

The Bliss Classification Bulletin

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EDITORIAL

$$(a+b)^2 = a^2+2ab+b^2$$

The publication of Classes AM/AX, Mathematics, Statistics and Probability, sees the most difficult and demanding part of the revision of the Bibliographic Classification successfully completed. It has been discussed from time to time in the *Bulletin*, and was the subject of a memorable annual lecture given by Vanda Broughton in December 1987. Some may have thought that the rigorous facet analysis and classification of the literature of mathematics would prove to be impossible; it wasn't, but it certainly took a little longer! By any standards, the achievement is a distinguished one. No other bibliographic classification scheme is remotely comparable. In due course we hope to get an assessment from a colleague who also holds a degree in mathematics.

The task is now handed on to you, the users of BC2, who have to apply the new schedules to the documents in your collections or to the thesauri you are developing. This may not prove to be easy. At all times it is necessary to analyse and characterise the subject matter of the items in hand accurately, as Derek Langridge and others have reminded us on numerous occasions. While a poor classification will always lead to poor results, a good classification can ease the classifier's path, but cannot of itself guarantee a helpfully arranged sequence of documents or entries in a subject catalogue.

Where mathematics is concerned many of us -- certainly this writer -- are floundering when confronted by anything beyond the most elementary. A guide to the use of this class and a practical workshop conducted by those who both know about the scheme and can also talk about mathematics clearly should plainly be high on our list of activities.

AXA J ; or, Sufficiency

The relatively few pages (101-114) devoted to the schedule for Statistics & probability are deceptive. The subject has *not* been skimped. Examination shows that there are several places where concepts are not listed in full but can be imported as required from the Mathematics class, and moreover that, unlike the latter, there is relatively little enumeration of synthesised compound classes. The extensive listing of the basic vocabulary of the subject added to the standard BC2 provisions for creating compounds mean that the literature of Statistics & probability can be specified more fully and more precisely than in any other scheme.

Queue here

Chris Preddle has completed his work on the revision of Class Q, Social Welfare, barring minor final adjustments, and it now awaits its turn for production in camera-ready form. Publication date? -- some time in 1994, we trust. The Politics and Law classes, R and S, are also in the queue and take precedence. We hope to see them in 1994 as well.

Revision of the revision

Mention of Chris Preddle's efforts, and my own plea for assistance with Class I, Psychology and Psychiatry, further on in this *Bulletin*, should not lead readers to fear that these revisions will delay work on the remaining volumes of BC2 as yet unpublished. This is going ahead steadily : revised revisions are slotted in when they can be accepted conveniently.

Never mind the theory ...

... come and hear about the practice! UK-based readers should by now have received an invitation to the 1993 Bliss Lecture to be given by our trio of Cambridge college librarians, Marion MacLeod, Liz Russell and Clare Sargent. This promises to be a particularly stimulating meeting, so make every effort to come to the Department of Health, Room 136/137b, Skipton House, 80 London Road, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6LW, on Friday, 19 November, for 2.00 p.m.

Note that security regulations mean that you **MUST** have informed Ed Dua in the DoH Library in advance, either in writing or by phone (071 972 5930).

We look forward to seeing you there.

A. G. C.

Bliss Classification Association: *An association to develop and promote the Bliss Bibliographic Classification* (Registered charity no. 270580) c/o The Library, Fitzwilliam College, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DG
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BLISS CLASSIFICATION ASSOCIATION

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Bliss Classification Association held on Friday 27 November 1992 at the Department of Health, Hannibal House, London, SE1.

Present: Jack Mills (Chair, and Editor of BC2)
Colin Ball (Kent Institute of Art)
Jennifer Buchanan
Tony Curwen
Ed Dua (Departments of Health and Social Security)
Douglas Foskett
Angela Haselton (Tavistock Joint Library)
Roger Hughes
Ia MacIlwaine
Helen Mackin (Barnardo's)
Marion MacLeod (Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge)
Jacqueline Mulchrone (Haberdashers' Aske's Boys School)
Colin Neilson (Science Museum)
Christina Panagiotidou (University of London)
Chris Preddle (National Children's Home)
Elizabeth Russell (King's College, Cambridge)
Hilda Stoddard

- 1 Apologies were received from Ken Bell (University of North London), Frank Emmott (Barnardo's) and David Potter (Barnardo's).
- 2 The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 29 November 1991 were approved.
- 3 Matters arising from the minutes of 29 November 1991
 - 3.1 Minute 3: Douglas Foskett from the floor stated that he had seen no reviews of Class J Education, published in December 1990. The Chair replied that the Committee would be asking the *Journal of documentation* to consider reviewing individual volumes of BC2.
 - 3.2 Minute 4.1: A review of Class A/AL Philosophy and Logic appeared in the 1992 *Bliss Classification Bulletin*. The Chair confirmed that review copies of new volumes are sent to journals in the appropriate subject fields, and added that the Committee would be suggesting reviewers for Class AM/AX Mathematics, Statistics and Probability.
 - 3.3 Minute 4.3: The Association received many requests for unpublished draft schedules. The Committee's policy was to sell to members at cost and to charge non-members of the Association £100 per schedule.
 - 3.4 Minute 7.1: The Committee's draft bibliography on BC2 would appear in the next *Bulletin*, and would be kept up to date in future.

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4 Progress of BC2: Editor's report

- 4.1 The Editor commented on his written report, which had been circulated to the meeting. [Appended to these minutes].

Class AM/AX Mathematics etc. would be passed to Bowker-Saur in December 1992. Class B Physics and Class C Chemistry would be worked on in 1993. Class Q Social welfare and Criminology: Chris Preddle's revision should be published in 1994. Class U/V Technology: Eric Coates had completed four-fifths of this huge class, and was now continuing his work.

- 4.2 The Editor reported the forthcoming publication of extracts from the Introduction to BC2 in Japanese, and expressed warm thanks to Alan Thomas in New York for writing and publishing papers on BC2. The Editor's own address at the CRG's Ranganathan Centenary meeting would be published in the *Bliss Classification Bulletin*.

- 4.3 Elizabeth Russell asked about Class X/Y Language and Literature. The Editor could not promise early publication of this class, but would welcome assistance with it, and he described the process of compilation by a consultant.

5 Finance: Treasurer's report

- 5.1 The Treasurer commented on the accounts for 1991/92, which had been circulated to the meeting. They reflected both an increase in the subscription rate and the infrequent payment of royalties. The publication of more classes would increase royalties. The Editor added that two volumes a year would appear in 1993 and 1994.

- 6 Ken Best was elected Auditor for 1993.

7 Publicity

- 7.1 Roger Hughes reported his resignation as Publicity Officer. The Chair expressed the Association's thanks to him for very many years of service.

- 7.2 The Chair emphasised the constant need to find reviewers for forthcoming classes.

8 Committee elections

- 8.1 Ken Bell, Jennifer Buchanan, Chris Preddle and Hilda Stoddard were elected to the Committee.

- 8.2 The Chair thanked Angela Upton, who had resigned from the Committee during the year, for her service.

9 Other business : Training courses

- 9.1 Colin Neilson asked about future training courses on BC2. Chris Preddle replied that the Committee was keen to hold more short courses at the University of London, and intended to arrange this as soon as possible.

PROGRESS OF BC2 IN 1992: EDITOR'S REPORT TO THE AGM

Development of schedules and publication

Classes A/AL: Philosophy and Logic. These classes were published in one volume in December 1991. As yet, no reviews of this volume have been reported.

Classes AM/AX: Mathematics, Probability and Statistics. Proofreading of this volume began in May. This was a tremendously taxing task and the Association thanks Tony Curwen and Chris Preddle for their fine work, which they completed with impressive promptness. Problems of physical production then slowed things up, unfortunately, but camera-ready copy should be ready to go to Bowker-Saur by the end of the year.

Class C: Chemistry. In response to a request from Eric Coates that final decisions be made on the crucial problems of citation order and notation of chemical compounds, some time has been spent collating the options presented by Vanda Broughton in her massive draft for Chemistry. A decision on this should be reached quite soon now.

Class I: Psychology and Psychiatry. Tony Curwen produced in machine-readable form a version of this class which consolidated all the published amendments. Further amendments are being sought from the Tavistock Joint Library (which played an important part in the production of the 1978 edition).

Class Q: Social welfare. Chris Preddle continues his work on the revision of this class, which was first published in 1977. A draft of the schedules has been completed. The finished volume should be passed to Bowker-Saur during 1993.

Class R: Politics and Public administration. This is now complete, and Colin Neilson is preparing a final draft for proofreading.

Class S: Law. This class is nearly complete; only the introduction has to be written. It had been hoped to have this completed together with Class R (although they will be published in separate volumes). But finalising of one or two classes has proved unexpectedly time-consuming. The chief culprit here has been the class of primary law materials; the economies of facet analysis and synthesis are only marginally available in this class and a great deal of work comparing the different publication patterns of the major jurisdictions (common law systems, civil law systems, and European Communities law) has slowed things up. The complete volume should be with Colin Neilson by the end of the year.

Class U/V: Technology. Eric Coates has now recommenced work on this huge class and is making good progress.

Class W: Art and design. At the 1990 AGM Colin Ball of the Kent Institute of Art and Design in Canterbury kindly volunteered to help prepare a revision of the penultimate draft (1974) of this class (excluding Music). A detailed outline revision of the whole class was prepared and this was discussed at two successive meetings of the Classification Research Group (which Colin Ball attended). At least one more meeting will be held before finalising the general structure, after which Colin will begin filling it out with detailed and up-to-date vocabulary.

Other activities

Naoki Takubo, of the Research Office for Information Handling in the Nara National Museum in Japan, reported delays in the publication of the translated parts of the Introduction to BC2; it is now hoped to publish it next spring. He also sent us a copy of the first issue of a new series -- *Technical processing documentation forum series*, no.1, June 1992; this includes an article by Keichi Kawamura on Current problems in classification and indexing, which devotes one of its sections to BC2.

Alan Thomas reported the publication of the proceedings of a Congress for Librarians at St John's University, Jamaica, NY (where he has been teaching) -- *Cataloging heresy : challenging the standard bibliographic product* (New York : Learned Information, 1992. ISBN 0-938734-60-1). This includes a paper by Alan on alternatives in BC2.¹ Alan has also written a paper on BC2 for *Cataloging & classification quarterly*.² We are grateful to Alan Thomas for continuing to fly the flag for BC2 in the USA. Our man in Jamaica!

There were further examples of the use of BC2 drafts and methodology to assist the production of special schemes and controlled vocabularies. Requests were received for copies of drafts for biology (from the USA), for politics (from a TV news agency), and for intellectual and industrial property law (for a special classification).

The centenary of the birth of Ranganathan was honoured in an open meeting of the CRG in October at the Science Museum Library (thanks to Colin Neilson for this facility). One of the papers was given by the Editor on Ranganathan and Bliss. The proceedings of the meeting are to be published.

Jack Mills

¹ *Options in the arrangement of library materials and the new edition of the Bliss Bibliographic Classification* (pp. 197-210).

² *Bliss Bibliographic Classification 2nd edition : principal features and applications* in *Cataloging & classification quarterly* (ISSN 0163-9374), vol.15 (1992), no.4, p.3-17.

BLISS CLASSIFICATION ASSOCIATION CONSOLIDATED RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 1992

1991	RECEIPTS	1992	1991	PAYMENTS	1992	
	Balance brought forward 1 August:		243.35	Committee and AGM expenses	157.10	
1604.67	General accounts	2253.27	246.25	Stationery, postage & photocopying	407.03	
752.73	Appeal account	<u>1065.27</u>	3318.54			
	Subscriptions:		987.93	2nd edition expenses	76.46	
72.00	Personal	96.00	00.00	Computer equipment & repairs	317.05	
16.00	School	16.00				
877.15	Other institutions	<u>933.55</u>	1045.55	20.99	New Appeal expenses	00.00
55.35	Royalties on 2nd edition	36.20	126.45	Other payments	166.88	
91.51	Distribution from M & G (Charibond)	54.91				
250.00	Appeal contributions	00.00				
	Interest payments:			Balance in hand at 31 July:		
136.56	Deposit account	90.09	138.84	General current account	449.63	
62.54	Appeal account	<u>45.44</u>	2114.43	General deposit account	1978.72	
		135.53	1065.27	Appeal account	<u>1110.71</u>	
1000.00	Other receipts	15.00			3539.06	
<u>25.00</u>	Creditors	<u>57.85</u>				
<u>4943.51</u>		<u>4663.58</u>	<u>4943.51</u>		<u>4663.58</u>	

Current assets at 31 July 1992

800.13	Charibond (at cost)	800.13
2253.27	Cash in general accounts	2428.35
1065.27	Cash in Appeal account	1110.71
	Computer equipment (pc:s and printer)	
<u>3007.20</u>	less depreciation @ 20% per annum	<u>2406.00</u>
<u>7125.87</u>		<u>6745.19</u>

I have examined the books, bank statements and other relevant papers of the Bliss Classification Association and find the above statement of accounts to be correct.

Marion MacLeod, Hon. Treasurer
6 Gilbert Close, Cambridge, CB4 3HR

K. Best, Hon. Auditor
2 Greendale, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0EB
22.11.1992

Annual lecture 1992

UDC -- has it a future?

Ia C. MacIlwaine

Background

It may seem strange that at the annual general meeting of the Bliss Classification Association, a speaker should be invited to talk about another general classification scheme and one, at that, against which BC2 stands as a shining example of what can be done through the consistent application of facet analysis to the whole of knowledge. But in these days of economic stringency, when bibliographic classification has a low profile, there is some good sense in interchange of ideas between those concerned with analytico-synthetic classifications of every kind which attempt to cover the whole of knowledge. It is necessary to redirect the attention of many of those working in the information field to the advantages of a systematic rather than solely verbal approach to more specific information retrieval than can be achieved with Dewey Decimal Classification or the Library of Congress classification. At present, these two schemes seem to dominate the library world on account of the pragmatic attractiveness of saving trouble and work to ill-funded information services of all kinds, but this is only a short-term solution.

The UDC has had a chequered career, and in this country we are inclined to see it as a somewhat unwieldy scheme used for large, specialized collections, usually in the sciences and technologies. It is frequently thought of as providing a subject approach to disciplines which many librarians, who by and large tend to have a background in the humanities, find unfamiliar and 'difficult'. This is not the case elsewhere. In many countries, for systems such as state libraries in Spain or those of small universities in Holland, concerned with the whole of knowledge at a fairly general level, the UDC is the normal scheme for subject arrangement or retrieval. The claim of Dewey Decimal Classification to be the most widely used in the world may be true for the English-speaking world, but UDC has a very large following right across continental Europe, in Latin America and in other parts of the globe as the recognized means for the organization of collections, national bibliographies and other indexing services.

UDC is sometimes regarded as a sort of dinosaur, a scheme with very detailed expansions, many out of date tables and very little instruction to the user. Its datedness is clearly the biggest cause for concern, especially in a scheme that claims to be particularly suited to large scientific and technical collections, where knowledge advances extremely rapidly. Its historic slowness of revision can be attributed to two causes: lack of sufficient funding and the democratic process employed for the implementation of revision. Radical steps have recently been taken to improve the situation with regard to both these factors.

Consultant

In the mid 1980s FID called in a consultant to look at the management of the UDC and set up proposals for its reform. This he did, and the result was the disappearance of the old Central Classification Committee with its network of subordinate, reporting committees organized somewhat haphazardly from groups of unpaid interested persons on a national and subject basis. Instead, a Management

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Board was set up, to which a series of four (later five) revision committees reported. The chairman of each revision committee was a member of the Board and was responsible for co-ordinating work across the whole range of subjects within his/her group. By 1989 the situation was still unsatisfactory, and the Management Board set up a short term Task Force to investigate whether UDC was viable, and if it was seen to be, to make recommendations to put it on a more solid footing.

The Task Force reported to the Management Board in March 1990 and it made a number of recommendations, many of which have been put into effect. These were all aimed at updating the scheme as speedily as possible and at placing it on a firmer financial footing. Probably the most important proposal was that a machine-readable Master Reference File should be created, so that the whole scheme was in a form that was readily available and could be quickly updated.

Master Reference File

Work began towards the end of 1991 on the creation of this Master Reference File which constitutes the 'standard version' of the UDC. It contains about 70,000 divisions and subdivisions (or classes, as UDC calls them) so is considerably larger than Dewey, and c. 20,000 classes larger than the International Medium Edition. This Master Reference File was completed in March 1993 and is based on the International Medium Edition : English text (BS 1000M; 1985/88) and subsequent Extensions and corrections, together with more recent medium and abridged editions of the scheme published in languages other than English.

This version is smaller than the full edition, news which will be met with some dismay in the UK, where the full schedules are rather more widely used than in many other countries. It was felt, however, that initially a Master File of manageable proportions must be created and it was also strongly felt that one of the working languages should be English. The International Medium Edition : English text and all subsequent Additions and corrections were already in machine-readable format, so this was a good starting point. German is intended to be the second language for the file and doubtless French and Spanish will follow not far behind. At present, English is needed for obvious reasons, German is the next most familiar language to those closely involved with the scheme's revision and it is a language that works well with English -- it is also felt strongly that two languages, as a minimum, are necessary for use in a scheme intended for international usage and to assist in the refinement of the terminology selected.

Revision procedure

Among matters that caused concern to the Task Force was the fact the system of revision by committee was still not working properly and that it was no longer possible for FID to continue to try to run a major classification scheme on a diminishing budget and to rely upon voluntary input. Some better means of controlling revision had to be found, and it was felt that a properly worked out, long-term programme was essential with firm decisions being taken and adhered to. Medicine is an example of a discipline where action was needed. Very little revision has been done to the medical schedules in the past twenty years. In that period a great many libraries have become automated and many of those concerned with medicine have moved over to the National Library of Medicine classification in the interests of standardization and getting classification and cataloguing data ready-made. After considerable debate, it was decided that such a large subject field could not be ignored, if only because it impinged upon other classes, and a decision was made to put Medicine high on the list of priorities.

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Until December 1991 all revision work was vetted by what was called publishing Proposals (which were known as P notes). This committee no longer exists and instead there is now a Revision Advisory Group responsible for advising on future revisions, commissioning interested and suitable persons to do the work and assessing those revisions that are submitted, to ensure that they are of an acceptable quality. They do not necessarily do the work themselves, though they may, and they have a budget out of which they can commission revisions and reviewers to assess the revisions that have been undertaken. The "ten year rule", whereby the meaning of a number could not be changed for a period of ten years, has been done away with.

Management, finance and publication

A major problem was to find the means to finance work on the classification. For a number of years FID's finances have been in a fairly precarious state and a number of cost-cutting exercises have taken place recently. UDC is very expensive and does not pay its way. So, on 31st December 1991 the UDC Consortium came into being and assumed full responsibility for UDC. The UDCC is established in the Netherlands as a Stichting (a non-profit making foundation) and its founder members are FID itself, which continues to house the Secretariat in the Dutch Royal Library at the Hague, and five major publishers of UDC from Belgium, Japan, The Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. It is hoped that other publishers and interested parties will join in the enterprise.

The machine-readable database is the property of the Consortium, and individual publishers may apply for a licence to publish it in any way that seems appropriate to them, for example in translation, in an abridged form or on CD-ROM. The abandoning of the full edition may be a cause for concern, especially in this country where the edition is almost complete in English, albeit at varying levels of currency. It is likely that the British Standards Institution will continue to publish full schedules for the foreseeable future -- it is the major shareholder in the enterprise, is still maintaining its revision committee and is anxious to make the most of its investment. The database itself may well be further developed as time and money permit. It is virtually certain that BSI will produce a new medium edition within the next six to twelve months, based entirely on the Master Reference File.

Revision of the scheme

So, the whole management of the scheme has been overhauled and the publication pattern altered. The approach to revisions has also changed. The Task Force recommended that, over a reasonable period of time, the scheme should be revised on strictly faceted principles and that the terms used should be capable of utilization as a verbal retrieval system, i.e. a thesaurifacet format was hoped for. That is patently a long way off yet, but the intention is there. The recently redrafted guidelines to revisers state that all new revisions must be faceted and any enumerative expansions that are submitted are returned to revisers for reworking.

Another change that is likely to occur in the reasonable future is the reversion to the pre-1930 policy of always expressing area by means of the Area Table and its distinctive notation. This would mean that numbers would no longer be spelt out in class 9, with the result that a machine search, for example, for everything on France would retrieve all information via (44) and there would be no need to look for (44) + 914.4 + 944. This is a small point, but consistent use of the same notation for a concept is a great boon for online subject searching using a classification scheme.

Religion -- an example

One example of the sort of revisions that are now being considered is a totally new approach to class 2, Religion, that is currently being worked out. It should be emphasised that this is only experimental at present and it will be quite a while, if ever, before it reaches the UDC proper.

It is strongly felt that as an international scheme UDC can no longer afford to be so biased towards Christianity. Therefore, a totally new approach has been adopted and a rigorously faceted scheme produced that treats every religion equally. It consists of five tables. Linked with the proposal is the transfer of the present class 21, Natural theology, to class 1 in a newly created class 112, Philosophy of God. Analogous with this is the relegation of 22, Bible, to an auxiliary, treating it as a source of particular religions, along with other holy books. This permits individual religions to constitute the principal facet:

- 2 Religion and theology
- 21 Prehistoric and non-literate religions
- 22 Religions of the Far East (except Buddhism)
- 23 Religions originating from India (except Buddhism)
- 24 Buddhism
- 25 Religions of antiquity
- 26 Islam
- 27 Judaism
- 28 Christianity
- 29 Other religions

This main table of religions (and there are several questions that might be asked about it, such as why is Christianity at the end, and why not keep 6 for Judaism and 7 for Islam as is presently the case and is an historically more correct order?) is supplemented by a series of auxiliaries, firstly a table of general categories (extrinsic aspects):

- 1 Classification, typology, definition

with subdivisions such as:

- 12 Religions/churches/sects classified by type of ministry and government
- 122 Churches with a distinct clergy or without clergy
- 122.1 Episcopal churches
- 122.3 Presbyterian churches
- 122.5 Congregational churches
- 13 Churches specified by principal doctrines
(to be specified by means of '01/'09 and '1/'9)
- 14 Religions etc classified by their interpretation of the holy books
- ...

As the excerpt from the draft shows, -13 is supplemented by two auxiliary tables. There is a table of general religious and theological concepts (i.e. constituting elements):

- '01 Fundamental concepts
- '02 Sources
- '03 Doctrines
- '04 Moral and social theology
- '05 Pastoral theology
- '06 Rites, cults ...

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Each of these concepts can be expanded. For instance, there are subdivisions of '01 as follows:

- '01 Fundamental religious concepts
 - '011 Founder
 - '011.31 The founder and his life
 - '011.33 Family of the founder
 - ...
 - '012 The holy, the supernatural
 - '012.1 Definition
 - '012.2 Origin(s)
 - '012.3 Structure
 - ...
 - '013 Revelation
 - (Divide like 012)
 - '014 Faith
 - (Divide like 012)
- '02 Sources
 - '021 Tradition
 - '022 Written sources: sacred books

'022 is in turn supplemented by a special auxiliary, '022.01/.09 covering such recurring concepts and forms as texts, criticism, exegesis, commentaries, concordances. Similar special auxiliaries are provided elsewhere, as needed, for instance at '031.1/.9 for Theology.

'02 may be further expanded, using a 'table of special concepts', e.g.:

- 208'022'5 Christianity - sacred books - Bible - NT
- 208'022'6 Gospels. Acts
- 208'022'61 Gospels
- 208'022'62 Matthew
- 208'022'62(V-VII) Sermon on the Mount

Similar provision is made elsewhere, for example at 208'035'1/'9 - Christianity - sacraments.

In all, the whole class is twenty four pages of typescript schedules and an index. The entire discipline is reduced to a series of tables, along the lines indicated. So far this schedule has not been accepted. This is on two counts. There are still some errors in it, and the Revision Advisory Group wishes these corrected. The Group is also unhappy about the notation because it disapproves of an auxiliary introduced by an apostrophe supplemented by a subauxiliary which also uses the apostrophe, so some other notation will have to be found which is not thought to be so confusing.

Guidelines for revisers

A bigger problem and one that has already been encountered in some of the revisions that have recently been produced, despite the redrafting of very clear guidelines for revisers, is to get the approach understood by users of the scheme. "Users", in this instance means the profession, rather than the public who tend to take what they are given on trust, rather than seeking for any structure behind notations etc. Classifiers will be dismayed at not finding compound concepts spelt out in the schedules. This will be overcome by better indexing and clear intro-

ductions to the classes. A very full index in which common combinations of terms are spelt out would be of considerable assistance. Probably a different set of notational symbols, or at least a different facet indicator would assist, rather than continually expanding '0 as a base. But these are fairly minor considerations and the more interesting element is that the UDC is not only saying that it intends to restructure the scheme on a much more rigorously faceted approach, its revisers (and this draft proposal was produced by the Dutch and Germans) are actually attempting to create a faceted scheme.

The future -- short-term and long-term

A forward plan for the revision of the scheme has been worked out and the intention is to overhaul it thoroughly, section by section over a well publicized period of time, rather like the Decimal Classification's "Phoenix schedules". In the meantime, a general patching up will be necessary. The next priority is to review the entire machine-readable file. Undoubtedly there will be a certain amount of general cleaning up to be done when the database is examined as a whole. In addition, two new subject fields will be totally overhauled. One is Computer science, which is already well under way, being at present divided into the technical aspects which the Japanese are working on and the communication elements which the Germans and Dutch are doing. The other subject field is Medicine, which is due for a "bottom up" revision. This is the next candidate for a commissioned revised schedule and feelers are being put out to find an interested party.

Another problem, especially given the fluctuating state of countries at the present time, is the Area Table. Here, the intention is to make use of the good offices of the Dutch Royal Library which uses UDC and produces annually an amended area table to incorporate any changes that have taken place. This just goes down three levels of subdivision, e.g., country, county, major cities, or whatever is appropriate. It has been agreed that this table will be used in future in UDC, incorporating the changes made annually. The intention is not to replace the very detailed Area Table already in existence which provides an historical approach, but to provide (with an individual facet indicator) a reasonably current listing of the state of the world.

So, with a mixture of sound theoretical principles and pragmatism the UDC is attempting to move into the 21st century. There is much to be done, and plenty of scope for co-operation. Like Bliss, the scheme suffers from not appearing on the MARC record (or at least, only very occasionally). It is used in a substantial number of national bibliographies, principally though not exclusively in the Franco-phone world, and more should be made of this -- and its other attraction in an automated world is the hierarchical structure of its notation and the clear labelling, notationally, of individual facets, thereby enabling productive machine searching via the classification, if that is required.

LA CLASSIFICAZIONE BLISS

Ken Bell

The day before our BCA Committee meeting in May, an invitation came from Italy for someone to talk about Bliss at a weekend classification seminar in Milan in June. Luckily for me, the Committee agreed that I should go. The event was jointly organised by Regione Lombardia Servizio Biblioteche and the Comitato Regionale Lombardo of the Associazione Italiana Biblioteche and lasted all day Friday 18 June and the morning of 19 June.

The overall title of the seminar was *Le classificazioni* and was arranged to celebrate the recently published translation into Italian of Edition 20 of the Dewey Decimal Classification. Apart from Bliss, the papers covered the theory and history of classification schemes (concentrating centrally on faceted theory), the NLM Classification, the uses of technology in all aspects of classification from schedule construction and revision to online searching, and the characteristics and problems of the Dewey translation.

My own contribution was entitled *La classificazione Bliss* and was, as requested, an introduction to the scheme, concentrating naturally on BC2. Fortunately an earlier paper, given by Elisa Grignani, had provided a very thorough summary of faceted theory, and I was able to assume some familiarity with such notions as facet, array and standard citation order. After a brief historical survey of the evolution of the scheme through its various outlines and editions, I looked at the principle of gradation by speciality, its effect on main class order in BC1 and the extent to which this has been preserved or modified in BC2. This included coverage of the problems and distribution of discipline-based and phenomenon-based classes and the innovations in BC2 for dealing with multi-disciplinary documents. My main section was a theoretical and practical demonstration of the ways BC2 puts into practice all aspects of the theory of faceted classification. The final section covered the uses of BC2 in different kinds of system, including its applications in thesaurus construction.

The discussion which followed ranged very widely : main class order, phenomenon-based classes, the rationale underlying non-hierarchical notation (and whether this is a disadvantage in online systems) and the provision of alternatives. I was happy to find considerable enthusiasm for classification generally and great interest in the characteristics of BC2 itself.

I was treated very warmly and with great hospitality by my Italian hosts and colleagues. Following the end of the seminar I was able to spend one full day in Milan, largely indulging my musical and record-collecting interests. In short, spending a weekend in Milan talking about Bliss was, indeed, bliss.

[And the next time we receive an invitation for someone to go and talk about Bliss Bibliographic Classification at a conference at the University of Hawaii, expenses paid, *I'm going.* -- Ed.]

In praise of uninverted schedules : a mini-polemic

by Antonio

For more than twenty years I spent an appreciable part of each session trying to devise ways of explaining the Principle of Inversion to my students in such a way that they would comprehend it more easily and remember it accurately. They were not particularly unprincipled, these students of mine (far from it!) but this particular Principle eluded many of them. Each year would bring a handful who would grasp it readily -- they were the ones who had that special cast of mind that found analysis, systematic order and synthesis desirable, congenial and natural. Then there were those who never understood it, however hard one tried (or who seemed to have grasped it, only to reveal hideous confusion again soon after). There was not a lot I could do for them, and I had a shrewd suspicion that they were in any case not the ones who would find employment in the kinds of libraries and information units where they might be called upon to construct special classification schemes.

In between these two extremes, however, were the students who gave me the most work and also the greatest satisfaction, namely those individuals who wrestled with the concepts and genuinely did their best to understand unfamiliar and difficult ideas (having probably been told by previous years' students how Very Difficult and Incomprehensible and Useless It All Was), and, refusing to be defeated, won through to a full understanding of the topic. They were able to demonstrate their new-found mastery of it in the construction of miniature schedules set as project work, complete with examples of documents classed by those schedules -- a far more revealing test than the ability to reproduce my lecture notes parrot-fashion as examination answers.

This experience has left me a little twitchy where discussions of the Principle of Inversion are concerned. Half the difficulties, I am convinced, occur at the outset and stem from an unfortunate choice of terminology. It is a matter of profound regret (and great annoyance) that every volume of BC2 and numerous textbooks on classification (to say nothing of speakers at BCA meetings) constantly refer to BC2 schedules as "inverted schedules".

Has anyone actually *looked* at the BC2 schedules? They are not inverted. They do not stand on their heads; indeed, they stand with their feet most admirably planted on the ground. Moreover, the sequence they convey is exactly that which will be shown by single-faceted documents which have been classed using those schedules. Believe it or not, BC2 schedules, like those of all other schemes, are in schedule order. (Now there's a fine circular definition for you!)

We never actually invert the schedules or any part of them. As the introductions to the volumes clearly and accurately state, compound classmarks are built up by taking the various constituent elements one at a time, beginning with the one occurring latest in the schedule and (normally) working progressively backwards, so that the last element in a synthesised classmark is the one which occurs earliest in the schedule.

So also for compounds within any one facet, the elements taken from later arrays being cited before those taken from earlier arrays. The arrays themselves, however, are not inverted: terms in any one array, and terms taken independently from successive arrays, always remain in exactly the order in which they are listed.

