Experiences With Digitization of Customary Court Cases in South Western Nigeria

Yemisi Dina

INTRODUCTION
This article describes my experiences on the digitization project of customary court cases in South Western Nigeria. I made a presentation to the African Section of the FCIL-SIS at the 106th Annual Meeting of the AALL on July 15, 2013.

Customary law is based on the tradition, customs and values of the people, and it varies in different ways. The terminology “customary law”, according to Park, is just a blanket description, as there are so many ethnic groups. Customary law covers various legal systems depicting each tribe’s customs and values. These are the two forms of customary law that are in existence in Nigeria:
1. Ethnic or Non-Muslim customary law, and
2. Muslim customary law.

Ethnic or non-Muslim customary law derives from the customs and values of a particular ethnic group which makes it indigenous. Nigeria has three dominant ethnic groups – Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. And among these three groups there are multiple groups as well; for example among the Hausas there are the Tivs and Fulanis, among the Igbo there are the different groups from Awka, Enugu, etc., while the Yorubas have Egbas, Ekiti, Ijebu, etc. This means that there are different groups of people in the geographical layout of Nigeria and each one has its own customs, values and traditions (See Figure 1). For traditional marriages each group has its own customs, traditions, and expectations. Many of these customs and values are unwritten and passed from generation to generation.

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Figure 1: Map of Nigeria (South Western Nigeria is highlighted in blue)
From the Chair

Don Ford

Ten years after AALL’s last Seattle conference, America’s Rainopolis was at its summer sunny best as we met from July 12th through the 17th for the 2013 AALL Annual Meeting. Our conference theme, “Rethink Your Value,” was evident in the various conference venues. The always-popular FCIL roundtable session impressively showcased FCIL librarians doing real-time explaining, interacting, conceptualizing, theorizing, and just plain thinking outside the box. No, in fact, nothing about the session was “just plain.” From cataloging to reference to teaching, the energy and creativity of FCIL librarians was infectious, as our non-FCIL participants quickly discovered.

“Rethink your [monograph; serial; database] value” took on a different meaning in the FCIL Selectors’ Group meeting, chaired by Selectors’ Group founder and veteran FCIL bibliographer Dan Wade. The Selectors’ meeting is an AALL “must” for anyone working in the high-cost field of FCIL procurement. There was much discussion about finances and inter-institutional cooperation. And, Bård Sverre Tuseth, the 2013 winner of the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians, shared Norwegian and Nordic European collection information at the Selectors’ Meeting.

Thanks to everyone who made Seattle 2013 a resounding success!

FCIL-ORIENTED PROGRAMS IN SEATTLE

The following FCIL-oriented programs were presented:

“Lifting the Veil: How to Effectively Research Foreign Customary Laws,” Hanibal Goitom (Coordinator and Speaker); Speakers: Tariq Ahmad and Kelly Buchanan.

“FCIL Librarian Core Competencies,” Neel Kant Agrawal (Co-coordinator), Michael G. Moore (Co-coordinator), Lyonette Louis-Jacques (Co-moderator), and Mary Rumsey (Co-moderator).

“How and ICRC: They Stand for Free Public Health and Humanitarian Law,” Lynn McClelland (Co-coordinator); Michele Huang (Co-coordinator and Speaker); Speakers: Amir Attaran, Alexander Capron, Anne Quintin, and Ismael Raboud. (Program sponsored by the FCIL-SIS under the new Annual Meeting programming rules.)

“PAC-Rim Legal Values: A Primer on Top Legal Resources from Non-English Speaking Jurisdictions,” Don Ford (Coordinator); Speakers: Robert R. Britt, Tom Kimbrough, Jootaek “Juice” Lee, Sergio Stone, and Roy L. Sturgeon.

SAN ANTONIO 2014

Many thanks to Education Committee Co-Chairs Teresa Miguel (FCIL-SIS Chair-Elect) and Dennis Sears (FCIL-SIS Chair, 2008-2009) for their efforts in promoting next year’s conference and working with program proposers. Their Google doc for conference proposals has indeed been a busy place!

FCIL SCHAFFER GRANT FOR FOREIGN LAW LIBRARIANS

Our Grant Search and Fundraising Committees do the heavy lifting of soliciting the applications and funds for the Grant, which is the FCIL-SIS’s outreach program to our globalizing profession. The Selection Committee then must do the complex and time-consuming work of vetting applications. The fundraisers diligently pursue contributions from AALL members and outside parties. And, none of this would be possible without the generosity of Ellen Schaffer.

We thank Ellen and the Selection and Fundraising Committee members for making all of this possible.

The 2013 Grant winner was Bård Sverre Tuseth, Academic Law Librarian at the University of Oslo Library in Norway. Bård provided a thorough overview of Norwegian law and legal resources during his FCIL-SIS Selectors’ Group presentation. We learned about general practices of Scandinavian, or “Nordic,” law in general, and Norwegian law in particular. Bård also gave a very helpful presentation to the FCIL-SIS Selectors’ Group on Norwegian legal resources.

OUR NEW VIRTUAL HOME

The FCIL-SIS website migrated to its new platform during 2012-2013. We are now part of the AALL community of SIS and Interest Group websites, with all of the advantages that such technical “unities” provide. The FCIL-SIS is all settled in, thanks to Teresa Miguel and Alison Shea, who moved every last item from the old website to the new one. A special thanks to Chris Siwa, AALL Director of Information Technology, and AALL headquarters for their unfailing support.

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generation; but it is interesting to note that they are applied by the courts. When disputes arise especially in matters related to inheritance, property, land, and divorce, the people will go before the customary courts, and in some instances the customs are used to interpret certain issues at the higher courts. The importance of customary law and tradition has been highlighted in several landmark decisions. For example, in Eshugbayi Eleko v Government of Nige-"r" which went before the Privy Council of the United Kingdom, judicial recognition was given to the customary practices of the Yorubas in the court’s interpretation of traditional values with respect to a native ruler who was removed from office. The tradition of the Yorubas was recognized even though the issue before the court was more of constitutional importance. And recently, in Edward Omorodion Uwaifo v Stanley Uyinmwen Uwaifo, which was heard before the Supreme Court of Nigeria, the court upheld its stand on the Bini customary law of progeniture – “Igiogbe”. It should be noted that these two cases did not originate from the customary courts which are the lowest in the hierarchy of courts in the Nigerian court system; instead it shows the relevance of customs and traditions. See also Oke Lanipekun Laoye v Amao Oyetunde (this case originated from the Native Court).

Muslim customary law is part of a religion which was introduced to the country. Shariah law is practiced in the northern part of Nigeria which is predominantly Muslim.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT
The scope of the digitization project is on the ethnic or non-Muslim customary law in South Western Nigeria. Customary law is used as a point of fact in family, land, and commercial transaction cases, especially in colonial and post-colonial times. In post-independence times, customary courts have been officially set up in different regions and states across the country.

Under the Nigerian legal system, customary courts are the lowest in the hierarchy of courts; despite this shortcoming most of the dealings at this level of court are oral and many important decisions have been lost due to a lack of documentation. Over the years numerous cases of interests have gone through many of these courts which portray the customs, tradition, and values of the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. Technological advancement through digitization will help with the documentation of this important and factual information.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT
The purpose of this project is to document customary court judgments in South Western Nigeria focusing on the following subject areas – property and inheritance rights, women’s rights in marriage especially in forced polygamous marriages, and children’s rights. The project will show the ways in which culture, tradition, and values are applied by this level of court. In a society where there is an abundance of information on traditional values, it is disheartening to know that a lot of information is still available only in print. Digitizing customary court judgments will hopefully create a permanent digital record for legal information in Nigeria.

The main objective of the project is to make these decisions perpetually available in digital format. In February 2013, I visited and participated at the seatings in two customary courts in Abeokuta, Ogun State in South Western Nigeria, where I recorded and reported the activities. These recordings will be transcribed, summarized, and made available online.

CUSTOMARY COURT SYSTEM
As shown in Figure 2, customary courts are the lowest courts in the hierarchy of courts in the Nigerian legal system. These courts adjudicate only civil actions. They are the most

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Figure 2: The Nigerian Court System
Experiences With Digitization, cont. from page 3

accessible to the common man in terms of costs and logistics. Usually the courts are located in residential neighbourhoods which means that people don’t have to travel long distances. Notwithstanding, this does not imply that they are not formal or well-structured; they actually have their own rules and officers who administer and control the activities at various sittings. Parties do not require legal representation; they can represent themselves and are able to relate their stories themselves - usually in the local dialect. The customary court system empowers and facilitates quick and fast access to justice. The courts are adjudicated by laypersons and the head of the court, who is called President and who sits and hears proceedings with three other lay persons. Appeals from this court go to the High Court and then to the Customary Court of Appeal.

CUSTOMARY COURTS – OPERATION
The operations of the customary courts are managed by the Judiciary in each state, as seen in the Ogun and Oyo states that I visited. As noted earlier, the courts are adjudicated by lay persons who are appointed by the Attorney General and Chief Judge of each state. In Ogun state, the government ensures that these lay persons are educated, highly knowledgeable in local customs and traditions, and very well-respected in their community.

The Registrar of Courts is responsible for monitoring and ensuring that court sittings take place. This office also organizes seminars and refresher sessions for members of these courts. Like other courts, customary courts have court clerks and other administrative staff who manage the day-to-day activities, including a bailiff who goes out to enforce court orders.

While I was on the field trip, the Oyo state government was restructuring the customary courts and was in the process of receiving applications from interested parties; appointments were made in July 2013.

CHALLENGES

Political climate/Reorganization and restructuring exercises in most states
Nigeria is a young democratic state with many teething problems; moreover many of the leaders are just introducing changes to the governance structure. This includes the judiciary, where a lot of reorganization is ongoing. For example, in Oyo state which is the second state I will be working on, the customary court activities have been suspended for a few months because the state government is reorganizing and reviewing the structure as well as making new appointments.

Funding
A project of this kind requires a lot of funding to assist with travelling from one city to the other. Research assistance will be needed to assist with interpreting some of the local dialects which may be new to the researcher (in some instances), so we will need to hire a couple of staff for the project. A computer programming software will be needed for the indexing and metadata of the final project when it is to be posted on the Internet in order to make it searchable.

Bureaucracy
Since the courts are subject to the control of government officials who in turn report to politicians there are a number of bureaucratic bottlenecks that will need to be handled such as permission for access and signing of copyright for online postings. But so far there has been great support from both the courts and the government officials.

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT
This project seeks to enrich and contribute to the access and availability of customary legal literature which is predominantly oral and unrecorded, yet highly relevant to legal research. As an information professional with expertise in Nigerian legal research, I often get reference enquiries for cases and legal issues related to customary law, but I’m unable to answer these questions as there

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are little or no resources available. Having digitized, electronic access to customary law decisions will enrich legal literature. The digitized cases will be of great use to legal historians, legal researchers, feminist scholars, and interdisciplinary scholars.

Having these judgments openly accessible will also give a broader understanding of the cultural values and traditions of this jurisdiction. Many of the cases that start from the lower court do not get to the higher courts and since they are unreported, nothing is heard about them.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION
While I was looking for funding, I learned a lot about granting agencies and their operations, something I would not ordinarily do. Researching about them also gave me an insight about the usefulness of my project, because as a librarian and information professional I tend to take for granted the amount of information I know and can find by myself which others cannot.

In Ogun State, I observed that there were no land disputes brought before the court, unlike in past years. The situation in Oyo State will be reported when the digests are available online.

I am hopeful that some of the administrators in Nigeria will show interest and provide funding and continuity for the project. Down the road, I hope to extend the digitization of cases to other levels of court in this jurisdiction, as law reports are mostly in print.

FURTHER READINGS


REFERENCES


2 1932 A.C. 622

3 Suit No. SC. 135/2004 (More can be found about this case in The Guardian newspapers)

4 The Bini people are from the South-South part of Nigeria, predominantly from Benin. See Figure 1, Benin is the capital of Edo State.

5 1944 A.C. 170

Chair, cont. from 2

MANY THANKS
I've had membership in various SISs over the years. All of them have active and enthusiastic members, and our FCIL-SIS is second to none. So, thank you to the FCIL-SIS members. You are unfailingly supportive of our SIS!

I personally would like to thank our current Past Chair, Heidi Kuehl, for her organized, prompt, and steady leadership. I am grateful for Heidi’s continuing advice and counsel during my own term as Chair. And, ídekuji and na shi danu to our outgoing Secretary-Treasurer (and my fellow Czech-American) Lucie Olejnikova, whose energy imbues everything she does. To our incoming Secretary/Treasurer (and my program’s Chinese law expert) Roy Sturgeon, I add xie xie for his dedication, enthusiasm, and artfulness (i.e., with the chairs we used at the Business Meeting).

Thank you to Vice Chair/Chair Elect Teresa Miguel for the Education Committee Report at the Seattle Business Meeting, and also for her publicity efforts on behalf of FCIL-SIS programs and the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians. Our Education Committee relies on the incredible institutional knowledge of Teresa’s Co-Chair Dennis Sears, whom I thank for his advice and support during my own term as Education Committee Co-Chair. Finally, a very special thanks to our immediate Past Chair Sergio Stone for his ready advice and counsel during the busy 2012-2013 year.

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Schaffer Grant Stories
Do you have a story about how you or your library have directly benefited from working with a Schaffer Grant winner?

Please send your notes to either Lucie Olejnikova or Teresa Miguel-Sterns for the next issue.
Report on IFLA 2013 in Singapore

Sally Holterhoff & Marisol Florén

Singapore, with its diverse blend of cultural traditions, provided an intriguing and hospitable setting for the 2013 IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) conference, held August 17-23. With 3,500 delegates from 120 countries in attendance and the theme of “Future Libraries: Infinite Possibilities,” the meeting featured a wide array of educational programs and many opportunities for networking. In the Opening Session, delegates were greeted by local dignitaries, inspired by the welcoming remarks of IFLA leaders, and entertained by music, colorfully-costumed dancers, and a ceremony with an LED dragon, all of which reflected Singapore’s unique tapestry of Chinese, Malay, Arab, Indian, and English influence. The exhibit hall included nearly 100 vendors and library-related organizations displaying their products and services, as well as a display area of more than 100 posters for Poster Session presentations.

LAW LIBRARIES SECTION PROGRAM

Open Access to Official and Authenticated Legal Information in Asia was the title of the main program sponsored by the Law Libraries Section, with two other sections as co-sponsors. Six speakers gave presentations about trends in the online provision of legal resources by governments of countries in the region, to a large audience of nearly 130 delegates. [Note: Program slots at IFLA conferences tend to be longer than those to which AALL annual meeting attendees are accustomed. This one was 195 minutes, so a 10-minute break in the middle was welcome.]

Uma Narayan (Chief Librarian, “Judges” Library, High Court of Judicature at Bombay) spoke about the Indian Initiative to Provide Free Access to Authentic Legal Information. She addressed projects undertaken by the courts and the government departments to provide free access to authentic legal information since 1990.

The National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy of 2012 will further improve the access to government information in open format. A National Legal Repository of India with links to all types of legal information may be available in the near future.

Irene Shieh (Lui Che Woo Law Library, University of Hong Kong) and John Bahrij (Lee Quo Wei Law Library, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and member of AALL and FCIL-SIS) spoke on the topic Hong Kong Moves Towards Open Access to Authenticated Legal Information. They highlighted the role that the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is playing in making legislation and decisions available online. They outlined the various sources where legislation and court judgments are available, the recent government initiative in moving towards digital authentication of official legal sources, and discussed the benefits and challenges of these digital initiatives. They pointed out that the Hong Kong Government Gazette, a print series, is still the official source required for very new or amendment legislation. The online versions found in various free and commercial sources are not authoritative or completely up-to-date.

Le Thi Hanh (The Library and Information Centre, Hanoi Law University) gave a presentation on Open Access to Official and Authenticated Legal Information in Vietnam. She reviewed the development, highlighted the achievements, and pointed out the challenges of open access to legal information in Vietnam. She recognized that the enactment of transparency laws and e-government information policies have been major factors in facilitating free and open access to legal information in Vietnam. The achievements are considerable but there are still many challenges, among which are upgrading the ICT infrastructure, and establishing a national legal information repository.

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Standing Committee (SC) Members, first meeting, Singapore.

Front Row (L to R): Radu Popa (New York University), Donna Scheeder (Library of Congress/IFLA President-Elect), Edita Bačić (Faculty of Law, University of Split, Croatia), Caroline Ilako (Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda), Margo Jeske (University of Ottawa, Canada).

Back Row (L to R): Lilia (Lily) F. Echiverri (University of the Philippines), Marisol Florén (Florida International University), Carole Hinchcliff (University of Melbourne, Australia), Sally Holterhoff (Valparaiso University), Sonia Poulin (Alberta Law Libraries, Edmonton, Canada), Claire Germain (University of Florida/Section Chair), Pascal Sanz (Bibliothèque nationale de France), & Robert Newlen (Law Library of Congress).
integrating different sources of legal information.

Carole L. Hinchcliff (Law Librarian, the University of Melbourne Law School, Australia, and member of AALL and FCIL-SIS) had prepared a presentation on the topic Researching Australian, New Zealand and Papua New Guinean Law. She was unable to attend the program due to a family emergency, so her presentation was delivered by Claudia Davies (Law Librarian at Legal Aid Queensland) and Megan Fitzgibbons (Faculty Liaison Coordinator for Law in Information Services at the University of Western Australia). The content focused on selected free online sources providing open access to legal information in Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea. ComLaw, the official Australian government site for Commonwealth or federal legislation, provides acts, regulations and legislative instruments. Since 2010, all new Commonwealth legislation on ComLaw is authoritative. Official or authorized versions of law are designated by a map of Australia with a big red checkmark. The High Court of Australia website contains very useful Judgment Summaries, released on the day of the judgment, which provide an effective overview of the often very lengthy judgments on the site. Special attention was given to the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII) and the Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PacLII) launched in 2001, offering all legislation as enacted, reported cases, and journal articles.

Charlotte Gill (Research Librarian, Law, Singapore Management University) spoke about free and fee-based online sources for Researching Singapore Law. SingaporeLaw.sg is a legal portal maintained by the Singapore Academy of Law. LawNet provides fee-based access to case law, legislation, and legal journals. Singapore Law Watch is a source for daily legal news, including links to court decisions. Singapore Statutes Online states that it is the “official government website for online publication of legislation.” [Note: However, it contains a legal disclaimer concerning accuracy of the contents.] The official “E-Gazette” is published daily and is available to the general public for viewing for 5 days. After that a subscription is required. Charlotte also mentioned legal research guides available on her library’s website.

Lilia (Lily) F. Echiverri (Law Librarian, College of Law Library, University of the Philippines) spoke about Open Access to Official and Authenticated Legal Information in the Philippines.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
Another program of particular interest from the law library perspective was “Government Libraries as Voices for Open Government” (sponsored by the Government Libraries Section, with the Law Libraries Section and Government Information and Official Publications Section). One segment of this program featured the “open government” work being done in developing countries through partnership with the already-existing network of public libraries, using them as resources in new and innovative ways. The project, Beyond Access, is one of many initiatives developed by IREX, a global organization based in the United States, and is backed by a number of organizations, with support from the Gates Foundation. Speakers who have been doing such pilot projects with libraries in Ukraine and in Romania gave excellent presentations. The last part of the program was devoted to break-out discussions with individual speakers, then re-convening to report to the entire audience, which led to some very productive discussions.

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MEETINGS OF STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE LAW LIBRARIES SECTION

As is customary, the Standing Committee (SC) of the Law Libraries Section held two meetings. During the first of these, held on Saturday before the official opening of the conference, Claire Germain was re-elected to a second two-year term as Chair of the Law Libraries Section. Various items of business were discussed and newly-elected SC members were introduced and welcomed. Sally Holterhoff and Marisol Florén presented the preliminary results of a working group project, “Report on Access to Digital Legal Information in South America.” This report covered the official gazettes of the ten countries of South America, focusing on the attributes of official status, open access, and authentication of these publications. The SC agreed that the report was very useful and the project should be continued, incorporating findings from other regions (Europe and Southeast Asia), which have been the focus of Section programs. Several other SC members volunteered to join the working group, which will now be known as the Working Group on Access to Official and Authenticated Legal Information. A suggestion was made to contact the Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section, to make their members aware of this project and perhaps enlist their cooperation.

At the second SC meeting, held on Tuesday, discussion centered on future programs and on projects to be undertaken during the coming year. Plans are underway for next year’s IFLA conference, which will be held in Lyon, France, Aug. 16-22, 2014, with the theme “Libraries, Citizens, Societies: Confluence for Knowledge.” The Law Libraries Section will propose a program with the tentative title of “Law Libraries at the Digital Crossroads: Innovative Solutions and Complex Challenges.” The program will highlight both opportunities and challenges libraries are facing as the resources they provide change from print to digital format. A “call for papers” will be posted, and from responses to that, at least some of the speakers for this program will be selected. An additional program proposal was suggested, possibly focusing on authentication of digital legal information by the governments of France and Brazil.

SOCIAL EVENTS

With a large and varied group of delegates from around the world attending the IFLA conference each year, social events are particularly valuable for providing informal networking opportunities. On Monday evening, members of the Law Libraries Section, parliamentary librarians, and local law librarians enjoyed a reception hosted by the Singapore Management University (SMU) and sponsored by LexisNexis. Gulcin Cribb (University Librarian) and Charlotte Gill (Research Librarian for Law at SMU) welcomed the guests. Claire Germain, Section Chair, thanked our hosts on behalf of the Section. Vivian Sia, Associate Director of Marketing for Southeast Asia, LexisNexis, provided short welcoming remarks as well.

In addition to this reception, on another evening the caucuses of various world regions held receptions, including the U.S. Caucus reception (organized at a local venue by the Chinese American Librarians Association). On Tuesday delegates enjoyed the traditional “cultural evening” that is part of each year’s IFLA conference but also unique to the host country. This year’s event took place at a private beach resort on Sentosa Island and featured Singaporean food and entertainment.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY NEWS

One headline event of the 2013 conference was the launch of the IFLA Trend Report, the result of a year-long consulta-
The Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) held its 43rd Annual Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from June 9 through June 14, 2013, at the Intercontinental San Juan Resort & Casino. The main theme of the conference, “Knowledge Territories, Exploring Commons Environments for Learning, Research, Creativity and Productivity in Caribbean Libraries, Archives and Museums” centered on the Commons philosophy and its application in the Caribbean.

During the opening speech, Cindy Jiménez-Vera, President of ACURIL, highlighted the importance of attending the annual meetings, acquiring new knowledge and understanding of recent trends and developments in the field, sharing experiences with other colleagues in the region, and interacting with providers of information services to learn about new products and services. Carol Koechlin and David Loerstscher, creators of the Virtual Learning Commons were the keynote speakers. Throughout the week Carol and David provided theoretical knowledge and hands-on practical experience concerning the different types of Commons environments: information Commons, learning Commons, research Commons, virtual Commons, iCommons, and iKnowledge Commons. Among other topics, Koechlin and Loerstscher covered the design and layout of physical Commons spaces and planning of on-site and virtual services; they also explored strategies for developing and implementing a strategic plan and integrating the Commons concept in training and professional development.

Librarians from different institutions shared their experiences, relating successes and challenges in regards to implementing Commons in the Caribbean; they discussed how we are moving from collection-centered units to empowering users, managing individual and collective knowledge, and creating physical or virtual shared learning spaces.

The law libraries section held two panel sessions during the conference. Representing different types of libraries (academic, law firm, and Supreme Court libraries), librarians from the United States and the Caribbean talked about the challenges law libraries are facing today. Paula Tejeda (Charleston School of Law, Charleston, South Carolina, United States) was the chair and moderator of the first panel. Maria Otero (University of Puerto Rico Law School, in Río Piedras), Miriam Michel (Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE), in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic), and Betsaida Vélez-Natal (McConnell Valdés Law Firm, in San Juan, Puerto Rico), engaged in a lively discussion on the impact of economic, social, and technological trends on services provided by law libraries, contrasting the demands and services provided to users in academic settings with the demands of clients at a law firm. Betsaida Vélez-Natal discussed major changes in law firm libraries in Puerto Rico, among which are: reduction in the number of library staff, reduction of the physical space allotted to the library, passing on to librarians of other non-library chores, decrease in paralegals, and decreasing budgets.

The second panel was led by Ivette Torres (Chief Librarian of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico) and Belka R. Villar (Judicial Documentation and Information Center (CENDIJD) in the Dominican Republic). Ivette and Belka focused on users and the resources and services available to them in Supreme Court libraries in the Caribbean. Aida Montero (Juan Bosch Library, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) moderated the panel with Marisol Florén (Foreign & International Law Librarian, Florida International University College of Law) providing additional commentaries on practices and trends in academic libraries in the United States and in the Dominican Republic.

These two programs were followed on Thursday, June 13, by a guided tour of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico’s Library.
the Capitol, seat of the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico, a lively explanation of the beautiful architecture of the building, and the history of the legislative assembly and the law making process. We had the opportunity to attend a live session of the House of Representatives. From the Capitol we walked to the building housing the library of the Office of Legislative Services (OSL), Biblioteca Legislativa Tomas Bonilla Feliciano, where Juan Carlos Ortega (Library Director) and Aida Sepúlveda introduced us to the collections and services offered to the Legislative Assembly, and responded to inquiries regarding the most frequent users and most frequently used resources. Of special note within the library is the room intended for the revision of the Civil Code which holds an extraordinary collection of civil codes from all over Latin America. The visit to the OSL Library ended with a delicious Puerto Rican afternoon meal. Later on in the evening, the group went to the library of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico where Ivette Torres (Head of the Library), Evelyn Ortiz and Luis Manuel Bonilla welcomed us, and walked us through an exhibit of the historical evolution of the building of the Supreme Court and the library. We ended the evening enjoying delicious Puerto Rican sweets!

The music, the food, and the kindness and joy of Puerto Ricans were main features of the conference, creating a friendly environment to learn and share knowledge among colleagues in the region.

Nomination News

The FCIL-SIS Nominations Committee for 2013-2014 will be co-chaired by Eugene Hsue (Temple University) and Jim Hart (University of Cincinnati). They are joined by Committee members Michele Huang, International Humanitarian Law Librarian at the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland. Former Nominations Committee Chair Jooaek “Juice” Lee ended his term as he assumed his new duties as Co-Chair of the ASIL International Legal Research Interest Group (ILRIG). Many thanks to Juice for his service and best of luck!

FCIL-SIS Member News

Roy Sturgeon recently had an op-ed about China published on the Fletcher Forum of World Affairs website. It’s freely available online.

He also wrote 13 signed entries for the just-published Biographical Dictionary of the People’s Republic of China edited by Dr. Yuwu Song (Library of Congress) and published by McFarland & Company. (Book details available online.) Each entry is concise, around 500-600 words each, and range from artists to athletes to dissidents to doctors to political leaders. (Sorry, no lawyers.) They were first written in 2007 and 2008, and updated last fall before the book went to press.

Congratulations, Roy!
Matchmaker, Matchmaker, Make Me a Match:
The Internships & Exchanges Committee

James W. Hart & David McFadden

Salut, mon amour. Yes, it could happen to you! You could find love in another library. Well, not exactly. We aren’t promising romance! You could find love with another library, however! Indeed, you might even learn something new! What better way to get hands on experience with foreign legal materials than in a foreign law library? As in any exchange or visit, this hopefully benefits everyone. Just observing and participating in how things are done and sharing information on how you do it in your library is highly beneficial. But which library? How do you find that one perfect library that is your destiny?

If your library has a long-standing or even new relationship with a foreign library, this is no problem. If you have faculty members and others who go off all over the world and bring along a spouse or partner who happens to be a librarian, this is no problem either. What about the rest of us? How do you find that one perfect library that is your destiny? You start with the FCIL Internships & Exchanges Committee, of course!

This matchmaking service does have some limits. It isn’t designed for the casual relationship. If you are just touring around and happen to end up in Budapest or Abu Dhabi and have a strange desire to visit a law library, you probably don’t need any help. It still might be a good idea to contact the library in advance so they aren’t too surprised, but the Committee really is designed to match up those staying on visits or exchanges of two weeks or more.

The first resource is the Clearinghouse for Internships & International Personnel Exchanges. (Some call it the Matchmaker for Internships & International Personnel Exchanges.) The Clearinghouse is a list of libraries that are willing to host a librarian. Although most of them are foreign, there is a section on United States libraries too. We wouldn’t want to leave out our foreign friends who are looking to come here for the same marvelous experience. The entries will tell you the address, phone number, email address, name of contact, length of time the library is willing to host, housing availability, collection concentration, what expertise would help the host library, whether the library has hosted in the past, and their web site address.

Of course you might be willing to be a host yourself. In this case you’ll want to fill out the Internships & Exchanges Committee’s Host Questionnaire. The result will go into the Clearinghouse, which tells individuals looking for an internship or exchange which places will suit that person’s needs best. In other words, it helps to attract those who will best fit your library’s situation. The kind of information the Questionnaire collects is the same as in the previous paragraph.

Just like those other matchmaking services, you might not know what to expect. You’ll find that in the Internships & Exchanges Committee’s Guidelines for Visits & Exchanges. These guidelines address the purpose of the visit, expectations of the visitor, expectations of the host library, resources, and references for further reading.

You’ll want to check out others’ experiences. You’ll find three testimonials on the Internships & Exchanges Committee’s website now:

Experiences of An American Law Librarian in Glasgow

A Month-long Exchange in Buenos Aires

Two Fortnights in Sheffield

Incidentally, if you’ve already taken an internship or exchange, but not submitted a testimonial, we’d love to include yours too. Just send it to David McFadden, the Chair of the Committee, at Southwestern Law School Library.

Lest we end by suggesting that, although internships and exchanges are primarily professional activities, if you have a dream of visiting some far away, if not exotic, location, an internship or exchange might not be a bad idea. And although the FCIL Internships & Exchanges Committee may not help you in the same way that some of those other matchmaking services do, it is the place to start your planning for an exciting change or visit.

Au revoir. A plus tard.
Italian Library Visits

Julienne Grant

This past May, I spent two weeks in Italy—one week in Rome, and another south of Rome (Naples, Pompeii, and the Amalfi Coast). Although my primary purpose for this trip was to study Italian (and eat!), I managed to find time to sightsee a bit and was able to visit several interesting libraries. I also had a private tour of the Camera dei deputati (Chamber of Deputies) in Rome, but I will leave that experience for another article.

Below are descriptions of the three Italian libraries I visited in May:

**BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE DI NAPOLI ("VITTORIO EMANUELE III")**

For those familiar with Naples, this beautiful library is located in the eastern wing of the Palazzo Reale (off the Piazza del Plebiscito). It is open to the public, and I had no problem entering with an ID, and was able to leave my belongings in a locker located at the library’s entrance. The library staff could not have been any nicer, and I recommend a visit if you’re in Naples.

The Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli is quantitatively one of the largest libraries in Italy. Its history is too complex to completely share here, but its beginnings trace back to the 18th century and the book collection of the Farnese family. The collection grew over the years as other Neapolitan library and book collections were added, and the library opened to the public in 1804 as the Reale Biblioteca di Napoli. The name changed in 1816 to the Reale Biblioteca Borbonica, and then finally the library became the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli (BNN) in 1860.

Originally housed in the Palazzo Reale di Capodimonte in Naples, and then later in the Palazzo degli Studi (now Naples’ Museo Archeologico Nazionale), the BNN was moved to the Palazzo Reale in 1922. Dedicated to King Vittorio Emanuele III (1869-1947), the BNN occupies space in the Palazzo that was utilized for entertain- ing in the 19th century. Thus, the library is a living monument to the decorative arts of 18th and 19th century Naples; its rooms are full of lovely frescoes and paintings by Neapolitan artists active in those centuries.

Amidst all of this splendor, however, is a working library. I visited late on a Tuesday afternoon, and the BNN was bustling with scholars and local university students. According to its website, the BNN houses 19,000 manuscripts, 4,563 incunabula, about 1.8 million printed volumes, over 8,300 periodicals, and 1,792 papyri (from Herculaneum). Along with the Herculaneum papyri, the BNN’s areas of emphasis are Neapolitan history and literature, and theater history.

**BIBLIOTECA DEL SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA ITALIANO ("GIOVANNI SPADOLINI" LIBRARY)**

The Italian Senate Library is situated off the Piazza della Minerva in downtown Rome, close to the Pantheon. I was able to enter and browse after I had applied for a library card, deposited an ID, and cleared security.

The Senate Library has been housed in this palatial space since 2003, along with the Biblioteca della Camera dei deputati (Chamber of Deputies Library). Named after Giovanni Spadolini, who was President of the Italian Senate (1987-1994), the Senate Library has three floors, with a passageway on the third floor to the Chamber of Deputies Library. The two legislative libraries have been integrated since 2007, and patrons may freely move between the two libraries and take advantage of services in both. The integrated library is known as the Polo Bibliotecario Parlamentare.

According to the Senate website, the Senate Library holds some 700,000 modern books and other printed items, 2,000 items from the 16th century, 8,000 maps, 80 incunabula, 850 manuscripts, and 2,000 autographed items. The Library’s areas of emphasis are law, political science, history of political thought, history of journalism, and Italian history. The Italian Senate website notes that the Library’s most remarkable holdings include: statutes of the Italian comuni (municipalities) from the late Middle Ages through the present; complete sets of legislation passed by the pre-unification independent states; publications relating to local and regional Italian history; and a significant body of early texts on civil and canon law.

The place was buzzing with activity when I was there on a Tuesday afternoon, and I was amazed at the number of foreign periodicals and newspapers that were available for perusal. According to the Italian Senate website,
the Library currently receives about 90 foreign and Italian newspapers and houses some 3,500 periodical titles (current and discontinued). It was fun to see so many U.S. newspapers, magazines, and journals on the shelves there.

One of the librarians gave me a DVD about the Senate Library that I enjoyed watching when I returned home. The 20-minute film (in Italian) shows the Library through the eyes of a young Italian researcher (Irene) and includes a number of interviews with patrons, including Leopoldo Elia (1925-2008), a former Senator, Deputy, and President of Italy’s Corte Costituzionale. The 2006 film also demonstrates how books are retrieved for patrons from the Library’s closed stack area.

BIBLIOTECA DELLA Camera DEI DEPUTATI
The Chamber of Deputies Library is connected to the Senate Library via a short passageway. According to the Chamber of Deputies’ website, the Library contains 1.3 million books, more than 2,000 current periodicals, and provides access to more than 100 databases. Its collection emphasizes law, history, economics, political science, and the history of political institutions.

The Library houses numerous reading rooms dedicated to specific topics. The ground floor contains a large hall housing parliamentary records, dating from 1848. On the second floor, there are three reading rooms—one focusing on international politics, another dedicated to works about the Italian Parliament and electoral studies, and a third focusing on pre-unification materials. The third floor also contains a number of reading rooms, including one that houses current Italian legal encyclopedias, treatises, and manuals, and provides access to various online legal databases. Also on the third floor is the Sala Galileo, which contains general works of history, and books about contemporary Italian history. The fifth floor has a reading room dedicated to foreign law.

I thoroughly enjoyed wandering through both of these truly impressive legislative libraries and would recommend a visit for anyone who comes to Rome. Also worth a visit is the nearby Libreria del Senato (Senate Bookstore) on Via della Maddalena. There, you can purchase materials related to the Italian Parliament, including a book on the Senate Library. (Note: There is also a great gelato place near the Bookstore!)

REFERENCES


Camera dei deputati: http://www.camera.it/leg17/1 (last visited October 10, 2013).


2013 Business Meeting Report

Lucie Olejnikova

2013-2014 ELECTION RESULTS
Lucie Olejnikova, Secretary/Treasurer, reported on the 2013-2014 election results. Elections were held from March 15, 2013 through April 5, 2013 online. The online election received a total of 109 votes. Teresa Miguel-Stearns from Yale School of Law Library was elected Vice Chair/Chair-Elect and Roy L. Sturgeon from Tulane University Law School Library was elected the Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations Teresa and Roy!

SECRETARY’S/TREASURER’S REPORT
Lucie Olejnikova reported that as of May 31, 2013 the FCIL-SIS budget had a balance of $23,741.19. As of May 31, 2013, the endowed corpus balance (restricted fund) of the FCIL-SIS Schaffer Grant is $43,000 and the excess balance is $13,350.00. Lucie thanked the membership for their continuous support and donations to this important legacy of international exchange and encouraged all to continue to do so as we collectively move toward making the FCIL-SIS Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians self-sustainable.

Education Committee Report

Don Ford & Dennis Sears

The Education Committee’s function for the Annual Meeting in Seattle differed substantially from previous years. The role of the Committee shifted from assisting those proposing programs, ranking the proposals, and submitting them, to simply assisting those proposing programs by reviewing the proposals and providing feedback. This change was a result of a report submitted by the Velvet Chainsaw Consultants to AALL. Beginning in 2012, Special Interest Sections would no longer sponsor programs; rather, the Annual Meeting Program Committee (AMPC) would select programs based on feedback from a general AALL membership survey.

Weeks before the Boston meeting, Don Ford, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect of the FCIL-SIS and Co-Chair of the Education Committee, along with fellow Co-Chair Dennis Sears, began sending regular reminders to the FCIL membership via the listserv, encouraging members to bring their ideas to the Education Committee meeting in Boston. Despite the initial perception that programming was going to be centrally dictated by the AMPC, FCIL members rose to the occasion, submitting a number of outstanding program proposals. Of these proposals, four were selected by the AMPC:

1. “Lifting the Veil: How to Effectively Research Foreign Customary Laws,” Hanibal Goitom (Coordinator and Speaker), Tariq Ahmad, and Kelly Buchanan.
2. “FCIL Librarian Core Competencies,” Neel Kant Agrawal (Co-coordinator), Michael G. Moore (Co-coordinator), Lyonette Louis-Jacques (Co-moderator), and Mary Rumsey (Co-moderator).
3. “WHO and ICRC: They Stand for Free Public Health and Humanitarian Law,” Lynn McClelland (Co-coordinator), Michele Huang (Co-coordinator and Speaker), Alexander Capron, Anne Quintin, and Ismael Raboud.
Julienne Grant opened the meeting at 7:45 a.m. on July 15. Fifteen people were in attendance, including two representatives from Susan Bach Books From Brazil (Daniel Levy and Sandra Soares). Attendees introduced themselves, and Jonathan Pratter from the University of Texas at Austin announced that the University is establishing the Kay Bailey Hutchison Center for Latin American Law.

Marisol Florén-Romero (Florida International University) gave a report on her attendance in June at the ACURIL conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. ACURIL is the Association of Caribbean University, Research, and Institutional Libraries. Since 2007, there has been a law libraries group within ACURIL that primarily focuses on the Spanish- and French-speaking Caribbean. Marisol said that this section organized two panel sessions during ACURIL. Academic, law firm, and supreme court librarians discussed the challenges that law libraries are facing in the Caribbean. This program was followed by visits to the Legislative Assembly, the Office of Legislative Services (OLS) and the Supreme Court Library of Puerto Rico. The law libraries group has a Google Group that is currently open only to members. The next ACURIL meeting will be held in June 2014 in The Bahamas.

Marisol also talked briefly about her article, “Mapping the Digital Legal Information of Mexico, Central America, the Spanish Speaking Caribbean and Haiti,” which was published in the most recent issue of the International Journal of Legal Information. She specified that Mexico is the leader in this geographic group in terms of open access, and that the findings of the research do not support a relationship between open access and development, citing El Salvador as an example.

Daniel Levy of Bach Books was next invited to address the attendees. He said that this is an important moment for Brazilian legal publishing, due to the country’s current political climate. He said the primary areas of publishing emphasis are in constitutional law, social law, comparative studies, social rights, and administrative issues. He also mentioned the importance of environmental law, water law, petroleum law, and investor-state relations (even though Brazil has not signed the Washington Convention).

Daniel continued his talk by providing some interesting statistics. He indicated that Brazil has about 1.4 million law practitioners and that some six million legal books were sold in 2012. Among the six million purchased books were 20,000 individual titles, with 40 percent of these being published in Sao Paulo. Daniel said that there are about 100 Brazilian legal publishers, and that the legal publishing market there is worth about 160 million dollars. Not much is currently available in English translation, but there is a movement to publish more Brazilian law and legal analysis in English. Daniel mentioned that arbitration is an area where there is currently information available in English. Attendees asked several questions, including whether there was a trend towards more reliance on case law in Brazilian jurisprudence, to which Daniel replied affirmatively.

After Daniel’s talk, the meeting addressed several agenda items. Attendees expressed an interest in having access to a list of vendors of Latin American legal materials. Teresa Miguel-Stearns volunteered to update a list she had created for SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials) in 2010. Sergio Stone volunteered to help Teresa and Julienne with a project they had started with Chilean law librarians. Attendees also talked about possible topics for AALL 2014 programs in San Antonio. Attendees agreed that a program on Mexican Law might be useful, and several people expressed an interest in assisting with this. One idea was to invite Stephen Zamora from the University of Houston to speak. Dan Donovan from the University of Houston said he is going to be Professor Zamora’s liaison and could approach Professor Zamora about this, if needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.
AALL Annual Meeting Committee & Interest Group Reports

Foreign Law Selectors IG Report

Dan Wade

About thirty participants attended the Foreign Law Selectors Interest Group meeting late Sunday afternoon at the AALL Annual Meeting. Bård Tuseth, the Head of the Library at the Department of Public and International Law at the University of Oslo and 2013 Schaffer Grant recipient, gave a short address on English language sources for Norwegian law. In sum, he says there aren’t many. He did point to a link for translated legislation, and an English translation of the Norwegian Constitution. There is very little case law translated into English. For a fuller description of Bård’s presentation, please see the FCIL-SIS website, as well his PowerPoint.

Next, there were reports from the two prominent public foreign and international law collections in the United States. Elizabeth Moore, who works in the Global Legal Resource Room at the Library of Congress reported on behalf of Kurt Caroll, Chief of the Law Library’s Collection Services Division. The library has a flat budget of $2.42 million for the third year in a row, and the budget for foreign monographs was flat this year. Kurt has freed up some money for foreign acquisitions by cracking down on getting United States copyright copies. A major goal is still the collection of foreign gazettes. The library is in the process of cutting some serial subscriptions. Asked about GLIN (the Global Legal Information Network), Elizabeth said, “nothing is happening.”

Neel Agrawal, Librarian, Global Law, reported on activities at the Law Library of Los Angeles County and provided an excellent handout with his remarks. The library still has a strong print orientation, including government gazettes. Its goal is to collect primary law from every jurisdiction in the world. Neel estimated that the library received 100 FCIL-related questions a month and encouraged those present to send him questions. The library has entered into a new agreement with LLMC to collect discarded foreign and international law materials, and LLMC will pay shipping. LLMC will then digitize the material when copyright on the material expires. Many in the audience were interested in the vendors the library uses, and Neel was asked to share a list of them with other foreign and international law librarians.

Marci Hoffman, Associate Librarian and International and Foreign Law Librarian at the Boalt Hall Law Library (Berkeley), then reported on developments with the Foreign Law Guide and the Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals (IFLP). Marci, the new editor of the Foreign Law Guide, asked for feedback on the new version of the Guide, available July 1st. Marci emphasized that the Index is still being modified. She also reported that the IFLP Committee met and selected titles to be indexed. Upcoming improvements include more frequent updates and foreign-language subject searching.

Finally, Marylin Raisch, Georgetown, and Gabriella Femina, U Penn, reported on the 2012-2013 meetings of the Northeast Foreign Law Librarians Cooperative Group (NEFLLCG). Marylin mentioned Victor Essien’s (Fordham) project to assess libraries’ holdings of African materials. Librarians may contact Victor for further information.

Unfortunately, there was not time for a Round Robin, but it is hoped that it may take place next year. For a fuller discussion of all of the reports, please see Mary Rumsey’s minutes on the FCIL-SIS website. A special thank you to Mary and all those who participated in and attended the meeting.

Members are encouraged between now and the meeting in San Antonio to review and update their collection profiles on the FCIL-SIS website or to create one if one does not yet exist.

Publicity Committee Report

Neel Agrawal

The FCIL-SIS Publicity Committee, Co-Chaired by Loren Turner (University of Florida, Lawton Chiles Legal Information Center) and Neel Agrawal (LA Law Library), has exciting plans for the year, including bringing back the FCIL Blog! Posts will highlight interesting reference questions and the latest developments in FCIL librarianship, such as new trends in publishing, cutting-edge services offered to patrons, teaching tips, and important events in the community. The Publicity Committee Co-Chairs, along with committee member Susan Gualtier (Louisiana State University), will administer and contribute to the blog, and are always seeking authors to share their perspective.

Additionally, the Committee will feature an FCIL librarian every month on the blog. In order to get to know more FCIL librarians, each month a different librarian will respond to questions about his/her background, work, and life. This will enable librarians to learn about the field from the unique experiences of FCIL librarians.
AALL Annual Meeting Committee & Interest Group Reports

Electronic Issues/Electronic Research IG Report

Marylin Raisch & Jennifer Allison

This year, the group had a shared meeting time with the African Law IG, the proceedings of which are reported separately on p. 18.

This year’s meeting, held on July 15, was an important transitional one for the group owing to a change in the chair and a significant name change, agreed upon by the consensus of the group. From now on, this will be known as the Electronic Research Interest Group.

The remaining agenda dealt with three equally important and timely topics:

1. Update to new platform for Foreign Law Guide.
2. Electronic translation tools, needs and resources.
3. Transfer of chair and review of mission

FOREIGN LAW GUIDE
Marci Hoffman reviewed recent changes to the look and feel of the Foreign Law Guide database. There will be additional editorial changes, and feedback is welcome. She is working with Brill and explained that the site was passed over to them as a set of static web pages.

ELECTRONIC TRANSLATION TOOLS
Next, there was general discussion of experiences attendee librarians have had with various translation tools. Among those mentioned were Slovnik, which performs word-by-word translation for the Czech language into German, French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Russian as well as English. Another tool, more like Google Translate (which many in the discussion said they used; all agreed it is not accurate or useful for large amounts of text), is Beolingus, which moves from German to English, Spanish, or Portuguese. Many asked what to do about non-Roman characters. This is a more difficult issue. EuroVoc is the European Union’s multilingual thesaurus, with an excellent tool for terminology suggestions that help find the nuanced legal or EU terms and not just a literal translation. It is worth noting for this newsletter that Donald Ford and Matthew Gran have written what will be a two-part series on machine translation in The Informer, the newsletter of the International Legal Research Interest Group of the American Society of International Law; for part I, see the Winter 2013 at page 2.

NEW NAME FOR THE IG, REFRESHED FOCUS
Finally, Marylin Raisch and incoming Chair Jennifer Allison reviewed a historical timeline of the group’s activities. This was done by reviewing the IG group reports in FCIL-SIS newsletters going back to when the group was created.

In light of the fact that the internet presence of the FCIL-SIS is now under the FCIL Publications/Public Relations Committee, they proposed that the group focus on the following activities:

1. Fostering an exchange of information about FCIL-related commercial databases and other electronic resources (availability, reviews of usefulness and ease of access, etc.), and
2. Supporting the undertaking and usage of FCIL-related digitization projects by anyone who wants to make or use FCIL materials available online for free.

In light of the fact that many members were uncertain of the group’s focus based on its title, they proposed, and the assembled attendees agreed by consensus, that the name of the group be changed to FCIL-SIS Electronic Research interest Group.

The balance of the meeting time this year was given over to a presentation for the FCIL-SIS African Law Interest Group, which is reported separately herein.

Submissions Wanted

FCIL Newsletter is looking for submissions for our next issue.

Photographs:
Do you have a photograph that sums up FCIL-SIS for you? It may be a picture of a favorite library, a group photo of valued colleagues, or something else entirely. Submit your FCIL-related photos and a brief explanation to share with the SIS.

Articles: conference reports, member news, etc.
Open call for authors

Questions? Contact Deborah Schander (dschander@gsu.edu).

Submission deadline: February 1, 2014.
African Law IG Report

Marylin Raisch

This meeting was held within the time scheduled for the Electronic Research IG on July 15, 2013.

The topic of the African Law Interest Group presentation this year was customary law for ethnic, non-Muslim groups in southwestern Nigeria. Yemisi Dina (Osgoode Hall Law School Library, York University, Toronto) presented on Digitization of Customary Court Decisions in South Western Nigeria.

Yemisi presented her first-hand knowledge of, and work with, a project to create records of proceedings of this court. The focus of the topic was Oyo State (Ibadan) and Ogun State (Abeokuta).

At the time that the project was beginning, there was nothing electronic on this area of law except the constitution. Legislation in place was that of the local law, influenced by English law, customary law, and in the north of Nigeria, Islamic law. Judicial precedent in fact plays a role, based on common law models.

Customary law operates in three main areas of law: marriage, inheritance, and landed property. Some citizens of the area preferred to go to the customary court for some matters, such as collecting rent, as it was more affordable. But the problem that arose was one of documentation. For example, a United States court dealing with Nigerian citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. would need documentation, and none exists for a customary law marriage or divorce.

The Nigerian Court System consists of a supreme court, which directly takes appeal from a court of appeal. There are four types of courts below that appellate level: high courts, by state; national industrial courts; a Shari’ah court of appeals; and a customary court of appeals. As to the latter, the judges and lawyers there are often not well-versed in customary law, or they call on lower court experts to assist. Customary courts have appeals up to magistrates’ courts and from there to the state high court.

In customary courts, only civil actions are heard. There is a president and three other lay persons. One can represent oneself; in fact, the presence of lawyers is not favored there. Law schools in Nigeria don’t emphasize customary law so there is an absence of training to represent clients. A woman may be president or one of the judges. The only official records are written in ledgers with party names and file numbers listed. Languages used are the local dialects such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, etc.

The court has its own procedure codes, at least in post-colonial times. Ms. Dina found that Ogun State was well-organized and the judges well-respected, but there are informal elements, such as a culture of shame over debts, family matters that are aired, and the like. Her presence there was allowed; she is having the investigators and team trained to record the proceedings and create a summary. They require dialect assistants, and she may ask law students to donate their time. Their aim is to have a website and a blog.

This fascinating project was most informative and there were many questions; the report above is filled with answers to many of them. This was a rewarding and fascinating follow-up to the excellent program earlier in the meeting on Customary Foreign Law moderated by Library of Congress Legal Specialist Hanibal Goitam.

Asian Law IG Report

Evelyn Ma

The Asian Law Interest Group met on Sunday, July 14th at the Seattle Sheraton - Capital Room at 7:15 a.m. Despite the early time slot, it was well attended with fourteen librarians showing up bright and early.

The meeting was kicked off by Evelyn Ma with a summary highlighting a few selected new Asia-related law journals published last year. They include Chinese Journal of Comparative Law from Oxford University Press, Trans-Regional and National Studies of Southeast Asia by Cambridge University Press, Renmin Chinese Law Review published by Elgar, China-EU Law Journal published by Springer, and Korean Journal of International and Comparative Law published by Brill. Also presented was a selection of open-access websites with Asian law-related secondary sources covered in the EastLib listserv, including Open Access Theses & Dissertation (OATD), which contains a global collection of ETD literature.

The rest of the meeting focused largely on the logistical planning to establish a spreadsheet of Asia-related journals indexed in the Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals, and to document print holdings of participant libraries and sources for online access. The following volunteers will be participating in the project: Rob Britt from the University of Washington, Sherry Xin Chen from Boston College, Catherine Deane from Vanderbilt University, Dan Donohue from the University of Houston, Eugene Hsue from Temple University, Jootaek Lee from North-
Teaching FCIL IG Report

Alison Shea

The Teaching FCIL Interest Group had a very successful meeting in Seattle. After soliciting volunteers from the FCIL listserv, we presented a session entitled “Innovations in Teaching FCIL” which featured short reports from Kristina Alayan, Thomas French, Susan Gualtier, Hilary Hardcastle, Marylin Raisch, and Deborah Schander on innovative new ideas they have employed in their FCIL teaching over the past year. For those who were unable to attend, handouts from each of the participants detailing their innovations are available on the Teaching FCIL website.

At the meeting we also heard from Karina Condra, University of Denver, who is interested in creating a repository of international/comparative law tutorials for use in FCIL classes. If you are interested in working on this project, please email Karina directly. Kristina Alayan of Duke also reported on her efforts to update/overhaul the wonderful International Legal Research Tutorial authored by Marci Hoffmann of Berkeley and Katherine Topulos, formerly of Duke. If you have any suggestions on ways this guide can be improved, Kristina would love to hear from you.

The FCIL Syllabi and Course Materials database was successfully transferred to the new AALL CMS platform during the year, and after a number of issues should be functional at this time! If you encounter any problems, please email me. Many thanks to all the contributors who donated their material to this wonderful resource! For those who would like to share or update their material, please send it to me for posting. Also, if you have any suggestions for material that you would like to see included but isn’t yet available, please let me know and I will adjust my annual call for contributions to reflect this need.

Going forward, if you are interested in working on projects related to Teaching FCIL topics please contact me (ahashea@law.fordham.edu) with your ideas!

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Asian Law, cont. from page 18

eastern University, Wei Luo from Washington University, Keiko Okuhara from University of Hawaii, Sergio Stone from Stanford University, and Alex (Xiaomeng) Zhang from University of Michigan. Once the format of the spreadsheet is formalized, I will enlist support from libraries that are members of the Northeast Foreign Law Librarians Cooperative Group (NEFLLCG) to add their print holdings. Thank you all for your input and support in getting this project rolling. The completed spreadsheet will be uploaded to the FCIL-SIS website. Hopefully it will be a useful tool for bibliographical verification and collection development for the FCIL community and others with an interest in these areas.

Moving forward, the next phase will be to develop a spreadsheet documenting the print holdings and online availability of selective primary sources of Asian countries included in the Bluebook. Our collaborative experience in the IFLP serials project should help us to realize this goal at the next meeting in San Antonio.

Internships & Exchanges Comm.

David McFadden

The FCIL Internships and International Exchanges Committee met on 14 July in Seattle. David McFadden (chair), Don Ford, Jim Hart, and R. Martin Witt attended.

Sally Holterhoff distributed the committee’s survey and handout at the IFLA meeting last August. (She’ll do it again in 2013.) The committee’s webpage was updated as a result of the FCIL webpage changes. There are some changes needed, including adding new content and revising the main Internships and International Exchanges page text. There were no known requests this year.

Marty Witt reported that he has contacted libraries in Asia and is continuing to work on this. He thought that some of the libraries were going to directly contact the chair but apparently they didn’t. Jim Hart has agreed to continue with possible libraries in Moscow. Paul Moorman, who was not in attendance, will be contacted about updating the US libraries since they have dropped to three.

Different ways of publicizing and promoting the committee’s work were discussed:
• John Hart agreed to write an article for the FCIL Newsletter. Various listservs were discussed as places to promote the survey and list. In addition to FCIL, Intlaw, IALL, BIALL, Australian lists, and IFLA, Don Ford and Marty Witt agreed to post on some lists that they use, including one for Germany and WESS.
• Marty Witt agreed to look into using Facebook, Twitter, and other social media.

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The two Committees’ meeting was scheduled for July 13, 2013 from 7:15 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. All attendees unanimously agreed that 7:15 a.m. – although an improvement from past years – is a tough time-slot, and will try to meet at an alternative time in the future. Lucie reported on the fundraising committee efforts and Gabriela and Kristina reported on the selection committee efforts. The FCIL Chair, Don Ford, was in attendance along with number of other FCIL members.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE
Lucie Olejnikova

Lucie briefly reported on the work of the fundraising committee during the 2012-2013 year, and invited anyone who is interested to join the effort. Jennifer Alison and Sarah Ryan expressed their interest and joined the fundraising committee. Lucie Olejnikova agreed to continue as the Chair. Laura Cadra, a former member of the committee, expressed an interest to re-join. Attendees discussed the grant, its financial standing, and the disbursement process. Attendees also shared ideas on how to reach potential donors outside of the FCIL membership, how to collaborate with foreign institutions to assist future recipients, how to get US institutions involved in assistance with the logistics of the exchange, and how to identify and utilize non-monetary means of assistance.

The committee also discussed the challenges it faced this year in the effort to better the process. With each year recipient’s experience, the committee has an opportunity to adopt any modifications to improve the grant and its disbursement. The Committee agreed to leave the grant amount as is (minimum of $2,000 to assist with accommodation and travel costs) subject to the Executive Board discretionary decision to increase the grant as needed, as provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding, sec. 5(c).

During the 2012-2013 year, a two-member committee, Amy Emerson and Lucie Olejnikova, focused on advertising the grant and its legacy within the FCIL circle and beyond. The committee encouraged membership beyond the FCIL to financially support the grant. The committee updated the What Past Recipients Have to Say document. Further, the committee produced the 2013 brochure advertising the grant and this year’s recipient, Bård Sverre Tuseth, and his presentation. The brochure was distributed at various AALL events. Maroon ribbons reading “FCIL Schaffer Grant Donor” were available again this year to acknowledge all past supporters and their dedication to this cause. Thank you everyone for your continuous support! Contributions can be made here.

SELECTION COMMITTEE
Kristina Alayan

I am happy to report on behalf of the 2012-2013 Selection Committee, which was composed of Gabriela Femenia, Sherry Leysen, and me. We were quite impressed with this year’s recipient: Bård Tuseth. He is an Academic Law Librarian at the University of Oslo Library in Norway, where he serves as the head of the library at the Department of Public and International Law. He earned his law degree from the University of Oslo, and currently serves on the Board of the International Association of Law Libraries. Mr. Tuseth has published extensively, and his presentation on Nordic Legal Cooperation drew on some of these materials. He provided an extensive legal history, the basis and types of legislative cooperation, as well as their impact on legal research. More information about Bård, including a link to his presentation PowerPoint are available on the FCIL-SIS website. A podcast will be forthcoming.

Bård was enthusiastic, confident, and he very capably managed the various obligations of the recipient. He shared his expertise at the scheduled program (Nordic Legal Cooperation and Researching Nordic Law), which was well attended. The Selection Committee arrived 15-20 minutes before his scheduled presentation to help with technology and troubleshooting, only to find that Bård had already set everything up himself! There were many thoughtful questions from audience members, which he ably fielded.

In addition, at Dan Wade’s request, Bård provided a short presentation at the Foreign Selectors Interest Group Meeting on English sources of Norwegian Law. His insight was not only valuable, but also presents some new opportunities for recipients to contribute more formally at the conference beyond the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians presentation. We were delighted that Bård was willing to take on this additional obligation.

We were pleased to receive applications from all over the world (including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Hungary, India, Nigeria, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Spain, and Zimbabwe), and we hope to encourage even greater participation for the upcoming selection cycle. We will be moving the application deadline earlier, which will allow for more opportunity to solicit applications, and may provide some additional buffer for planning once the recipient has been
Bård Tuseth: Schaffer Grant Recipient

Bård Tuseth

I would like to show my appreciation for the generosity of Ellen Schaffer for initiating the Schaffer Grant, and all those who have contributed to it. I must also thank the Schaffer Grant Committee, Gabriela Femenia, Kristina Alayan and Sherry Leysen, for selecting me as this year’s recipient, and for all their work in making my participation in Seattle possible.

During a visit to the exhibition hall in the Washington State Conference Center, someone asked me, rather bluntly I thought, why a European like myself would attend a conference meant for US law librarians. Even though I didn’t find it a particularly difficult question to answer, I thought it made an interesting starting point for reflection on library conferences and their importance for professional development in law libraries.

The first part of my answer dealt with the practical possibility of attending the conference. Since I was lucky enough to be awarded the Schaffer Grant, I had the opportunity to attend the AALL Annual Meeting that would otherwise not have been possible.

The second part dealt with the relevance of an American library conference for someone from another part of the world. The first point I made was that since the AALL Annual Meeting is easily the biggest law library conference in the world, it offers unparalleled opportunities for learning from colleagues and networking. My second point was that the AALL Annual Meeting covers a wide range of topics relevant to law libraries and law librarianship. Attendees are spoiled with choices and can always find sessions that are relevant to their interests, or address a particular challenge they are facing in their library. Thirdly, I pointed out that many US law libraries are among the best in the world, and the topics addressed at the conference represent the “state of the art” in law librarianship.

My fourth point was that the AALL Annual Meeting provides a unique opportunity to interact with vendors and get an overview of what is available electronically and in print.

As a total package the AALL Annual Meeting is unmatched for professional development, sharing new ideas and improving law libraries. Not only do I consider myself very fortunate for having had the opportunity to attend, but my law library will also benefit from the many new ideas that I brought with me from Seattle.

One of the honors bestowed upon the recipient of the Schaffer Grant is the opportunity to present a topic at the conference. While I was preparing my presentation on Nordic legal cooperation and researching Nordic law, I discussed the topic with a handful of faculty members here in Oslo. All of them agreed that the subject was interesting, but a couple asked me why I had chosen such a difficult topic. As I was researching the presentation I came to partially share their initial assessment. Even though Nordic legal cooperation is very interesting as a legal and historical phenomenon, and it highlights many traits of the Nordic legal systems, its impact on legal research is not as substantial or tangible as I expected when I came up with the title. Nevertheless, I learned a lot while preparing the talk and hopefully it proved interesting to those in attendance as well.

In addition to my grant presentation, I was invited to hold a brief presentation on English sources on Norwegian law for the Foreign Law Selectors Interest Group. This was much less of a challenge as there really aren’t many English language sources to point out, but hopefully I was able to provide an overview that may be helpful for researching Norwegian legal questions. The topic also provided a reminder of the need to facilitate access to national legal sources for those who may not have detailed knowledge of the jurisdiction, or do not know the language. Since Norway is such a small jurisdiction with only a handful of law libraries, this effort is something we will need to follow up on at the University of Oslo Law Library.

Attending AALL in Seattle was a great experience for me, and I will do my utmost to attend future AALL conferences. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Schaffer Grant for making my attendance possible, and to all the attendees I met who made the conference so memorable.

Grant Reports, cont. from p. 20

selected, as well as giving the Committee more time to work with a new recipient if the original winner is unable to accept. We will be reaching out to more organizations (e.g., general library associations abroad), and Don Ford will be working with AALL on an institutional level to determine how we might be able to build in more flexibility with the distribution of the funds themselves.

Working on the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians is one of the most rewarding activities in which the current members have been fortunate enough to participate as AALL members. We want to thank everyone for their donations, and making our recipients always feel so welcome.
New Member Profile: Catherine Deane

Mary Ramsey

Catherine Deane (“Deane”) has been consciously preparing for her job as Vanderbilt’s first FCIL librarian for several years, and unconsciously for several years before that.

After majoring in Anthropology and Latin American Studies at Princeton University, Deane acquired a JD and an MA in Anthropology by going to school year-round for three years. Deane adds, “[w]e had a wonderful study abroad program that I participated in, spending two summers studying contemporary culture in Dublin and Belfast, and studying foreign and international law in Dublin and Belgium. I then spent another Fall Semester in London Studying British and EU Law and contemporary culture. I successfully completed the Certificate Program in Foreign, Comparative & International Law under the tutelage of Transnational Law Professor Larry Catá Backer.”

As if this schooling weren’t enough, Deane was inspired by learning about FCIL librarianship, so she next acquired an MLIS with her sights set firmly on foreign and international work. UC-Hastings’ FCIL Librarian, Vincent Moy er, took her under his wing; she worked as his assistant for almost two years. In addition to answering reference questions, Deane also updated FCIL research guides, and even co-taught with Vince. Together, they created a GlobaLex guide to Trinidad & Tobago, where Deane was born.

Deane studied both French and Spanish as a child in Trinidad, dabbled in Portuguese in college, and achieved fluency in Spanish while writing papers at Princeton and speaking to Mayan villagers while in Mexico conducting fieldwork for her Senior Thesis in 1997. She recently revived her Spanish by taking a short course, and hopes to continue focusing on mastery of these Romance Languages.

Like most FCIL librarians, Deane has many and varied responsibilities: “I am a faculty liaison for several faculty members, most of whom write in the area of foreign and International law, and I am a consultant for other law librarians when they get non-U.S. law questions from patrons. We work as a team and with a small staff. I have a variety of responsibilities, depending on who is out on vacation that week, including: teaching US legal research, creating LibGuides, providing research to faculty, guest-lecturing on foreign and international law in the Advanced Legal Research course, training the Board of Editors of the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law, evaluating and selecting materials for the foreign and international law collection, and teaching a 7-week 1 credit pass/fail course in Transnational Legal Research.” Whew!

Among all these responsibilities, Deane says that teaching is her favorite: “My very favorite part of my job is teaching, and the extensive self-directed learning in the areas of substantive transnational law and legal theory, research strategies and sources, and legal instruction andragogy, that necessarily accompanies that endeavor. Of course, I always love a challenging long term research task that provides me the opportunity to manipulate databases (like Claudia from the TV show *Warehouse 13*) and to pour over dusty print books from the Annex (not unlike Artie also from *Warehouse 13*), especially if the task also pushes the limits of my foreign language and citation interpretation skills.”

Given Deane’s passion for her work, you might expect that she has no outside interests. But her hobbies range from reading, and caring for her two canine companions, to practicing Applied Eskrima, a Filipino knife and stick fighting martial art descended from the fighting technique that was used to slay the Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521. “I live to conquer my fears and my enemies,” says Deane. We can expect to hear more from this talented new FCIL-SIS member.

Internships, cont.

- Don Ford will contact a Japanese librarian he knows about a testimonial.
- There will be monthly solicitations on the FCIL listserv and Intlaw in the coming year. Some will be directed internally for committee work, getting surveys out, etc., and others will be directed externally to promote the survey results to potential interns and visitors.
- Once the website is updated, David McFadden will attempt to get links from IALL and IFLA and Don Ford will try to get a link from ASIL.
- David McFadden will try to revive and update the resources page that links from our website to other websites including IALL and NELLCO.

David McFadden has agreed to continue as chair for 2013/2014, but Marty Witt agreed to take over in 2014.
New Member Profile: Daniel G. Donahue

Mary Rumsey

Daniel G. Donahue is the most recent star in the University of Houston O’Quinn Law Library’s firmament of distinguished FCIL librarians. Born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Dan grew up in Fairfax, Virginia. Like many librarians, he had an interesting path to law librarianship. Earlier jobs included working as a ghostwriter at Peking University in Beijing, China. Dan also practiced law in Washington, D.C. (with an interest in international trade and documentary credit transactions) while attending library school classes in the evenings.

Like most FCIL librarians, Dan is learning on the job—from colleagues, from experience, and with a plan he and his supervisor designed for training and learning on his own. Dan says, “[m]y responsibilities include providing research assistance to faculty members and law students, and reference services to all patrons of the library, presenting educational and training sessions for law students along with the rest of the library staff, and creating and maintaining legal research guides. I am the library liaison to the Houston Journal of International Law and to some specific faculty members, particularly those with an interest in FCIL.”

Asked about his favorite aspects of the job, Dan responds, “[l]earning something completely unexpected as a result of helping someone with their research is always fun. I’m also lucky enough to be able to work with some very knowledgeable, professional, and personable coworkers.” On the negative side, Dan says, “[n]ow that I’m beginning to develop that whole “pride in maintaining the library collection” thing they talked about in library school, it can be painful to see patrons sneak food into the library and eat while looking at rare books. The guy with the spaghetti sauce was the worst offender, but fortunately we noticed him and asked him to eat outside before any tragedies occurred.”

Policing food sneaks aside, for Dan the most difficult part of FCIL research is “finding foreign materials in a language I can’t read— that can be a challenge.” Fortunately, he has a bit of experience with Portuguese and Mandarin Chinese.

Dan is currently working on revising and updating the library’s research guides on international law. His hobbies include reading (as with all good librarians) and hiking. Dan traveled to Seattle for the 2013 AALL Meeting and scored the “newest FCIL member” prize at the FCIL-SIS business meeting. Welcome, Dan!

IFLA, from p. 8

tion with experts and stakeholders from disciplines outside of the library sphere. The full report (which unfortunately seems to be available only to members of IFLA) is presented as a set of online resources that library and information professionals can use to do some “big picture” thinking about how five high-level trends in society will affect the global information landscape of the future.

Those trends are:

1. New technologies will both expand and limit who has access to information.
2. Online education will democratize and disrupt global learning.
3. The boundaries of privacy and data protection will be redefined.
4. Hyper-connected societies will listen to and empower new voices and groups.
5. The global information economy will be transformed by new technologies.

Another session reported on a milestone treaty, the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled. This is the result of the June 2013 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) meeting in Morocco. It will put accessibility provisions in place for 285 million print-disabled people around the world. AALL had previously joined IFLA and several dozen other organizations as signatories to a statement in support of the treaty. In Singapore, IFLA delegates were urged to lobby their nations to adopt this treaty, which will go into effect three months after being ratified by twenty countries.

Also announced in Singapore was the launch of the IFLA Library repository. It is designed to collect IFLA conference papers and other publications, to make them easy to locate and access, and to preserve them. Over 160 papers are already available.