideologies to a nationalism number?

We have pursued these questions by investigating political ideologies of African Americans. While different sources[[1]](#footnote-1) use somewhat different terminology and/or granularity, the following political ideologies are widely recognized as a comprehensive set: black nationalism, black liberalism (i.e., modern liberalism), black conservatism (i.e., traditional liberalism), black feminism, and black radicalism. Of these, only black nationalism has an associated LCSH, but each is easily recognized as a variant of a “mainstream” political ideology. Thus, we can easily obtain rough literary warrant counts:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WorldCat search statement** | **Retrieval results** |
| :su=liberalism and :su="african americans" and :dd=320.5\* | 4[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| :su=conservatism and :su="african americans" and :dd=320.5\* | 39 |
| :su=radicalism and :su="african americans" and :dd=320.5\* | 1 |
| :su=nationalism and :su="african americans" and :dd=320.5\* | 108 |
| :su=feminism and :su="african americans" and :dd=320.5\* | 13 |

These results perhaps suggest that an expansion for black conservatism is in order; however, the [sources we have consulted](a%20href=%22http:/science.jrank.org/pages/8210/African-American-Ideas-African-American-Conservatism.html%22%3eAfrican-American%20Ideas%20-%20African-american%20Conservatism%3c/a) indicate that “black conservatism articulates better with its mainstream equivalent than do the other black ideologies.” Therefore, the need for an expansion for black conservatism doesn’t really exist; meanwhile, the building of 320.5208996073[[3]](#footnote-3) for black conservatism is commonplace. Thus, we see no need for a separate number for any African American political ideology other than black nationalism. More specifically, we find no evidence for treating the Black Muslim movement as a political ideology.

At the same time, discussions of black nationalism often mention Malcolm X as a proponent.

In light of these findings, we recommend the following actions:

* Moving the indexing of the RI for Malcolm X to match the mapping of the associated LCSH (that is, to 320.546092).
* Discontinuing 320.558 as being without meaning in context. (FYI: The RIs Black Muslims—political science and Nation of Islam—political science currently index 320.558. The LCSHs for the one work classed in 320.558 proper have “History” or “Social conditions” subheadings, not “Politics and government,” and probably should be classed elsewhere.)

1. The following have been used: (1) Dawson, Michael C. 2001. *Black visions: the roots of contemporary African-American political ideologies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (winner, Ralph J. Bunche Award, American Political Science Association; W.E.B. Du Bois Book Award, National Conference of Black Political Scientists); (2) Harris-Perry, Melissa V. 2004. *Barbershops, bibles, and BET: everyday talk and Black political thought*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press (winner, Best Book Award in Racial and Ethnic Political Identities, Ideologies and Theories Category; Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Section of the American Political Science Association; W.E.B. Du Bois Book Award, National Conference of Black Political Scientists); and (3) the set of articles on political ideologies in the African-American Ideas section of the Science Encyclopedia at science.jrank.org. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As it so happens, the retrieval results here are all based on the BISAC POLITICAL SCIENCE $x Political Ideologies $x Conservatism & Liberalism; all are titles about conservatism. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. We anticipate producing an EPC 138 exhibit on political science ideologies that will clarify that American conservatism belongs in 320.512 Traditional liberalism, but that’s a different issue. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)