

DEWEINEAZAR

The Universal Decimal Classification and its Application to Jewish Materials

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Bella Weinberg's article on Jewish classification schemes which appeared in the first issue of *Judaica Librarianship* (Weinberg, 1983), mentioned the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) very briefly, and the bibliographic references may have led readers to believe that UDC schedules for Jewish topics exist only in a Hebrew edition (though this was certainly not the author's intention). Although it is not very well known in the United States, the UDC is actually the largest, most detailed, and most widely used classification scheme in the world, and it may be of interest to *JL's* readers to discuss its major features as well as its treatment of Jewish topics.

The UDC was originally developed in 1885 for the classification of a huge card index of the world's literature in all fields of knowledge, and its schedules were first published (in French) in 1905. Dewey's scheme—then in its 5th edition—was taken as the basic framework, but was expanded (with Dewey's permission and support) into a much more detailed system. UDC features a notation which, in addition to numerals, makes use of typographic signs in order to indicate what we today call *facets*, thus achieving a more compact, yet expressive notation that gives visual clues to the various elements of a compound subject. Although UDC today no longer follows Dewey's Decimal Classification (DC) in detail, many basic notations are still either the same or compatible with DC. The main difference lies in the synthetic structure of the UDC.

Thus, while DC introduces the *place* facet by 09, followed by the code for the specific region, e.g., -73 for the U.S., UDC uses parentheses to indicate place. Thus, for the concept "Plant cultivation in the U.S." DC has the notation 631.50973, while UDC has 631.5(73). Not only place, but also language, physical form, races and peoples, time periods, specific points of view and recurring subdivisions can be expressed independently by suitable facet notations appended to the main class mark for a subject. In addition, UDC

makes it possible to link two or more notations to express a complex subject by means of a colon, e.g., Irrigation systems for plant cultivation, 626.84 : 631.5. The system is not designed primarily for the arrangement of books on shelves, but rather for the construction of classified catalogs where combinations of notations can be shown in two, three or more places, depending on the number of elements, always in relation to all other notations. Thus, in the example just given, 626.84 : 631.5 may be found under 626.84 and under 631.5 : 626.84, and if the place facet for U.S. (73) is added, a third file can be created showing everything American under (73), e.g. (73)626.84 : 631.5.

These features make the UDC a highly synthetic and flexible system, and it has found wide application in Europe, in most Latin American countries, in the Soviet Union (where all sci-tech publications must be classified by UDC) and in Japan and Israel (because UDC is independent of language and script). Needless to say, searching "up and down a hierarchy" and searching notations either singly or in combination with others is a task ideally suited to computer manipulation, and these possibilities are only now beginning to be realized in online retrieval, although the first successful experiments on UDC were performed in 1965 in the U.S. at the American Institute of Physics (Freeman, 1967).

Until the late 1960s, Jewish religion, history, and other topics of Jewish interest were rather poorly and unevenly developed in UDC. When the first Hebrew Abridged Edition of the UDC was planned, an effort was made to expand and update the schedules pertaining to Jewish topics. While the synthetic structure of the UDC was taken into consideration, new and revised sections were developed by a team consisting of Dr. Jacob Rothschild (then director of the Graduate School of Library Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem), Dr. Hanna Oppenheimer (lecturer at the same institution), and myself, as editor of the Hebrew edition.

The main subdivisions of the revised schedules are shown in Table 1. The principal innovations and changes were: a new separate schedule for the Bible in Jewish canonical order at 221; a revised and expanded schedule for Judaism at 296, partially modelled on Scholem's scheme (but without its notation); and a schedule for the History of Jews at 933, combining elements of the earlier Israeli adaptation of DC and Scholem's scheme. The revised schedules still lack a separate detailed subdivision for the Dead Sea Scrolls and fragments, which are at present classed with the Qumran community at 296.624. The notation 296.7, immediately preceding 296.8 Talmud and Midrash remains unused, and will probably be the future place for Dead Sea Scrolls, still to be elaborated by experts on that subject.

TABLE 1
MAIN SUBDIVISIONS OF UDC
SCHEDULES FOR JEWISH SUBJECTS

296	Jewish religion. Judaism
.1	Jewish theology and philosophy
.2	Apologetics and polemics. Antisemitism
.3	Jewish prayer and ritual
.31	Prayers
.38	Shabbath and holidays
.4	Jewish ethics. Sermons
.5	Halakhah
.6	Jewish sects and religious movements
[.7]	[Not assigned. Possible future place of Dead Sea Scrolls]
.8	Talmud and Midrash
933	History of the Jewish people
956.94	History of Palestine and Israel

Table 2 provides a comparison of DC and UDC notations for some of the major topics of Jewish interest; one notes that not all topics subordinated in DC to 296 are also in that schedule of UDC, e.g., *Zionism* is classed as a political movement in 323, and its history is expressed by the appropriate facet (09).

The 296 schedule was designed to allow a large measure of flexibility by using parts of the schedule itself to give prime emphasis either to the practices of specific religious traditions, sects or movements, subordinated to various aspects of Jewish religion, law, rites and customs or, alternatively, to emphasize these aspects and subarrange them by movements and sects. For example, a work on "Sermons of Reform congregations in the 19th century" could be classed under Sermons at 296.45'681"18" (where 296.45 is *Sermons*, '681 is taken from the latter part of 296.681 *Reform movement*, and "18" is *19th century*). If, however, a library prefers to keep everything on the Reform movement together, the notation would be 296.681'45"18". This could, of course, be made even more exact by, for example, specifying *German Reform congregations*, resulting in the notation 296.45'681(43)"18". Such a notation would hardly be useful as a shelf mark, nor is it likely to be needed in a classified catalog, unless the collection consists of a large number of sermons from various congregations in many different countries.

Because of this potential for high specificity and resulting complex notation, UDC has undeservedly earned a reputation for being an extremely complicated classification scheme. Specificity is, however, only a possibility offered, not a necessary feature of practical application. The book on Reform sermons could get the simple notation 296.45, or at most 296.45'681, which would still express the two main facets of its topic and result in a shelf mark not longer than most DC notations. Thus, the UDC may offer those Jewish libraries which sometimes find DC, or classification schemes based on it, insufficiently detailed an opportunity to expand DC notations—either by using the UDC facets for place, time, form, etc., or by using the more detailed breakdown of certain topics.

In order to facilitate comparison with other Jewish classification schemes, Table 3 extends the structural analysis of schemes

**Table 2
COMPARISON OF SOME DC AND UDC NOTATIONS FOR JEWISH SUBJECTS**

<i>Dewey Decimal</i>	<i>Subject as defined in DC</i>	<i>Universal Decimal Classification</i>
181.06	Jewish philosophy	1 ... (=924) ^a
221	Bible (Old Testament)	221 ^b
296	Judaism	296
.1	Sources	296.5/.8 ^c
.3	Doctrinal, moral, social theology	296.1
.4	Traditions, rites, public services	296.3
.6	Leaders, organizations, activities	06(=924)
.7	Religious experience, life, practice	296.4
.8	Sects and movements	296.6
909.04924	History of Jews	933 ^d
913.3	Geography of Palestine before A.D. 70	915.694(33)
915.694	Geography of Israel	915.694
933	History of Palestine before A.D. 70	956.94.01
933.609 ^e	History of Zionism	323.13(=924) (09)
956.94	History of Palestine after A.D. 70	956.94.02/.05 ^f

- ^a No specific notation. Jewish conception of any philosophy may be expressed by (=924). Jewish religious philosophy is 296.14.
- ^b With detailed subdivision for all 24 books according to Jewish tradition.
- ^c See also table 1. In UDC, consecutive class notations are indicated by /.
- ^d With detailed subdivisions for all periods.
- ^e Authorized Israeli expansion (in Hebrew DC edition only).
- ^f With detailed breakdown of post-Second Temple periods until present.

displayed in Weinberg's Table 1 (p. 29 of her article), augmented by a column headed "Amenable to computerized searching," which would probably not be applicable to any of the other schemes because they lack a faceted structure.

One of the advantages of the UDC is the fact that a large international organization, the International Federation for Document-

tation (best known by its French acronym FID), stands behind it, and that it is continuously updated by a network of international committees. On the other hand, since it is not very widely used in the U.S., there is no service that offers ready-made UDC notations on cards or in any other form. Thus, every classifier has to construct notations from the schedules, (continued on page 107)

**TABLE 3
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION
APPLIED TO JUDAICA***

<i>Philosophical acceptability</i>	<i>Specificity</i>	<i>Notation</i>	<i>Compatibility with general systems</i>	<i>Possibilities of synthesis</i>	<i>Availability of class notations</i>	<i>Updating frequency</i>	<i>Amenable to computerized searches</i>
Medium	Very high	Complex	High	Very high	None	Frequent	Yes

*This analysis is designed to supplement Weinberg's Table in *Judaica Librarianship* vol. 1, no. 1, p. 29. UDC, while mentioned briefly in that article, was not given a detailed analysis, because the focus of the paper was on classification schemes suitable for synagogue and school libraries, whereas UDC is a more research library-oriented scheme. — Ed. (B.H.W.)

MANAGEMENT—JEWISH

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the English editions of which are being published by the British Standards Institution in London. These are available either as "Full editions"—in separate booklets covering whole classes or certain parts of them—or in a "Medium Edition," with shorter class numbers suitable for the needs of most libraries, which will be published in 1985. Full editions exist for class 2 (Religion) and 9 (History). (British Standards must be ordered in the U.S. through the American National Standards Institute in New York.)

A "U.S. Information Center for the UDC" is housed at the College of Library and Information Services of the University of Maryland (College Park, MD 20742). A master file of all English UDC editions and annual updates is kept here, as well as about a dozen editions in other languages. UDC users in North America may turn to the Center for advice and information.

References

- Freeman, R.R., "The management of a classification scheme: modern approaches exemplified by the UDC Project of the American Institute of Physics." *Journal of Documentation* Vol. 23 (1967), pp. 304-320.
- Weinberg, Bella Hass, "Judaica Classification Schemes for Synagogue and School Libraries: A Structural Analysis," *Judaica Librarianship*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (Fall 1983), pp. 26-30.

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My role as Contributing Editor for Management is to encourage people to write articles on management and to shepherd them through part of the editorial process. In this first column, I invite readers to contribute not only full-fledged articles on management to *Judaica Librarianship*, but also smaller reports, notices, and thoughts that can be combined into a column from time to time.

What is "management," and what constitutes a Judaic angle that justifies a place in this journal?

Without going into dictionary or textbook definitions, management is goal-setting, planning, budgeting, implementing, quantifying, evaluating, reporting. Management really covers every area of library activity.

And what is "Judaic"? It is that something that sets our libraries—or departments—apart from others. It is the special subjects or languages, the problems of "right-to-left" or of multiple languages, the appropriate partners for exchange of materials, the specialized clientele, the suppliers of funds, etc.

Now, granting that everything, more or less, that goes on in a library involves management, it is inevitable that this column will overlap the other departments of the journal. [See Margot Berman's column on synagogue library gift policy in this issue — Eds.] Other members of the Editorial Board may lay claim to any of the following suggested topics:

1. Photoduplication price structures
2. Computers in administration
3. Managing slide collections
4. Managing microform collections
5. Circulation systems
6. Staff structures
7. Salary scales
8. Acquisitions profiles
9. Evaluating gifts
10. Interlibrary loan policies
11. Preservation policies
12. Disposing of duplicates
13. Staffing
14. Priorities in cataloging

[Articles submitted to this column on topics which clearly relate to another subject department will be referred to the appropriate Contributing Editor for review and returned to Dr. Zafren - Eds.]

If you have an interest in writing on any of the above, or on other aspects of management, please communicate with me, and we shall define the scope of the study you plan to undertake and the report or article that you hope to write. Remember that the Judaic aspect (liberally interpreted) of what you treat, or a comparative approach between general and Judaica libraries, is what makes the article eligible for publication in *Judaica Librarianship*.

In the meantime, until the articles begin to flow in a steady stream, and even after, there are always things going on in your libraries or in your thoughts that you should want to share with colleagues. My column—giving each contributor credit—can be the conduit for these sharings. If you learn about new equipment that might be useful in Judaic libraries, the management column may not be the place for too technical a description; but this is the place to describe how the hardware might improve productivity. If your library is experimenting with, or just thinking about, new policies, techniques, or devices in the organization of tasks; in interpersonal relations; in recruiting—let us know. If you have public relations ideas or successes, interlibrary activities that are worth expanding, communications innovations, new ways of doing old things, report them.

As I see it, your studies and articles should be useful summaries of the state of something important, or thoughtful and deliberate projections for the future. My column, through your input, may also become the place for less formal reports, news, and even flights of fancy on the subject of managing the Judaica library.

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