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IALL Professional Development Scholarship Report

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IALL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

HARVINDER KAUR*

INTRODUCTION

I am one of the three privileged persons awarded a 2005 *IALL* scholarship to attend the Association's annual conference. The grant of US \$1,500 assisted me in many aspects, which are highlighted in this report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Before writing my experiences and thoughts about the conference I first wish to thank the IALL board members for granting me the opportunity to attend the 2005 IALL annual conference and for providing me with a one-year membership in IALL. The IALL had worked hard in making many librarians' dreams come true by enabling them to attend the IALL international conference.

It was a great opportunity for me to meet the 2005 IALL dedicated board members in person. The whole conference has given me a lot of benefits in terms of financial assistance, enhancing my knowledge of the profession, namely law librarianship, knowing more about other countries' legal systems, enhancing my interpersonal and communication skills through social events and experiencing the Italian culture.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference was held at the European University Institute Badia Fiesolana, San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy. The theme of 2005 IALL conference was, *The European Union in the 21st Century: New Challenges in Law and Legal Information*.

Participants from around the world attended the conference. They came from the US, UK, France, Norway, Moscow, Africa, Australia and New

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Zealand. There was a wide range of speakers, many of whom were not from the traditional library profession, but from educational, legal and information technology fields. The papers delivered at the conference were thought provoking, unique and gave useful insight into the constitutional history and developments of the European Union (EU), Italian legal system and information, as well as EU copyright law for libraries. The presenters were knowledgeable in their field.

The following papers were presented at the conference. There were four main themes:

- i. Constitutional Developments in the EU*
 - The EU's constitutionalizing efforts from a comparative federalism perspective.
 - The Court and EU Constitutional Law.
 - A Keynote Speech: Constitutional Developments in the EU: the Past and the Future.
- ii. EU Copyright Directive*
 - The EU Copyright Directive as compared to US Copyright Law and its Implications for Libraries.
 - Implementation of the EU Copyright Directive: Lobbying in France.
 - Discussion of EU Copyright Law.
- iii. Italian Legal Information Sources*
 - Introduction to the Italian Legal System.
 - Legal Information on the Web: the case of Italy.
 - The "Norme in Rete"- project: Standards and Tools for Italian Legislation.
 - Open Access in Italy: Achievements and Future Prospects.
- iv. Ius Commune*
 - The Continued Resonance and Challenge of the 'Ius Commune' in Modern European Contract Law.
 - European Administrative Law: towards a Ius Commune in the Sphere of Public Law?
 - Harmonizing European Private International Law: a Replay of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps?

The presentation which caught my interest was delivered by Prof. Giuliano Amato, *Constitutional Developments in the EU: the Past and the Future*. To me, Prof. Giuliano Amato was the most outstanding presenter. He caught everyone's attention with his in-depth knowledge of the European Union Constitution. His presentation started with the early development of the European Union Constitution, its evolution and the developments to date.

Other papers which were of interest included a paper on the Italian legal system, Italian legal information on the web and open access in Italy. Marinella Baschiera's presentation dealt with the legislative, administrative, and judicial functions of the Italian legal system. Ginevra Peruginelli spoke about the Italian legal information on the web, the problem of accessing Italian legal literature, and the design and implementation of effective legal information services. Paola Gargiulo highlighted open access initiatives in Italy and in-depth presentation about PLEIADI (Portal for the Italian Electronic Scholarly Literature in Institutional Archives). Overall the conference papers were well delivered and very informative.

EXPERIENCES & BENEFITS

First and foremost the conference was held in Florence, Italy, a beautiful and historic city. Italy reminded me of my first profession as a history teacher. I taught my students about the Renaissance. Being in Italy gave me a chance to see all that I had previously taught. Flying into Rome was an exciting and exhilarating experience.

On my current professional level, this conference has given me an opportunity to meet law librarians from all over the world and share experiences and thoughts about our profession and the legal system within which various libraries function. The whole conference was certainly eye-opening, as this was the first ever international conference I have attended. I learned that within law librarianship itself there are specialist librarians, namely the international law librarian. The designation of such librarians is common in the US, Canada and UK academic libraries.

EXCURSION & SOCIAL EVENTS

Besides intellectual and academic events, social events were also incorporated in the conference programme. Visits to Casalini booksellers in San Domenico, an excursion to Siena, visit to Machiavelli's house and the conference's annual dinner at Villa Viviani in the hills of Settignano were unforgettable events. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Local

Planning Committee, Machteld Nijsten, Jose Mounthaan, Tommaso Giordano and Veerle Deckmyn from the EUI who facilitated my experience the best of Italy and for their hospitality. Participants got to taste the local Chianti wine and taste Italian pastries and food as well as experience scenic and enchanting Tuscany throughout the conference.

The lunch and tea breaks gave me the opportunity to mingle with participants from other countries and to exchange knowledge and experiences of our profession. I also had the chance to meet legal publishers' representatives from Westlaw International, LexisNexis Butterworths, Casalini Libri and Mr. William S. Hien himself, the titular head of the publishing house of William S. Hein & Co., Inc. Rounding out the conference programs were visits to the Biblioteca degli Uffizi and the Biblioteca Nazionale.

CONCLUSION

With the increasing economic and political relationship among countries all over the world it is very crucial for a law librarian to gain more knowledge of international law and legal aspects of other countries. I look at this conference as one way to increase this knowledge and gain a good understanding of the development of the law of other countries through papers presented, as well as associating with the other participants. Besides, I learned a lot about various other cultures and learned to network. I made many new friends throughout the conference. This conference has motivated me to enhance my professional outlook and heighten my enthusiasm to achieve excellence in advancing my professional career in this field. I have also taken this experience as a stepping-stone to venture beyond my environment and reach out for more valuable opportunities and gain experiences as well as knowledge of my profession. This will enable me to contribute to my country, institution, and library association.