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The Universal Decimal Classification and its historical relationship to the DDC

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ASIS&T :: November 7, 2006

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The UDC in 2006

- **UDC Consortium** <<http://www.udcc.org/>>
 - The Hague, The Netherlands
 - 4 executive members: inc. national standards organizations in Russia, Spain, UK
 - editions also published in Brazil, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Ukraine
 - used in national bibliographies of 30 countries (mainly E. Europe and Francophone Africa), and >65 special, academic, national libraries worldwide
 - maintains Master Reference File of 66,000 class numbers

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Two complementary views ...

- **... of universal classification schemes**
 - as transnationalizing forces: facilitating cross-national flows of information
 - as transnationalized artefacts: some outgrowing local contexts, others not

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Factors influencing “success”

- **structure**
 - social, cultural, political, economic, technological ...
- **agency**
 - Dewey, Otlet ...
 - negotiation

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Critical incidents

- **Dewey’s innovation and Otlet’s appreciation**
- **the Brussels agreement**
- **the LC disagreement**
- **Fellows’ distrust**
- **Dewey’s loss of interest**
- **Custer’s modernization**
- **FID’s decline**

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Recommended reading

- Comaromi, J. P. (1976). *The eighteen editions of the Dewey Decimal Classification*. Albany, NY: Forest Press.
- McLwaine, I. C. (1997). The Universal Decimal Classification: Some factors concerning its origins, development, and influence. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 48: 331-339.
- Miksa, F. L. (1998). *The DDC, the universe of knowledge, and the post-modern library*. Albany, NY: Forest Press.
- Rayward, W. B. (1994). Visions of Xanadu: Paul Otlet (1868-1944) and hypertext. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 45: 235-250.

**Thank you.
Questions?**

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