If solutions to key library problems are to be sought increasingly at the national and international level there is need for a maximum of comparative data. The experience of the Soviet Union should be instructive as an example of a country with several decades of experience with forms of centralized cataloging, and one which is engaged in new experimentation with cataloging-in-source. Have any of the “classic” problems been solved?

A survey of the literature today soon runs into the thorny issues of classification. This problem does indeed remain. Other matters are less obvious. There is the challenge of evaluating the cataloging-in-source trials initiated in 1959. At the same time there is evidence that the printed cards issued by central agencies are far from abandoned. Of fresh interest is the fact that the distribution of the All Union Book Chamber cards has been refined for 1967. In the scientific and technical information network there appears to be increased emphasis on the standard card—a development that may be less traditional than it seems at first glance, in that the cards for journal articles as well as books are intended to be used by individuals for current awareness and personal files which would link with catalogs in specialized institutions. At the same time the potential of wider service to libraries is gained.

In Soviet sources the origins of ideas and practices relevant to centralized cataloging in Russia are traced to the nineteenth century, in particular to Kvaskov’s pamphlet of 1893, The Reform of Library Affairs: Library Cards in Newly Published Books; with a Supplement of Library Cards.1 Kvaskov attributed the idea to “friends across the


* Book titles in the text are given in English, periodical titles in the original with translation when first cited.

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Atlantic.”2 Judging from his list of nine references to other notices in journals and newspapers in Russian in 1892 and 1893, cataloging-in-source, as we now call it, was a lively topic of discussion in bibliographic circles at that time. Several publishers issued books accompanied by cards.3 The opinion was expressed that the matter could not be left to private agreement but would have to be made binding upon the publishers by law, and that stiff paper and uniformity of card size would be essential.4 In 1911 Unde-Popov proposed at the first All Russian Congress on Library Affairs that classification numbers be printed on title pages, in addition to having publishers required by law to provide cards.5

According to Firsov, the author of a candidate dissertation in 1940 on centralized cataloging and of several subsequent articles, other early proponents of similar ideas were E. I. Arkad’ev, N. F. Fedorov and V. A. Krandievskii.6 Klenov, in his 1963 textbook on cataloging, indicated that none of the early proposals was implemented on a large scale and that the history of centralized cataloging in the Soviet period had been largely a history of the issuing of printed cards by central agencies until 1959.7

For the years after 1917 three bibliographies of library literature have provided a substantial list of works in Russian on the subject of centralized cataloging. Mez’er listed some three dozen references which testified to the active discussion that took place in the 1920’s.8 Few of Mez’er’s references were repeated in the bibliography by Masanov, although it dealt with the period 1917-1958, and provided annotations for many of its 105 references.9 Subsequent articles have been listed regularly in the quarterly index to library literature.10

Masanov’s main divisions of the topic are still relevant: (1) printed cards for large research libraries and (2) annotated cards for mass public libraries. Each main division had a subdivision for articles reporting on the experiences of libraries receiving the cards, indicating that practical effect was not ignored by central purveyors. Discussions of printed cards for journal articles appeared in the 1930’s, according to Masanov.

Sokurova states that a part of the edition of the national bibliography Knizhnaia letopis’ (Book Chronicle) was printed on one side of the page as early as 1907 and continued until 1938, with the exception of the years 1921–1925.11 The All Union Book Chamber issued its first cards for books in 1927.12 Commencing with the Bureau of Centralized Cataloging in 1925, a succession of different agencies pre-
pared the annotated cards, a selection amounting to about twenty percent of the book production. In recent years annotations have been prepared at the Lenin Library by a special staff with responsibilities for leadership of the public library system.

Descriptions in English of the system of printed card services as it existed in the late 1950's were given by Horecky, and by Ruggles and Mostecky, the latter with samples of printed cards. Observations made by the delegation of United States librarians visiting the Soviet Union in 1961 were reported by Ruggles and Swank. The general system outlined in those works continued into the 1960's. A somewhat later description in Russian was the chapter on centralized cataloging in Klenov's textbook, with illustrations of cards and explanations of their components.

Essentially the system provides for the issuing by the All Union Book Chamber of cards for books published in the Russian language. Titles for which cards are not issued are identified in each issue of Knizhnaia letopis' and are primarily books in non-Russian languages of the union republics. Cards for these books or a selection thereof are the responsibility of the republic book chambers. Thus, in spite of the existence of a highly effective legal deposit system and national bibliography, with its counterpart in the union republics, there is actually no over-all card service from one source, even for the domestic production. While the reasons might appear to be mainly political there are also compelling technical considerations of a linguistic nature. In a large, multilingual nation some decentralization of catalog card production, as distinct from comprehensive bibliographic listing in translation, may be almost mandatory. It might be argued that the practice resembles trends to "country of origin" production now being utilized partially by the Library of Congress for descriptive elements of catalog cards.

A characteristic of card services in the Soviet Union has been the method of distribution: by "complete" sets comprising all subjects and by subject sets, or by type of library in the case of the annotated cards. The change in distribution in 1967, referred to at the beginning of this article, was not a change in method, but one which greatly increased the number of subject sets.

In 1966 subject sets were available in thirty-seven series, but for 1967, the number was almost doubled, to seventy. The announcement was published in Knizhnaia letopis' with prices indicative of the relative quantities. A full set of cards for the large universal li-
braries was offered at a price of 145 rubles for books, 400 rubles for journal articles and reviews, 32 rubles for newspaper articles, and 60 rubles for printed summaries of dissertations. An abridged set of cards for public library subscriptions was priced at 42 rubles for books and 35 rubles for journal articles and reviews.

With the breakdown into seventy subject sets, parallel series were offered, one for books and the other for periodical articles and reviews. The selection of articles would be from among those included in the periodical index, *Letopis' zhurnal'nykh statei* (Chronicle of Journal Articles) which specifies in each issue the items not covered by printed cards.

Undoubtedly the main purpose of the large increase in the number of subject sets was to give libraries an opportunity to select card series more closely fitted to their acquisitions and to avoid large numbers of cards that would not be used. This had been suggested as early as 1959 by Rabin in an article expressing doubt that a completely different approach to centralized cataloging, advocated by Tomakhin, was necessary. The 1966 decision was part of the evidence that cataloging-in-source would continue to be supplemented by the Book Chamber cards and improvements in their method of distribution.

If the problem of quantity had become acute for cards representing books, the threefold number of cards for articles suggested further quantitative problems, at least for general libraries, and a need for rigorously selective policies in acquiring them. But flexibility and currency of indexing presented in close association with the centralized cataloging of books, were clearly a goal. In this there appeared to be an increasing resemblance to procedures for cataloging foreign publications.

Cataloging-in-source, a possible alternative for the domestic production, will be discussed before turning to centralized cataloging of foreign publications.

It is significant that cataloging-in-source was considered worth a large scale trial in a country with a long-established national bibliography and its associated card service, and with similar services in all the union republics for their publications. Obviously the classic problems prevailed. Too many books were reaching libraries sooner than the cards, too many cards were received but not used, and too many books were acquired for which cards were never received.

The order by the Ministry of Culture was dated October 10, 1959.
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The first instructions for carrying it out specified that all priced books published after January 1, 1961 in editions of 8,000 or more should be provided by all publishing houses with a classification number, author symbol, bibliographic description, and printed annotation. The instructions specified the rules and tables to be used. Books issued by central publishing houses in Moscow and Leningrad were to be classified and described by employees specially assigned for this purpose, with assistance in method provided by the Lenin Library in Moscow and by the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad. Books issued in the union republics and by other regional presses were to be classified and described by the respective Book Chambers or by the central libraries.

Understandably, the implementation of the order has been gradual and published comment relatively infrequent. The Ukrainian Soviet Republic, where the experiment met with the most success, was among the first to report on its methods and problems. The article by the Director and two chief bibliographers of the Book Chamber of the Ukrainian S.S.R. was exceptionally clear as to what steps had been taken, and provided illustrations of some unsatisfactory results. Their experiments included having some publishers print a library card together with the publication, in addition to printing the cataloging and classification information in the book. Implementation involved much cooperative work on the part of trained catalogers and representatives of the publishers.

In 1963 a brief report on the situation in the Tadzhik S.S.R. pointed to the difficulties imposed by the absence of a uniform system of classification. A description of the Lithuanian S.S.R.'s centralized cataloging, published in 1964, did not refer to cataloging-in-source but noted that cards began to reach libraries before the books after a 1960 law required publishers to send rush copies of each printed book to the Book Chamber. A member of the Interlibrary Cataloging Commission reported in 1965 that the Book Chambers of the union republics, with the exception of some of the Baltic republics, lacked some of the basic instructions and tools for correct cataloging procedures in their own work, and that the quality of work done in cooperation with publishing houses left much to be desired.

A more optimistic note was sounded by Ivanova and Chizhkova in 1966, describing the cataloging-in-source experiment in relation to the public libraries. To illustrate conditions which led to the experiments and which still prevailed they referred to a 1964 ques-
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The questionnaire circulated by the Lenin Library to city and regional libraries. Replies indicated that for the sample of 2,286 books, 45 percent of the cards arrived before the books but that about half the books acquired by the libraries were those for which no annotated cards were ever issued, such as local publications, books in small editions, textbooks, and the like. In most cases the needs of the local economic and cultural interests were not being met by a selection designed for the country as a whole. Even in one Moscow library a test showed an average of only 15 or 20 annotated cards for every 100 cards in its catalog.

The two authors reported that by 1966 "124 publishing houses published books with the author symbol on the back of the title page, 27 also provided bibliographic description and full classification, and 25 included with their publications annotated printed cards." In Moscow, cataloging and classification of newly published books was carried on by 24 publishing houses. Of these only "Kniga" supplied an annotated, printed card. Eight others provided the author symbol, full classification, and bibliographic description, and fifteen only the author symbol. But in spite of commendable efforts, errors and deficiencies persisted and the essential need of libraries was still, in their opinion, to have cards delivered with the books. Differing from Nemchenko's opinion, they believed that the quality of the cards produced in the Ukrainian S.S.R., for example, was still much higher than could be produced by the average library staff worker in a public library.

Another positive development was the experience with distributing cards through the Book Collectors, the distributing centers for libraries. They proposed that the 148 Book Collectors of the country be provided with photographic equipment for reproducing cards. But until such time as distribution and other problems could be solved, they recommended that the traditional methods of providing sets of annotated cards for public libraries be continued.

Additional facts and comments on the progress of the cataloging-in-source experiments were provided in a series of articles in Bibliotekar' (The Librarian). The general impression was not one of enthusiasm on the part of librarians for the present state of accomplishment but one of continued interest and debate, together with a growing appreciation of the issues involved, and the expectation that benefits would accrue to the public libraries.

Trends in the centralized cataloging of foreign publications are
difficult to discern because the work is performed by a relatively large number of institutions, and usually for a specific clientele. An active bibliographic and processing center for many branch libraries of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has been maintained for some years by the Sector of the Chain of Special Libraries. Since 1960 the Fundamental Library of the Social Sciences has performed centralized cataloging for libraries and institutes of the Academy in the field of the social sciences and humanities by photocopying catalog cards. Other major institutions with active centralized cataloging functions are the Lenin Library, the Library of Foreign Literature, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library, the All Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (VINITI), and the complex of centers for medicine, agriculture, patents and standards.

The interests of VINITI have brought about what appears to be a blend of centralized cataloging with the current awareness function. Since 1960 VINITI has issued printed catalog cards jointly with the All Union State Library of Foreign Literature for articles in foreign journals and collections to inform “institutions, organizations and individuals” rapidly of new literature.

One series advertised for 1967 subscription from the Foreign Literature Library included publications on library science, bibliography and book arts. Annotated cards were offered at a subscription price of 2 rubles 80 kopeks for books and 14 rubles for articles selected from approximately one hundred specialized library journals.

In fields served by VINITI two types of bibliographic cards were advertised for 1966 subscription. Nine sections of the Referativnyi zhurnal (Journal of Abstracts) for electronics and related subjects were to be produced on standard cards as well as in the abstract journal. There was to be no reduction in the length of the abstract because both sides of the card and continuation cards would be used where necessary. According to the announcement, the purpose of the card edition was to permit readers to set up personal card files in specialized problems in science and technology.

Another notice described bibliographic cards for a series for the use of information centers and scientific and technical libraries. In contrast with previous years the cards would correspond exactly with the bibliographic description given in the Referativnyi zhurnal, and each card (without abstract) would contain the number of the abstract in the abstract journal. Estimates of the number of cards per

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year in each of the twenty-one series ranged from 2,100 to 14,400. They would be shipped monthly.

Recently one abstract journal (not issued under VINITI auspices) has been eliminated and replaced by cards. This was deplored in an article by a specialist who maintained that the elimination of the abstract journal for construction and architecture at the end of 1964 had seriously lowered the effectiveness of specialists in the field. He recommended that the journal be produced along with the cards. In this case a subject index to the abstract cards of 1965 was published, but as an item not in the book trade.

Further evidence of the importance of the bibliographic card to VINITI and related organizations may be found in a diagram which appeared in the book Fundamentals of Scientific Information. In that diagram, illustrating the ascending and descending flow of information in the U.S.S.R., the three central bibliographic publications are shown as the Referativnyi zhurnal, the Ekspress-informatsii (spot report) series, and cards.

Future objectives in matters of rules for entry and descriptive cataloging, and exclusive of classification, were reported at the 1965 Scientific Conference on Cataloging. Among its primary recommendations were (1) that unity of principles of description for all types of libraries should be sought and that future developments should tend toward simplification that would make it possible for one set of rules to serve both large and small libraries; (2) that the goal of maximum similarity of method for catalogs and for bibliographic publications should be sought, referring in particular to the comparison of the Uniform Rules with the Rules for Bibliographic Description of Publications and (3) that the standardization of publishing practices be furthered by the approval and publication of guide lines prepared by the All Union Book Chamber.

The first two recommendations involve decisions familiar in principle to experts in cataloging. The third recommendation is indicative of the increasing attention being given to amelioration of cataloging problems at the publication source. The approval of the Book Chamber's standardization proposals by the State Committee for the Press of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers would be a matter of great importance to libraries.

In general, it may be said that the rules for entry and for descriptive cataloging have reached a high level of development in the Soviet Union, within the context of the traditional catalog.
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opinion, expressed at the conference, was that the next edition of the Uniform Rules would be accepted as the government standard.43

The present state of classification, on the other hand, is difficult to describe, let alone assess. That classification has become the most important issue for centralized cataloging was stressed by Sukiasian in a leading article in the journal Sovetskaia bibliografiia (Soviet Bibliography) in 1966.44 The same issue of the journal carried an announcement of a decision taken by the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture in a decree of November 12, 1965.45 The decree outlined the steps to be taken with regard to the use of the first edition of the Library-Bibliographic Classification.46 Publication of “the new Soviet classification” in some thirty parts had commenced in 1961 and completion of the main set was scheduled for 1966 and 1967.

Like most major classification systems the Library-Bibliographic Classification has had a long history of change and development.47 Its drafting has been subject to the shifting currents of Marxist-Leninist theory. At the same time many important scientists, scholars, and specialists in classification have participated in its preparation. The institutions primarily charged with the work have been the Lenin Library, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library, the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., and the All Union Book Chamber. Thus many of its schedules reflect the realities of large collections, as does the classification system of the Library of Congress. According to Kondakov, practical testing of the classification was begun by the Lenin Library in 1962 when it began to classify all current acquisitions by the new schedules, and more than sixty scientific and special libraries in the Soviet Union were making use of at least some parts of the classification.48

Since the official adoption of the Universal Decimal Classification in 1921 it had undergone many reworkings in an attempt to fit it to the realities of the books actually being produced in the Soviet Union, to the needs of different sized libraries, and always to the ideological norms of a given period. During much of this time the benefits that might have accrued by cooperation with the most recent work done in Europe, at least for the science and technology sections, could not be fully utilized. There was also the expectation that a “new Soviet classification” would provide solutions.

A classification system used in the arrangement of the weekly printed bibliographies of the All Union Book Chamber, a “state registration classification system,” had been published in several edi-
but the far more elaborate schedules for the U.D.C. numbers also assigned to the entries and used on the cards on the lower right hand corner (the state registration classification also appears on the left) were not available outside the Book Chamber in published form. The closest version was the publication in Russian in 1962 of an edition based primarily on the U.D.C.'s trilingual abridged edition of 1958, but this did not reflect some of the actual practices of the Book Chamber when classifying by U.D.C.

By this time many libraries had reworked earlier versions of U.D.C. to fit their needs, and since 1959–61 had been able to apply the Tables for Public Libraries, a simplified form of U.D.C., in many situations. The Tables for Public Libraries were a unifying element but were inadequate for large or specialized collections.

Meanwhile the Committee on Science and Technology of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. (formerly the State Committee on the Coordination of Scientific Research) decreed in 1962 that, commencing in 1963, the U.D.C. was to be applied for all information items in natural sciences and technology. Approximately 21,000 libraries in technology, agriculture and medicine were involved, but not the numerous large and small libraries within the system of the Ministry of Culture.

In an article published in English in 1965 Fomin provided a succinct description of the plans for utilizing the U.D.C., the urgent priority given to the updating of the 0, 5, 6 and parts of 7 of the schedules, and the application of the system to "books, journals, patents, conference transactions, symposia by academic or research institutions, etc." and to "unpublished information sources (drawings, progress and development records)." Many detailed schedules were published, and a Russian edition of Extensions and Corrections to the U.D.C. was begun.

That the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture recognized that the first edition of the Library-Bibliographic Classification was not yet ready in a technical sense for full adoption could be seen from the wording of the order, which recommended but did not require its adoption. The order recommended that the classification be introduced into the practical work of large research libraries within the system of the Ministry of Culture, and that manuals, abbreviated tables, and provisions for additions and changes be undertaken. It also recommended that the Committee of the Press of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. request the All Union Book Chamber to
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prepare for the introduction of the new tables in its centralized classification work. The Collegium also established a Council on Classification to coordinate the work on the creation of abbreviated tables and the introduction of the classification.

Sukiasian appeared to be well qualified to discuss the issues. His bibliography of the literature on classification appeared in 1966. For the journal Nauchno-tekhnicheskaia informatsiia (Scientific and Technical Information) he had compiled similar lists about the U.D.C., and his analysis of the characteristics and problems of the U.D.C. classification, addressed to the scientific community, appeared in that journal. His review of the general and geographical type divisions of the Library-Bibliographic Classification was published in 1965 in Bibliotechi SSSR (Libraries of the USSR).

Sukiasian's lead article in Sovetskaia bibliografiia, mentioned above was entitled, "Conditions and Perspectives for Development of Centralized Classification in the U.S.S.R." In it he made clear that what exists today is essentially a decentralized system with classification carried on by many organizations. What had existed in the past was centralized cataloging in a limited sense, and the professional literature reflected that fact. The most successful work was in the system for public libraries by reason of the fact that the tables published in 1959–61 were issued in a sufficient quantity for use in the 120,000 libraries and were translated with relatively few adaptations and changes into the other languages of the U.S.S.R. With regard to the cataloging-in-source experiments the same benefit accrued to the public library materials, and the work has been more successful there than elsewhere. His article provided many additional details on the cataloging-in-source projects and indicated that the basic technical difficulty of providing an authoritative, printed card had not yet been solved.

The difficulties which surrounded the implementation of the 1962 decree on the use of the U.D.C. for science and technology were not minimized by Sukiasian, and were attributed to the lack of up-to-date schedules and to insufficient quantities of those that had to be used. In addition to the sections that have since been published it was essential, he stated, that both full and abridged editions be issued at the earliest possible date.

In the concluding section Sukiasian commented on the work which lies ahead before the Library-Bibliographic Classification could be adopted widely as a centralized classification system. It would mean
reclassification for the great majority of libraries in the country so that all details would have to be worked out with great care. It would require the training of a corps of specialists, prior to which guides on methodology would have to be prepared. Thought would have to be given to the notation in the interests of multilingual applicability. The notation as it stands contains Russian letters of upper and lower case, Arabic and Roman numerals, and additional signs and symbols.

One can appreciate the position of the large libraries, particularly the Lenin Library, whose specialists have been laboring over many years on the Library-Bibliographic Classification and whose actual practices are reflected in the schedules. To an outside observer it would seem nevertheless that the public libraries' Tables, the variant of U.D.C. in use by the Book Chamber, and the very refined special sections of U.D.C. recently reworked by specialists, all have more in common with each other than with the Library-Bibliographic Classification. There are indeed problems in adapting social science sections of U.D.C. to twentieth century realities. But if the Soviet authorities find it possible to use modernized versions of the U.D.C. agreed upon internationally it could be a great step forward, enabling them to benefit from the research and development on rapid updating. It is of course not impossible for two major classification systems to co-exist in one country, but under today's conditions of urgent need to standardize the costly and complex operations of cataloging and classification wherever possible, one can only speculate that a choice will have to be made. If the intensive research on classification under way in many centers results in the millennium of a universal, internationally applicable system superior to U.D.C., the matter of convertibility from U.D.C. would receive early attention. Soviet authorities are fully cognizant of the issues.

However, the simple fact that a printed card, carefully produced, can be of great utility even when classification is omitted or is not identical with the practice of a given library suggests that card services will continue to perform an important function in the U.S.S.R. as elsewhere. A major contribution to retrospective cataloging was performed by the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad in providing printed cards for Russian books of the period 1726-1926. Those cards, without printed classification, formed the basis of the important union catalog in the Lenin Library and of the volumes now in progress.

The immediate relevance of the new Soviet book trade classifica-
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tion to the topic of centralized cataloging is questionable. However, any organized scheme for the distribution of large quantities of books could conceivably be aligned with card distribution. During 1965 a classification system to be used by the book trade was announced and published as an appendix to a textbook by Al'tshul and in a book on basic accounting and planning in the book trade by Reznikov. It is possible that the complexities of library classification introduced into publishing by the cataloging in source experiments were of some influence in inducing the book trade authorities to establish a simpler classification. It is more likely that internal considerations of cost accounting and the use of data processing equipment, as well as physical arrangement in stores, were the determining factors. In any case, the number now printed on the back of the title page in the lower left hand corner is distinct from the library classification in the upper left hand corner. In the nine basic divisions of the book trade classification there is no apparent correlation with the 0-9 of decimal systems familiar to librarians and to many others.

Even after the Soviet Union's several decades of experience with forms of centralized cataloging, within a climate of government more favorable to centralization than in the West, one is struck by the number of problems that still exist and by the fact that there is less centralization than at first might be supposed. There is no single institution which performs a role similar to that of the Library of Congress in its provision to any subscriber of catalog cards selected by the subscriber from an almost universal range of subjects and languages. Nevertheless, the printed card continues as a key element in the Soviet library economy. Its traditional function is being extended in technical fields to extra-library uses, at least temporarily pending further active research on the theory of information and applications of new technology. Current attempts to solve the problem of distribution of centrally produced cards take the form of greater refinement of their supply according to subject groups, but elsewhere attention is being paid to supplying cards with books through book distributing centers for libraries. Meanwhile, the general magnitude of the cataloging problem has warranted continuing efforts to alleviate matters at the publishing source.

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