


10-1980

# The Librarian Fellowship Program at the Max-Planck-Institute for Foreign and International Private Law in Hamburg, West Germany

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## Recommended Citation

Germain, Claire M., "The Librarian Fellowship Program at the Max-Planck-Institute for Foreign and International Private Law in Hamburg, West Germany" (1980). *Cornell Law Faculty Publications*. Paper 1056.  
<http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/facpub/1056>

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THE LIBRARIAN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AT THE  
MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN AND  
INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE LAW IN HAMBURG,  
WEST GERMANY

A Visiting Foreign Law Librarian program has been established at the Max-Planck-Institute in Hamburg, West Germany, at the initiative of its Library Director, Dr. Ralph Lansky. This program allows law librarians from different countries to spend a few months at the Institute. Mr. Adolf Sprudz of the University of Chicago came in 1979, and I was invited to spend May and June 1980 in Hamburg. The Director of the Library hopes to attract librarians from other countries in the future, especially from developing countries.

The Hamburg Max-Planck-Institute is one of the 5 law-oriented research centers sponsored by the Max-Planck foundation. The Library is naturally a vital part of the Institute and lawyers come from all over the world to use its facilities. During my stay, lawyers and scholars from numerous countries including Australia, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Poland, Switzerland and the United States were using the Library, in addition to the regular full-time staff of lawyers and their assistants.

The Library has a splendid collection, mainly in the area of foreign and comparative private law, law of procedure, private international law and the unification of private law. The Library has over 200,000 volumes. Approximately 7,000 volumes are added annually. The Library receives more than 1,700 periodicals.

A pamphlet giving information and regulations for visitors of the Library is available in German and English from the Director of the Library (Mittelweg 187, D-2000 Hamburg 13). This brochure also contains an up-to-date selected bibliography on publications of and about the Institute and the Library.

The Visiting Foreign Law Librarian is expected to help with the classification of law books according to the Library's systematic classification scheme as well as assist in collection development. Perhaps more important is the general exchange of information and ideas on the organization of libraries and the library profession in West Germany and abroad. The Visiting Foreign Law Librarian, who receives a fellowship from the Institute, works in the Library an average of 4 hours a day and the rest of the time is devoted to personal research.

During my stay, I had the opportunity to meet German colleagues at the annual meeting of the German Association of Law Librarians (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Juristisches Bibliotheks- und Dokumentationswesen*) in Wuppertal. I received invitations and visited the libraries of the Max-Planck-Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg (Director, Dr. Steiner, Deputy Director, Dr. Schwietzke), the libraries of the *Bundesgerichtshof* (Supreme Court.

Director, Dr. Kirchner, Deputy Director, Mr. Pannier) and of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* (Constitutional Court. Director, Dr. Mackert, Deputy Director, Mr. Schneider).

These two months left me with a very positive impression. I admired the collection and the pleasant work conditions which were enhanced by the location of the Institute and the excellent housing accommodations (the Institute is located near the Aussenalster—one of the two lakes in the middle of the City of Hamburg—and an adjoining park. Housing can be arranged in one of the apartments within the Institute building). I learned about law libraries from the perspective of a large, world-renown research law library. Dr. Lansky and Dr. Gödan (Deputy Director) always provided me with good advice. They are both law- and library-trained. Their expertise confirmed my opinion that great possibilities exist for international cooperation in the law library field. I feel honored to have been a participant in this program and I am thankful to the Max-Planck-Institute for its support.

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#### THE NEW ZEALAND LAW LIBRARIANS' GROUP

The New Zealand Law Librarians' Group is an informal group, set up in 1977, which maintains contact between the handful of professional law librarians in that country, as well as involving those who have responsibilities in connection with private or "law society" libraries or official publications collections. The group publishes a small newsletter edited by A.J. Edwards, Law Librarian, University of Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand. For further information contact Mr. Edwards.

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#### NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES PUBLICATIONS

The recently established Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies has commenced the publication of a series entitled the "Occasional Papers". The first four papers of the series, all published in 1979, have been received by our editorial office. They are:

- No. 1: *Nigeria in Search of Social Justice Through the Law*, by Dr. Akimola Agude, the first Director of the Institute (28 pp.).