



# Ivy Leaves



News and Notes from the Penn Libraries | Fall 2007

## The GLOBAL LIBRARY

*This issue of Ivy Leaves explores a few of the many ways that Penn's librarians engage in global partnerships.*

The international reach of the University is nowhere more evident than in its Libraries. We acquire scholarly resources from publishers worldwide, and have developed collections that embrace more than 350 languages. Our staff participates in a range of global initiatives sponsored by agencies like the World Bank, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), and the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies. In the advancement of their disciplines, Penn faculty and graduate students borrow nearly 34,000 non-English items each year. And our fast-growing digital library of manuscripts, rare books, images, and research of Penn scholars has found a significant



"Through our collaborative engagement with communities all over the world, Penn is poised to advance the central values of democracy: life, liberty, opportunity, and mutual respect."

Penn President,  
*Amy Guttmann* from the *Penn Compact*

audience on the web, with hosts in more than 180 countries accessing our content daily.

At the heart of the "global library" is its staff, a group of librarians who have the academic preparation, language skills, technical expertise, and knowledge of Penn programs to participate in worldwide networks of information providers. From the desert back roads of Yemen to the crowded streets of Chichicastenango, Guatemala to less exotic stops along Locust Walk, Penn librarians are working to democratize access to scholarly resources.

## STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS



A network of thirty subject specialists liaises with academic departments to develop and preserve Penn's collections. Visit our website at this URL, <http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/contact/subjspec>, to learn who they are and how to contact them. These librarians work closely with faculty to ensure that we select the most significant information resources in support of teaching and research. Currently the Libraries' collection budget exceeds \$13 million; in this area Penn ranks 21 among the top 110 research libraries in the United States and Canada. As the stories in this *Ivy Leaves* indicate, Penn Libraries continue to build distinctive collections of international repute through creative partnerships.

## Ambassadors of the University

"Libraries have always needed people who could work effectively in other parts of the world, because research has long been a global enterprise," so says Martha Brogan, Director for Collection Development and Management at the Penn Libraries. "My introduction to librarianship came, in fact, while I was an international student adviser at the University of Minnesota, twenty-five years ago." It's widely understood, according to Brogan, that libraries develop and share their information capital across national borders. What is less widely appreciated is librarian involvement in regional development work, technical training, and institution-building in foreign countries. "When I came to Penn nearly a year ago," Brogan notes, "I quickly recognized the great strength of our area studies librarians and other specialists, who have a long record of sharing their knowledge with colleagues around the globe."

Penn librarians William Kopycki and Bob Krall illustrate her point. Each is working under the auspices of an international organization: Kopycki with the World Bank, helping libraries in the Middle East adopt critical standards of best practice, and Krall with IFLA, fostering the creation of resource sharing networks in under-served parts of the developing world. Then there is Museum Library Head, John Weeks who has recently completed a field trip to Mayan communities in Guatemala that are busy trying to re-appropriate indigenous languages and cultural practices virtually lost in the colonization of Central America. [Continued on the center spread inside.]

## THE GLOBAL LIBRARY

[continued]

Whereas Kopycki, Krall, and Weeks are out on the road, a host of librarians have made the Penn campus a destination for colleagues from other nations. Delegations from Brunei, Botswana, Ghana, and Japan have consulted with collections and public services professionals in recent months. A case in point is Barbara Cavanaugh, Head of the Veterinary School's Atwood Library and Information Commons, who recently hosted Jin Cheng, Deputy Director of the Information Service Section Medical Library of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), on a month-long internship. While here, Cheng gained ideas and training for enhancing interlibrary loan services, website design, social networking tools, and electronic journals management. She left with the aspiration to create an information commons at her library, one modeled on the Atwood Library's particular blend of library, technology, and learning spaces.

### Legacies Rediscovered, Recollected, Re-imagined

*The Penn Library Collections at 250: From Franklin to the Web* (2000)<sup>†</sup> provides testimony of our cosmopolitan past, present, and future. "It's worth noting," explains Brogan, "that the library Franklin founded was for many years largely the product of a major gift from the King of France." In fact, the Founder's Collection, with its 100 or so volumes from Louis XVI, is carefully preserved in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library. Brogan adds, "But as much as we believe to know about the history of our collections, discoveries come to light and sometimes they surprise us with novel insights about the origins of Penn's Libraries." One such discovery made recently by Chinese Studies Librarian Jidong Yang points to the rich history of international collection-building at Penn and the complex provenance of our 250-year old library. Read about the unfolding mystery in the story of the rediscovered McCartee Library on page 5.

The McCartee Library's story dramatizes the often fragile history of collections. Today, Penn and other libraries around the world are employing new technologies to enhance the organization of legacy and new collections, and to make the contents of great libraries—particularly primary sources—easier to discover, access, and preserve.

In some cases this involves reassembling libraries that have been destroyed or broken up and scattered to distant places. Dispersed collections can be a matter of life-or-death for a nation's cultural legacy. Consider the case of the Iraq ReCollection project, an NEH-funded international collaboration that aims, through digitization and aggregation, to rescue and resurrect scholarly materials at risk. It is spearheaded by the Arabic and Middle East Electronic Library (AMEEL). In December of 2007, Kopycki, Penn's Middle East Librarian and a member of the AMEEL Advisory Board, will join colleagues from North America and the Middle East for a week-long training workshop hosted by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Alexandria, Egypt) on digitizing Arabic materials. Yale, Penn, and other cooperating libraries will supply the print publications that will eventually be digitized and delivered to Iraq to restore access to scholarly literature lost in the war.

In other cases, digital technology is helping to reintegrate collections that, over centuries, have found their way piecemeal into libraries separated by oceans. These digital library collaborations not only reverse the fragmenting of knowledge, they also make unique texts available to audiences who might never otherwise see the originals. One such program, an alliance between Penn Libraries and Cambridge University Library,



Penn Librarians [l-r]: Barbara Cavanaugh, Veterinary Library, Arthur Kiron, Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, Lauris Olson, Social Sciences, John Weeks, Museum Library, and Jidong Yang, Chinese Studies



The Libraries' web space is the host for Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Relations in the Middle East, and gateways to content serving Area Studies

reunites documents belonging to the Cairo Genizah from the 9th through the 15th centuries, and presents them as a coherent whole from disparate locations in England and North America.

### "Arsenals" of Learning

The Libraries' Judaica Curator, Arthur Kiron, is passionate about the role librarians play in integrating knowledge; and who could better understand this role than someone working to foster the education of young scholars of the contemporary Middle East. Kiron and his colleague, William Kopycki, are partners with Heather Sharkey and other Arts and Sciences faculty on an innovative effort in undergraduate training, known as the Penn Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society (PRRUCS).

"The area studies community is a close-knit bunch, so when William and I—and a former Penn Librarian colleague—heard about PRRUCS, we immediately saw an opportunity for a unique collaboration, one that could bring together a range of electronic publications we were authoring and scanning and in some cases licensing for the digital library." This, explains Kiron, was the genesis of *Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Relations in the Middle East*, a library-designed web space that Kiron and his colleagues created to host research guides, maps, and digital facsimiles of primary sources, all in support of PRRUCS initiative. A huge success, judged by the improved quality of student research, the website now moves into its second stage of development, digitizing more Arabic manuscript codices from Penn's collections and acquiring additional scholarly resources for teaching and learning.

This theme of supporting teaching by integrating knowledge resources, derived from and pertaining to international areas, also plays out in recent work by Social Sciences Librarian, Lauris Olson, who has created a website on immigration for the new Program on Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism (DCC). The site and its broad array of content have been developed specifically to serve DCC's theme in 2007, "Citizenship, Borders, and Human Needs." Even in the earliest stages of their field research, DCC undergraduates are collecting materials from afar which Penn librarians hope to add to our collections for the benefit of future generations of scholars. In the best of symbiotic relations, librarians and the Penn community help to build a world-wide library together.

Of course, world-class libraries like Penn's are not isolated silos of materials; rather they comprise an interdependent network of repositories. For more than fifty years, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) has served as a consortium of North American universities, colleges, and independent research libraries whose mission is to acquire, deliver, and preserve publications and archives from various regions of the world—first through collaborative microfilming projects, and increasingly via digitization. CRL's Global Resources Network, to which Penn Libraries belong, includes projects pertaining to African newspapers, South Asian digital resources, and table of contents services for hard-to-find Latin American periodicals. ■

† This publication is available online at <http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/at250> or in print at multiple locations in the Penn Libraries and at the University Archives.



Martha Brogan, Director for  
Collection Development and  
Management

## IN THE FIELD: YEMEN

William Kopycki describes Yemen as a land of extremes: A place of lifeless deserts and forested mountains; one of the most impoverished corners of the Arab world, surrounded by the greatest concentrations of wealth in the Middle East. While Kopycki has lived, traveled, and worked extensively in this region and knows well its inherent contradictions, his first exposure to Yemani society and culture came only recently.

In July of 2007, Kopycki went to Yemen on behalf of the World Bank, which has begun funding initiatives designed to strengthen the country's fragile higher education system. The Bank's goal is to spur scientific and technological advances that can in turn stimulate economic growth. Key to the Bank's strategy is the recognition that research and learning—and the economic progress they promote—are intimately tied to the availability of high quality library services and information networks. So as part of their development effort, Bank officials have taken aim at Yemen's three principal academic libraries and turned to Kopycki to study their organizations, IT, training, and collection needs.



*Kopycki touring a bookshop in Sana'a and assembled with staff on the stairs of the Ibb University Library. The fellow on the far right, sporting a ceremonial dagger, is the head of cataloging.*

Over the course of eight days, Kopycki and Dr. Bedjat Mekki, a faculty member of the library school at Sharjah University in the United Arab Emirates, shuttled between the cities of Sana'a (Yemen's capital) Aden, and Ibb, meeting with librarians, inspecting collections, reviewing computing facilities, and touring library spaces. Their findings were grim by any standards. "The libraries we surveyed," said Kopycki, "had seriously outdated collections of books and inadequate, unusually erratic serials holdings. They had poorly maintained reader spaces and obsolete computers. And most notably from our perspectives, they possessed no Internet connectivity whatsoever. In Yemen, a conversation about e-journals can't even begin until there is reliable and widespread access to the web." Kopycki describes the staff of these libraries soldiering through the most difficult conditions, lacking money, equipment, and software, as well as the training necessary to provide services appropriate to current research needs.

Over a long period, libraries in the west have tackled many similar problems, but Kopycki speaks with clear concern about the scale of the challenges confronting Yemen. In a report now awaiting presentation, he and Dr. Mekki raise disturbing questions and emphasize the need for broad-based Internet access and an improved IT infrastructure to support it. This will facilitate the development of online catalogs, and the delivery of e-journals and other electronic content, along with services that students and faculty require in the 21st century. Of course these and related improvements are inexorably bound to money and the need to dramatically increase the budgetary resources of Yemen's main academic libraries.

No serious bibliographer can travel 6,000 miles and leave empty handed. So Kopycki used his travel interludes to pick up books for Penn's already well-established Middle East collection, including a number of rare titles on Yemeni history, law, and literature. Gifts from local presses rounded out the acquisitions phase of his trip and extended Kopycki's already broad network of collection contacts in the Middle East.

## IN THE FIELD: CENTRAL AMERICA



In 1899, Daniel Garrison Brinton, Penn's distinguished professor of Anthropology and Linguistics, gave the University his personal library of books—many of them rare and unique—along with a treasure trove of manuscripts and pamphlets. His generosity (memorialized on the front page of the *New York Times*, on May 25, 1899) helped to establish at Penn one of the world's great anthropology libraries. Today the Brinton collection is part of the Museum Library, which is overseen by John M. Weeks.

For the past decade, Weeks has been forging a series of partnerships, on campus and beyond, with the goal of making the Brinton collection and other singular resources of the Museum Library available to scholars and ethnic communities around the world.

In collaboration with the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc. (FAMSI) of Crystal River, Florida, Weeks has developed *Bibliografía Mesoamericana*, a comprehensive bibliographic database for the study of the archaeology, cultural and social anthropology, linguistics, biological and physical anthropology, art history, and ethnohistory of the indigenous peoples of Mexico and northern Central America. The database presently contains some 100,000 records, many describing holdings of the Brinton collection, as well as numerous illustrated full-text research reports provided by FAMSI. It receives almost 5,000 hits monthly, over half from students and scholars outside of the U.S. The *Bibliografía Mesoamericana* is available at <http://www.famsi.org/research/bibliography.htm>.



John Weeks' photo of the market square in Chichicastenango in June of 2006

Together with FAMSI and the Penn Libraries' Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image (SCETI), Weeks has also worked to digitize and make available on the public web indigenous language texts from Mexico and northern Central America. The manuscripts curated by Weeks and hosted by SCETI were originally assembled by the German scholar Karl Hermann Berendt during the late nineteenth century. The collection was eventually purchased by Professor Brinton and turned over to Penn in 1894.

The manuscripts in question were once used by missionaries engaged in the conversion of native peoples as part of the colonization of Central America. These important primary sources—grammars, dictionaries, and abundant texts revealing a language in its many uses—eventually made their way from church archives to European and American scholars, and finally to library collections in the U.S. and Europe. After centuries of marginalization, many of the indigenous groups, especially the Maya peoples of Guatemala, are today experiencing linguistic and cultural revival aided by the re-appropriation of language and cultural practices. The archival material held at Penn, now accessible in the most remote places via the Internet, is lending support to this long delayed reclamation of culture. In June of 2006, John Weeks visited several Maya communities in Guatemala from which some of the Penn manuscripts derive. Where it was appropriate, copies and transcriptions of original documents were returned to the community. Some of the linguistic manuscripts may be seen at <http://www.famsi.org/research/mltdp/catalog.htm>.

Currently Weeks is engaged in another initiative designed to highlight the scholarly value of Penn's primary Mesoamerican resources, this time with two colleagues from the University of Bonn, Frauke Sachse and Christian Prager. The team is preparing for publication English-language translations of three existing Maya divinatory calendars. This work will expose rare and culturally significant primary source material, even as it advances Penn's global partnerships east across the Atlantic and south to the rugged highlands of Guatemala.

For more information about the Museum Library and the Berendt-Brinton collection see: John M. Week's, *The Library of Daniel Garrison Brinton*, published by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2002. This book is also available online at <http://www.library.upenn.edu/eresources/brinton.html>.

## IN THE FIELD: IFLA

Simple economics necessitates the practice of resource sharing among libraries. No one library can afford to acquire and store all the materials its researchers might need, so networks of institutional lenders and borrowers have developed, primarily in Europe and North America, to get resources to where they're needed. But such programs have their costs, too, and a lack of cash flow and infrastructure have conspired to keep some libraries, many in the developing world, from participating in these networks, effectively closing off the exchange of scholarly resources to and from these libraries.

Having helped place Penn at the forefront of low-cost inter-institutional resource sharing through his involvement with BorrowDirect+, Bob Krall (C '71) is now applying his expertise on a global scale. With a four-year appointment to the standing committee of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Document Delivery and Resource Sharing section, Krall is collaborating with librarians from countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas to facilitate access to the world's libraries, while making it possible for libraries in developing countries to grow their resource sharing capital.

To make global resource sharing affordable to more libraries, IFLA is working to establish an electronic voucher system that tracks credits and debits used as payment for transactions. This system will allow libraries to participate simply by lending their materials, and accepting e-vouchers as payment. The more books libraries lend, the more vouchers they will receive. This will, in turn, enable them to borrow

Bob Krall, Director for  
Departmental Libraries, Resources  
Sharing, and Delivery Services



more materials for the scholars they serve. The big benefit of this barter economy is that the collections of libraries in the developing world, often containing sought after materials such as theses, case studies, and proceedings, will be opened up to scholars around the world, and, in lending them, the owning libraries will build their ability to borrow from large research libraries.

But payment isn't the only challenge. Many libraries in the developing world lack the necessary computer infrastructure to share their catalogs. This makes it difficult for researchers to discover the existence of materials relevant to their research. Once an item is located, the issue becomes making a request, a high hurdle to clear when a lack of common language, unstated service expectations, and even cultural misunderstandings can hinder communication. And until the e-voucher system is implemented and widely adopted, questions about payment remain. Does the lending library take credit cards? Must the borrowing library cut a check in a foreign currency? And who has the conversion rate of record, anyway?

Working to open lines of communication, shoring up infrastructure, and hashing out payment options, it's easy to get bogged down in the details. But given that the true value of a library's collection is in its use, IFLA's efforts to establish global gateways among libraries, and get materials into the hands of researchers who otherwise would not have access to them, will increase the worth of scholarly resources and enhance scholarship on a global scale.

## THE REDISCOVERED MCCARTEE LIBRARY

The origin of Penn's East Asian Collection can be traced to a box of books left behind by the Chinese Government at the U.S. Sesquicentennial Exposition, held in 1926. Despite its modest beginnings, the collection today is a considerable resource in modern Chinese literature. But in May 2007, Jidong Yang, Penn's Chinese Studies Librarian, made a discovery that substantially alters the history and provenance of Chinese and Japanese materials at Penn, and all because of Divie Bethune McCartee.

Yang holds a nondescript little volume bound in black cloth boards, and begins turning the thin brown pages. "We found it in the stacks one day. It's probably been there since this Library opened in the 60s." He is referring to a book from 17th-century China that bears a bookplate reading, "McCartee Library." "What was the McCartee Library?" asks Yang. "What did it contain, and how and why was it dispersed? These are just a few questions we're eager to answer."

McCartee, a Penn graduate from 1840 and later a Protestant missionary to the Far East, was a name familiar to Yang from his student days in China. "I poured over all the

available records from the late 19th century, trying to find a mention of the McCartee Library." The story that emerged, according to Yang, begins when McCartee returns from Japan in 1889, with a distinctive collection of books dating from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Within a few months, he donates a large portion of this library to his alma mater. Some time after his death in 1900, McCartee's wife completes the transfer of materials to Penn, and his collection is incorporated into the University's rapidly growing Library.

With the rediscovery of the McCartee Library, we have reset the clock on Penn's assembly of primary source materials from China by some thirty years—to a time concurrent with the formation of the seminal Chinese collections in the U.S., which include the Library of Congress (1869), Yale (1873), Harvard (1879), and UC Berkeley (1896).

Jidong Yang's effort to provide high quality, vernacular cataloging of Chinese primary sources, and his diligent detective work, document Penn's decades-long experience in global collection development.

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## Join The Orrery Society. Help Us Build Collections for Tomorrow's Scholars



The Vice Provost and Director of the Penn Libraries, Carton Rogers, announces the establishment of The Orrery Society. Dedicated to the memory of Martin Meyerson, former President of Penn and a consummate library supporter, The Orrery Society will recognize donors who help to build and preserve the Penn Libraries' collections through annual gifts of \$2,500 or more and through the creation of new endowments. Margy Ellin Meyerson will serve as Honorary Chair; and Richard S. Johnson (W'64) and Deborah Wharton Lippincott (C'76) have graciously agreed to serve as Founding Co-Chairs. Look for a full-length feature about The Orrery Society in the next issue of Ivy Leaves. For more information or to become a member, please contact the Office of Development, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center, 3420 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19104-6206, (215) 573-3610.