

the left and right hemisphere, favoured so abundantly. It describes but a most successful non-deterministic fuzzy computer simulation of the cerebellum. Its unique – one is tempted to say evolutionary – design makes the structural and the related functional properties of the brain, e.g. pattern building (!) and transmission more transparent.

More than a friendly surplus is presented by the reprint of the famous treatise on 'Quantum Physics', published first in the *Economist*, London (ch. 19). Thus completing the concluding chapter on 'Models of Reality' it shows the possibility and, too, the beauty of the Quantum model, and how it aids to understand even revolutionary changes in thinking. Revolution often had its aesthetic appeal, which helps to overcome scientific inertness. The three aspects of information: confirmation, novelty and pragmatics do necessarily apply to the highly structured set of heuristic information called models. The impending fundamental and global changes will be met if and only if we systemically control the process, securing confirmation from reality and actively asking for novelty, thus keeping alive the pragmatic learning process of selforganization. That is the message of the book, which should be received the more often the better. Owing to its qualified contributions, 'Models of Reality' will be recommended by its readers.

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**MOMENI, Mahvash Kashmiri: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Adaptations of the Dewey Decimal Classification in the Middle East.** PhD Dissertation. University of Maryland 1982. XIII, 326 p.

Eric de Grolier aptly writes that "No classification in any field is 'value free'" (1). Therefore, every general classification system has to be adapted when it is used in a culture other than it was produced. This law applies the more to: (a) an internationally used scheme which was not designed for this use and (b) to a scheme which is still based on Wyndham Hume's principle of literary warrant. When the Dewey Decimal Classification was conceived and executed, the libraries of New York and New England, unlike today, were not procuring much literature from the outside world. Therefore, it is no wonder that such a pragmatic scheme is biased towards the culture in which it was conceived. It is all unconscious but natural and inevitable. In the modern fashion of acronyms it is described as WASPish (White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant) bias by Hans H. Wellisch.

Abetted by blind chance as well as its intrinsic merits, the DDC was an instant success in the USA. The use of the scheme abroad, too, spread infectiously, and in Dewey's own life time it was being used in 32 nations of the world; and now it is being used in more than 104 nations in all the continents. It was said, "the sun never sets on it". The story of the diffusion of the DDC has been narrated in detail by John Comaromi (2) and W. Boyd Rayward (3). Paradoxically, the increasing use of the DDC and its criticism on account of American bias have always gone hand in glove. Once the scheme was adopted all the world over, the libraries outside of

the USA, not only in Africa and Asia but in Europe too, began to realise the meagre treatment doled out to their subjects. Many of the non-WASPish subjects have been poorly represented; and many subjects get no better treatment than a mere blanket mention. Their librarians, though dissatisfied with DDC, are not however disappointed: they do not abandon the scheme for the numerous advantages accruing from its use. So they resort to the next best thing they could: to adapt the scheme from here and there to suit their local needs. This internecine tendency became so fashionable that once it was considered that there was no library outside the USA using DDC as such. It was a matter of serious concern which thwarted the original identity of the DDC.

To offset this tendency the Forest Press and the Editorial Policy Committee took some effective steps. The first being to provide some options to empty the notation of its biased Western subjects and refill it with the desired subjects and their home-made details. This mutual transportation has its own ill effects which have been explained in detail elsewhere (4). The second remedial action was to authorise and sponsor, translations, though purient translations were in vogue quite early. Now about fourteen authorised translations are available, besides many unauthorised and unpublished ones. (To make an inventory of such DDCs, as it has recently been done for the UDC, will be a useful and interesting exercise). These are known as international editions and are mostly based on the abridged editions, and in no way are their literal translations. It has been made clear by the Forest Press that "While retaining the basic structure of the Dewey, they also contain expansions and revisions of parts of the schedules and tables to take into account local traditions and culture" (5). Such editions do not bring forth any absolute benefits. Some of them are not even used much. The Hindi Edition, for example, is a little used edition; it is not even much talked about. If any side sees victory in such editions, it is certainly a pyrrhic victory; which may prove to be a beginning of fresh troubles.

The dissertation under review is a study of four such DDCs: three from Middle Eastern countries and one from India. These editions collectively called MEDDCs are:

- (1) Arabic Edition (1960) (AE), based on DDC-16 prepared by Mahmood Al-Sheniti and Ahmad Kabesh (published in Cairo).
- (2) Farsi Edition (1971/1975) (PE) based on DDC-17 prepared by Tehran Book Processing Centre (TEBROC).
- (3) Hindi Edition (1976) (HE) based on 18th edition, prepared by PN Gour and published and printed in India by the Forest Press.
- (4) Turkish Edition (1962) (TE), based mostly on the standard 15th edition, and to some extent on the 16th edition, published by the National Education Press, Istanbul.

One is at a loss as to why the Hindi Edition produced in India has been treated as a Middle Eastern Edition. If the Hindi edition was as important (rather comparable) as the other three editions to this study, then why this information has not been revealed through the title of the dissertation? Nevertheless, the Hindi edition has been subjected to a thorough and drastic examination for the first time.

The whole study has been divided into four chapters.

The first chapter sets the tone by defining the problem and purpose of the study, which basically is to "help improve the standardization and congruence among the classification systems used in the Middle Eastern Countries". This could in turn help to evolve a truly universal DDC, though the author himself is aware of the futility of such an attempt. This is followed by an overview of the Islamic religion and culture. It provides a useful reorientation for non-Muslim readers. The fifth section of this chapter takes incomplete stock of the published literature on the problem, mostly in India. Strangely enough it ignores the succinctly relevant literature published in Pakistan (6) not to speak of Kamal Asali's plea for an Islamic classification for Arab culture published in *International Library Review*, (6(1974):181). An exhaustive study of the literature in India has now been published (7). This section ends with a note on the research methodology, analysis and comparison are his tools. The DDC editions 15 to 18 and the MEDDCs are his basic material for work.

The second chapter is the central and the largest chapter in the work. It is a detailed and close analysis of each of these MEDDCs with special reference to the sociocultural based adaptations. This chapter consists of five sections: the first provides an introduction, the other ones devoted to each one of the MEDDCs under study. All the MEDDCs are fully described first, then evaluated and compared with the DDC edition on which they are based. The study of every edition begins with an introduction to the history, geography, social, and philosophical values of the country concerned. Thus each edition is seen in its larger socio-cultural context. This has multiplied manifold the value and usefulness of this study. The third subsection of each section makes a combined study, in numerical order of the classification numbers, of all the changes: expansions, deletions and relocations of topics under each main class except 000, 500 & 600 for obvious reasons. Adaptations in the auxiliary tables, if any, have been studied in each of the next subsections. The last subsection in every section ably summarises every edition allowing us to differentiate between the wood and the trees.

In the third chapter "Comparative study of the DDC classes" the above approach has been reversed. But in itself it is more than a vertigo of the second chapter. At this stage two more Islamic classification schemes are associated with the study. These are "The classification of Islam" by Anis Khurshid, Karachi: University of Karachi, 1981 (Type script submitted to the DCEPC). It is based on the DDC. The second scheme is a published work. *Islam: Outline of a classification scheme* by Ziauddin Sardar. London: Clive Bingley, 1979. It is a non-Dewey faceted scheme. It has been studied to searching details. Momeni feels that it will have to be drastically revised to make it a practical classification. Here the various MEDDCs have been subordinated to each of the affected classes and subclasses. This approach helps to visualise these editions as laid open together on a single table. Momeni tries to find a common thread which runs through these editions; and to see how far these MEDDCs concur or even come closer on adaptation of similar topics. These editions usually emphasize the following areas: philosophy, the national religion Islam and its practices, public law and admini-

nistration, education, various forms of social organization, local languages and literature, national form of arts, architecture, sculpture, and history and geography of their country. The expansion of these topics in various MEDDCs are closely comparable, though are not the same or identical. Islam is the central topic of concern, and through its ripple effect all above topics are adapted.

It is an important question as to why all the MEDDCs are not identical. The reasons are both external and internal. Firstly they have been produced independent of one another based on different editions of the DDC. Some have preferred the use of options, while others have not. Above all, their national and local needs differ. There are mistakes even in correctly following the "Divide-like" instructions.

The last chapter clearly summarises the whole study. It consolidates the summaries and conclusions reached in every section of all the chapters. It ends with a striking suggestion for a survey of the use of the DDC in Middle Eastern countries. It also recommends the preparation of a manual to guide all the official adaptations and language editions. It was one of the purposes of the study to find guidelines for future international editions and to see particularly whether all the MEDDCs could be coalesced into a single edition. The latter possibility can best be described as a two-steps-forward-one-step-backward policy. It is certainly not in the hands of a single individual. The DCEPC seems immune to outside influence. Although John Comaromi, the Editor of the DDC, was on the Dissertation Committee, this thesis will hardly influence his decision and that of the DCEPC. It seems to be clear from the facts revealed, that the MEDDCs have no returning effect on the future DDC. Though DCEPC or the Forest Press have no such guide in mind yet, certainly they are actively associated with the preparation of such editions. John Comaromi, Editor of the DDC, has been working closely with the latest Arabic (1984) and Italian edition expected in 1985. It is not known if Momeni's work has any influence on the new Arabic (1984) edition of the DDC based on the Abridged DDC-11 produced under the aegis of the Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization, (ALESCO), Tunis. There is no evidence that it has any.

With his Islamic backdrop the Author has been able to argue very effectively and lucidly. The text is full of illustrations and tables which make it quite transparent. Ranganathan-like division of the text into decimally numbered headings and subheadings bring symmetry of treatment in various chapters and sections. The value of the work lies in its prying analysis of academic brilliance.

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**DEUTSCHES BIBLIOTHEKSINSTITUT: PRECIS: für die Anwendung in deutschen Bibliotheken überarbeitete und vereinfachte Form des syntaktischen Indexierungsverfahrens der British Library.** (Im Auftrag d. dt. Bibliotheksinstituts. Projektleiter: Bernd Maassen). – Berlin: DBI, 1984. 310 p., DBI-Materialien: 35, ISBN 3-87068-835-1.

A work of this kind calls for some kind of historical context. In 1979, a special "Kommission für Sacherschließung" (Commission for Subject Indexing) was established in West Germany with two primary tasks: firstly, to investigate current techniques for subject indexing; secondly, to propose an indexing system for adoption on a federal-wide basis. The suggested system should be suitable for all kinds of libraries, and it should also be amenable to computerization. The "Deutsche Bibliothek" in Frankfurt (the German National Library) agreed to adopt the chosen system from 1986 onwards.

In the event, the Commission spent very little time investigating new techniques, nor did they seriously consider computerization. Instead, they concentrated mainly on the production of yet another code of practice for the construction of subject headings; despite the fact that a great many traditional subject heading systems are already in use in West German libraries. The staff in the Deutsche Bibliothek felt that at least one modern system should also be studied, and selected PRECIS on the ground that it was designed from the outset with computer production in mind, it had already been used to generate indexes in German, and it has potential value as a means for international data exchange since its techniques are based upon procedures recommended in International Standards. The Deutsche Bibliothek set up a special 2-year project to study PRECIS, and the work under review is the final report on this research project.

This work differs in two main respects from previous books on PRECIS: firstly, it is in German, not English; secondly, it does not deal with PRECIS-as-is, but sets out to describe a special "simplified" version that was developed as part of the project. At this point I need to declare a personal interest in the work under review, since I was engaged on a part-time basis as an outside consultant for the project, advising on PRECIS procedures and checking much of the output. I also attended a number of meetings of the advisory committee that supervised the work, and had frequent contact with the principal research workers.

When the research project was established in Frankfurt, the Commission that had investigated the subject heading system assumed a new role as the Advisory

Committee for the PRECIS Project. At least in theory this should have ensured an unusually high level of coordination between the two projects, but this ideal was marred in practice by the fact that the Commission, when the PRECIS Project was launched, has published a version of its own Code of Practice for subject headings, and had already introduced this new code into a major library cooperative (in Bavaria), despite an agreement that no decision would be implemented until after the PRECIS Project was finished.

The Commission, in its role as the PRECIS Advisory Committee, was largely responsible for the research into a simplified version of PRECIS. Before any serious attempt has been made to study the system, certain pre-conditions were established:

- it was decided that the system has too many role operators, and their number had to be reduced to about 10. The reasons for choosing this arbitrary number were never explained,
- it was also decided that the terms used in PRECIS strings and entries should be chosen and/or constructed according to the new code of practice for subject headings. In this context, it should be remembered that the subject heading system has no syntax and does not allow the use of prepositions or other function words. In addition, its rules for vocabulary control are vague and rudimentary, and do not accord with any of the national or international standards that are accepted as the basis for vocabulary control in PRECIS. In many cases the system resorts to repetition as a means for explaining relationships (e.g. "nuclear waste" + "waste disposal"). Anyone familiar with these different types of indexing language will realise that phrases intended as subject headings would usually be quite unsuitable as terms in a grammar-based string-input system such as PRECIS. Imposing these headings led to tedious redundancies and a serious lack of syntactical precision in many entries.

These preconditions ensured from the outset that an objective study of PRECIS would be virtually impossible. This conclusion emerges clearly enough from the document under review, which contains not only a description of the "simplified" PRECIS used at the Deutsche Bibliothek but also includes the final report of the Project. Without the latter, the former would make little sense to any reader who is familiar with PRECIS as a working system. The report avoids any explicit reference to the political issues underlying the project, but a careful study of its description of the work (and, in particular, its references to PRECIS "simplification") offers a number of clues.

Stated frankly, it would appear that the Advisory Committee set out to ensure that any feature of PRECIS that does not occur in their own system should not be available to the PRECIS research team. In some cases, they then criticised PRECIS for not possessing a feature that they had deliberately removed. For example, PRECIS possesses a set of special codes to deal with inflections on nouns in German and similar languages – these are easy to apply by any indexer familiar with one of these languages, and the computer program for generating inflected entries has been available for some time. One of the first tasks of the Advisory Committee