

ICA-SUV -

Front slide:

Hello

It is truly good to be here and I want to thank this **section board** and Beth and John for the opportunity to introduce the international counterpart of SAA's College and university section to all of you.

The way I organized my talk is to begin with a cursory history of factors, structures, and actors behind international efforts to organize us archivists over the last 100 years. I will then briefly introduce ICA-SUV, talk about a few interesting international trends and projects and then I'd like to hear from you.

You can define invention in many ways: thesaurus terms cover the range of nuances from creation, discovery, development, to innovation as well as secondary connotations of modernization and advance. Why bring up invention and particularly in its sense of innovation? International cooperation between archivists was a major innovative idea really of the early 20th century. It reflected a broader trend then in international cooperative scientific efforts and political efforts such as the League of Nations and eventually the UN. The very few and accessible historical sketches about international archival cooperation are almost exclusively written by UNESCO and ICA. According to this view of history, we archivists appear to be creatures driven by war or its avoidance. War is the so-called 'mother' of invention here. But as you will see in my euro-centric historical narrative, necessity frequently became the driving force behind such efforts. Personally, I prefer to go along with Agatha Christie. She whimsically wrote about invention – which I find quite accurate for those of us living in relative plenty.

I don't think necessity is the mother of invention. Invention arises directly from idleness, possibly also from laziness. To save oneself trouble."

SLIDE: Expo

In contrast to mainstream histories, I found archivists to not just be driven by horrific external factors. The 19th century saw the emergence of central and national archives in Europe and a bit later on the North American continent and these came to function almost as pre-conditions for realizing and sustaining international organizational structures. As always, they were not the only movers and shakers here: the Jewish communities of the German Empire for instance inspected Jewish community archives in several countries in 1904. They eventually established a Central Archives of German Jews in Berlin in 1905 driven by a desire for more uniform practices, higher standards, and solving resource and storage problems of smaller institutions. Begins to sound familiar, doesn't it?

While the enlightenment thrived, partially because incipient scientists were closely linked through correspondence and international travel, the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of international scientific congresses and societies. Frequently, these met at the commercial and empirical extravaganzas that we know as world expositions. According to my research in the European literature, archivists met for the first time internationally at the 1910 international congress of archivists and librarians at the World Exposition in Brussels, part of 69 national and international scientific congresses. There archivists presented, both, specific case studies and comparative assessments. One novel idea was to compare vacation and salary information of archivists! Nice, isn't it and In the German case life expectancy of archivists also correlated with rank within the hierarchy. They also assessed the use of general archival principals such as provenance and of processes such as preparing archivists for genealogical requests. The subsequent congress planned for Milano in 1915 had to be canceled due to WWI while the fascist build up in Europe also sealed the fate of the third Congress planned for Rome around 1934.

Political violence, war and the resulting threat to documentary heritage of course did their share in triggering international archival solidarity within and across archival sub-fields. For instance: The Central Archives of the History of Jewish Peoples was founded by emigrant Jewish archivists in Jerusalem already in 39 trying to collect and safeguard archival records of Jewish communities throughout Europe and ship them to Israel. They had a sense for what was coming.

In 1949, Hilary Jenkinson, one of the primary personalities involved in establishing ICA, argued that such international efforts originated in a realization that archival principals transcended not only administrative divisions within a country but also across international borders (quote). According to his institutional and universal account and given his national background, the failure of pre WWI attempts was due to the absence of national archival organizations in the US and the UK as well as the absence of a national archives in the former.

A year before Hitler took power in Germany in 33, Heinrich Otto Meisner, (1890-1976) state archivist in Berlin, presented a more thorough and perhaps more careful historical analysis. He focused on particular bodies, concerns and projects that drove the movement. There was the international committee on historical sciences, which formed a commission regarding archival questions and made up of historians in 1929. It focused on public access to archives, pressure on states to enable that access and the challenges of organizing business archives. Moreover: upon pressure by the German, Prussian and then the Italian state archives, the International Commission of Intellectual Cooperation, agreed to consider archival sciences as one of their areas ... it itself was part of the League of Nations that was concerned with the international exchange of goods, political ideas and intellectual relationships. *We were in good company there including Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, Béla Bartók, Thomas Mann, or Paul Val'ery.*

The commission formed a committee of expert archivists in 31, interestingly, including both Jenkinson and Meissner. The nine national archives members divided archival issues into two groups: the first group of issues was viewed as allowing only exchange and pooling of information given national archival sovereignty. Issues here included changes in archival holdings, legal and administrative requirements regarding use or weeding, or such topics as the verification of ink and paper. The second group of issues was seen as allowing for a possible universal rapprochement. Among them were the creation of an international archival terminology (called archives Esperanto) and the creation and publication of finding aids. Late in 31, the committee met in Paris and decided to carry out a very detailed survey of archives (marvelous in its conception) and to publish an international guide. Worried about the long-term preservation of writings in soft pencil or **type-writer**, the committee recommended reproductions/*surrogates, that is* set in print or in handwriting using good paper and ink as the safest means to 'maintain' originals. Given modern trends such as the type-writer, it also called upon the commission to explain to respective archives the importance of conserving and accepting type written documents. Members discussed the exchange of facsimiles and of different teaching methods as well as teachers and experts and periodic international conferences. One business proposal to film **all** historic manuscripts was discussed as a modern day Napoleonic world archives to be housed at the League of Nation library. All this resonates even more with us today, doesn't it?

Hitler, Mussolini and subsequent events and the war put an end to all such schemes.

After 1945 the geo-political and economic realities had changed. The archivist of the US, Solon J. Buck, ascertained through a widely circulated letter that archivists still wanted to form an international organization. With UN backing, Unesco invited a small number of national archivists plus a US military government representative for Germany and observers to Paris in 48. After intense debates and disagreements based on linguistic and political differences, the committee succeeded in founding the

international council of archives, ICA, and in passing a draft constitution. 2 Americans wrote most of the draft: Oliver Wendel Holmes and Herbert O. Brayer, state archivist of Colorado and consultant to UNESCO. ICA's six purposes are largely reminiscent of what we would say today but with a contemporary touch of humanistic concern.

SLIDE: Quote

Such sentiments are echoed in the welcome Jaime Torres Bodet, Director General of Unesco, issued to the first ICA constituent assembly and congress in Paris in 1950. By necessity, he called upon the best in our work and us; he chose not to talk about archival politics and archivists' role in recent horrific events.

In its endeavours to draw closer the spiritual links between men, Unesco can never underestimate the help afforded by the international organizations of specialists and of professional men: in the cultural life of the world they are an admirable – sometimes the only – means of ensuring those effective contacts without which the word 'peace' would lose much of its meaning.

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SLIDE: ICA-SUV history (ICA 2009:1400 institutional members, 190 countries, about 200 individual members.)

Fast forward to 1992, and the Australian archivist, Alan Ives, brought together 41 university archivists from 13 countries to organize an ICA section for university archives. Upon ICA's request, the provisional section eventually incorporated archives of science and research – given their shared interest in documenting science and technology – which explains the dual nature of our section. Today, SUV is probably the largest section. It has 155 members from 35 countries.

Think back a moment to Jenkinson and Meisner: The tension between these historical accounts has resurfaced productively within SUV. To found an international section is, of course, premised on Jenkinson's universality of both, archival practices and theory. We assume that we are so alike in common structural features, practices and responsibilities that we also have common problems and issues that can be addressed through common efforts. This model was predominant in SUV's early years, a perfect illustration is the effort to write 'General, read universal, guidelines for university archives.' At the time, most actively involved members were alike enough in terms of archival traditions to not recognize differences existing elsewhere.

In contrast to Jenkinson's universal model – allow me to exaggerate a bit -- Meisner discussed two types of issues, remember?: archival issues, practices, and problems which we share across national traditions versus those that are specific geo-politically and historically but about which we can exchange information fruitfully. This second 'international model or approach,' has come to influencing recent SUV discussions, conference content and projects. The realignment also reflects recent broader trends in history and cultural studies for instance, that have rediscovered culture, historical diversity, and groups and institutions at the periphery.

In recent years, SUV has begun to question *unrealistic* universalist assumptions and to elicit diverging international experiences, innovations, and trends. To give you a simple example: a recent member survey asked archivists about their operative definition of science and therefore their scientific archival holdings. The results indicate that most countries and archives do not follow the Anglo-Saxon definition of science as hard sciences. For them, science encompasses all research activities and fields and SUV adjusted its own definition as well as international projects accordingly. As a follow up, our Committee on Preservation and

Access to Scientific **and** Research Data (CSR D) is assessing preservation strategies for science data broadly defined and from several countries.

Here is another example: we just started a new project regarding student files and records to develop recommendations for appraising and retaining such material when storage options are limited. Currently, the range of appraisal decisions runs the gamut from Sweden not appraising files at all, the University of Tel Aviv retaining some documents of each file, and others such as most Eastern Europe universities destroying all files. However, student files turned out to refer to distinct types of records even within the 9 countries represented in our board. Our cross-national survey will therefore ask about student records retention policies and what student records mean in each context.

The original idea of an archival Esperanto is still with us – of course in a different guise. We see the need for an international thesaurus mapping how terms are used in a few select languages. This should help us know when different terms are used for the same archival phenomenon or when identical terms are used for different phenomena. It might reduce misunderstandings and misreadings.

Another new project *proposed by Bill Maher* centers on deciding if and how we ought document distant education programs at universities. These programs are not new: previous versions used radio or television, for instance. Now we have however complete online degree programs organized by various business models that raise numerous archives and records issues:

- How do you capture the learning experience,
- the on-line teaching practices,
- how do you track the faculty most of them are outsourced
- how do you document the financial and business models.

To capture much of this would require a proactive electronic records program. Given the many other issues we face, we have to select strategically in how to document it. SUV proposes to conduct an initial study of current practices, needs, and opportunities for capturing such record. Our goal is to come up with a statement of best practices.

SLIDE Conference

Our most labor-intensive event is our yearly conference. It is THE occasion to meet, listen, talk, learn other archival traditions and practices, and to socialize. It is also the most fascinating part of being a member. Let me give you a few eclectic, insights I gained from attending or organizing such conferences. Archivists are becoming more aware of the legacy that historical, geopolitical and economic structures leave for archival practices: take the case of the Latvian university archivist who showed the traces of Soviet and Prussian record traditions on their archival policies. We learnt how war effects archives by listening to the only university archivist in Lebanon. She detailed how thirty years of civil war have influenced the student body and who dares to visit the archives. War has shaped record types, archival safety, their capacity to maintain a controlled climate, the ability to get archival supplies from abroad, staff members' stress and other factors. And don't forget: it make it almost impossible for them to be active professionally.

We learnt that Brazil and other South American countries are facing increasing thefts and sales of archival records. They have organized conferences on this topic and in one of the archives I visited, they had devised ingenious methods to double code and store records to make it very difficult for thieves. In another archives in Rio de Janeiro, their conservator told me how they use banana leaves to produce acid free archival paper. This apparently makes for a less expensive and less resource intensive product. Or

listen to an Austrian university archivist discuss how semi-privatization, granting of autonomy, or privatization of universities influences record policies, resources and archival access for example.

Given new developments and our diverse membership, we are launching a member survey this fall to find out what they need and want from SUV. For example: we have long discussed what kinds of solidarity activities we could offer as a section to those in resource poor countries: e.g. helping to set up an archives, expertise exchange, workshops, literature. But before we act, we need to know what members need or want, hence the survey. Consider here how much worse the economic crisis has hit those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In the last few years we have also rewritten our governing documents and created a new pamphlet as well as new website ... where you can find all relevant documents, information, how to join, our conference proceedings as well as resources. Among those is for example the recent bibliography of COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES readings, in English, French and Spanish. We also have a listserv.

Let me discuss one more development that clearly shows the need to collaborate internationally to a degree not seen hitherto if we want to document the process of scientific discovery.

SLIDE CERN

Some 6,500 scientists, half of the world's particle physicists, do research at CERN representing 500 universities and over 80 nationalities. Sometimes experimental facilities were built at CERN such as the bubble-chamber experiments, while analysis of the data was done in a physicist's home institution. In more recent, larger experiments involving electronic detectors, most funds however come from participating institutions and universities across the globe can combine research, teaching and detector development at their respective homes.

The transformations in 'doing science' over the last five hundred years is startling -- moving from the individual researcher, to the science team, and finally to the anonymous and amorphous science field. At my university, at yours and at institutions across the globe, we are seeing a true internationalization and decentralization of scientific endeavors in many if not all scientific disciplines. Laboratories are becoming computer terminals linked internationally; experimental stations are becoming collaborations among dozens if not thousands of scientists working in innumerable countries.

How will archival records of 6,500 scientists accurately portray their scientific work, their participation, and inventions at CERN even if we were to assume that they are all preserved at their 500 home institutions? Or, alternatively, how would CERN and its archives be able to do this with its very limited resources?

When and IF dozens or even hundreds of countries *and* public, private, and corporate institutions are collaborating, there will be different collection policies and different and distinct appraisal rules. Are there even archives of science and university everywhere? – because the existence of archives elsewhere and what they do, will now effect our archival collection strategies and practices at home. Optimistically, there will be methods but different methods of digital preservation as there certainly are and will be vastly different terms of access and copyright. Since almost all Swedish universities are public institutions, for example, scientific records are generally considered public access records in Sweden. In the US, in contrast, some universities define scientific records as their property but most consider them as the professor's. Now add archival traditions that differ by nation states to the mix.

Some of the questions we need to raise go to the substance of what it means to do science: who is the author or inventor in modern science? What is the laboratory? What is even the appropriate locale to study? What is a collection in this regard? What does a finding aid have to look like? In one sense, modern

science is perhaps approaching a communal mode of knowledge creation akin to former indigenous or native modes -- given their lack of a clearly defined author or inventor, a lack of precise locale, and a difficulty to track processes of discovery and describe them. And perhaps in response, modern archival practice will also have to turn to an international communal mode of working: collaborating in collection policies, in descriptive efforts, and in reconciling and adjusting access, appraisal, preservation, and other essentials across the globe.¹ This will be necessary -- I argue -- in order to fulfill our obligation: preserving sufficient residues of these activities to allow later generations to analyze and depict the history of science in all its flavors -- be it through histories of tools, biographies, histories of discoveries, of institutions, or of work processes.

We are truly at the beginning here and SUV's project I had mentioned is a first step in the right direction.

I know I am not an inspired speaker so let me end with how I began. A hundred years after the idea was born, joining an international archival organization is still a novel ideal for most archivists. However you hold it:

be it an abhorrence of war and interest in solidarity,

be it the drive of necessity,

be it that you go along with Franz Boas, a contemporary of the Belgium Congress and a physical anthropologist turned cultural anthropologist for whom -- to paraphrase him - there is no opportunity for intellectual work, inventions and art as long as all the time is taken up by the needs of the moment

-- which would lead us back to Agatha Christie's dictum: that it is idleness or laziness, saving oneself troubles.

Whatever the reasons and motivations, I invite you to look at ICA-SUV and join it if you like what you see. The organization needs you and I think the profession needs something like it.

I thank you for your attention and hope to see you at SUV in the future!

Come to Rio!

SLIDE:

Practicalities at the end.

¹ In this regard, archivists will have to become and stay familiar with current sociology and history of science research.

UNESCO, *The Slave Trade Archives Project: Final Report*, (Paris: 2005).

see here also the resolution regarding archives of colonization adopted by the Annual Meeting, ICA, Curaçao, November 2006.

CAHJP (collaboration to safeguard records)

Things we miss: assumptions of models

e.g. Brazilian Science Archives journal publishes articles in various languages, archives students are expected to read at least one to two foreign languages so as to be able to read other languages, communicate, and work with foreign language collections

The reason I used history to talk about joining SUV is that in its telling a wide range of factors, perhaps conflicting motivations, and actors were introduced and thus become available. I would not discount Agatha Christie's idleness and laziness which echoes Franz Boas

Slide: photographs of us and list of annual conferences

List of objectives, and resources/

How to join and pamphlets and url as well as my e-mail?

geographic pie

Franz Boas quote on art? and wealth

ICA SUV brief history:

Objectives are rather self-explanatory. Let me give you a couple of examples what we might miss if we professionally focus only on the local and national level? What are recent trends that affect university and research archives internationally that are better dealt with or only to be tackled through international cooperation. Let me list just a few...What is SUV missing out if there is limited involvement in SUV and a limited geographic diversity and therefore political, cultural and economic diversity?

In the larger context of (list those factors)

Education of ourselves

Learning

Solving problems/limited resources: distant education, CERN, prevention

Access

Solidarity and Advocacy (e.g. threat of semi-privatization, archives down under benefit from online cooperations more) early warning systems

Accountability and Democracy

Discussion of expert knowledge sharing and consulting

(definition of science not quite that important for college archivists ... should I refer to the survey?)

How to join:

Cynically Pilgrims, innocuously invisible college, historically a tool for advocacy and solidarity as well as standardization, professionalization, and sharing of common problems and lack of resources.

As a SUV board member and an international archivist with work experiences in three continents, I of course will argue the benefit of international involvement and structures ... knowing full-well the quirks and shortcomings of any organization to be expected but also its many benefits.

I have tried to give you a more nuanced picture about our international activities and the only international organization that brings together archives and archivists of universities and colleges world wide. I would encourage you all to consider joining ICA-SUV and becoming active. Pamphlets are back there, our website is to be found at the link you see on the slide...Thank you.

Questions

Jenkinson, Hilary, *An International Council on Archives*, *Archives*, 1:1 (1949), p. 5-10

Meisner, Heinrich Otto, *Internationaler Zusammenschluss im Archivwesen*, *Minerva-Zeitschrift*, 8:9/10 (Sept/Okt. 1932), 137-140.

Argentina records...panel discussion and Sofia
Brazil article for trends

To this end, I gave a presentation to Brazilian archivists in 2007 for instance with encouraging results; four Brazilian institutions joined our section, one of their archivist was elected to our board and this year' annual conference will be a joint venture with the Brazilian Scientific Archives organization in Rio de Janeiro in September.

Issue of Theft/Security:

Given the extend of theft in Brazilian archives, our colleagues there have not only organized conferences and published about it but the archives of the research institute of Case Rui Barbosa came up with an ingenious manner of double-coding material. Most thieves rely on inside cues. The locally devised system not only stores material from one collection as a unit but only the top administrator knows of the second level code which identifies material in the stack. A thief braking in would be faced with rows upon rows of unintelligible labeled material: looking for example for precious lantern slides of a scientific expedition would take luck and digging through all of the stacks. In Eastern Europe, resource strapped archivists and conservators are experimenting with very inexpensive, low input manners of restoring paper.

Invisible college.

How can you get involved.

Options here range from the low individual membership of 20 euros and free, online collaborative efforts to participating in our annual conferences and running for office.

Let me finish by giving you just one example of a trend which will effect the way we can and will have to collect records if we at all want to be true to our role of ...safeguarding scientific discovery process.

I will give you a few historical examples I am most familiar with that highlight for me why such conversations and contacts are essential.

Now, ICA-SUV is the only international organization and forum for having discussions and cooperation between archivists of university and research institutions (i.e., archives of science broadly defined) across the globe.

Find out about trends and problems

Realize types of projects only to be solved internationally

Renewed focus on global users

Tufts High Energy Physics group is participating at CERN. Here modern technology and information sciences, size of experiments, and other factors are creating a radically different practice of science.

One of our board members, Megan Sniffin Marinoff whom most of you know, briefly introduced ICA-SUV at last year's meeting in San Francisco. In the course of corresponding with Elizabeth, she suggested that I give you a presentation about ICA-SUV this year.

I will touch on why we should care about it ...and give you a few eclectic examples of what we miss out on when we archivists do not collaborate and communicate across national boundaries.

Currently, the project includes case studies from Israel, Sweden, Austria and the UK.

Based on his experience, the project coordinator, Gatis Karlsons from Latvia, currently suggests sampling to be the most viable solution and that particular algorithms will have to be developed to sample student files. I have recently suggested that we could post a book or article review on our site each month to help keep abreast of what is happening elsewhere.

. Depending on the survey results, we hope to revitalize it and keep university and research archivists communicating internationally since SUV is the only international organization for having such discussions and cooperation (i.e., archives of science broadly defined) across the globe.

Doing off and onsite research and analysis, Professor Schneps, Tufts University's longest serving professor and now in his late 70s, was part of a team of 54 international scientists confirming the existence of the tau neutrino at Fermi Lab in 2000. The

tau neutrino was the last missing link of the Standard Model of Elementary Particles. Even more of a departure from science as usual is that

“University scientists can spend more time at their home institutions, and more research students can be involved in the advanced technology.” One example is the ATLAS, a mass of particle detectors, for the Large Hadron Collider. The ATLAS is being constructed by 1700 collaborators from 144 institutes in thirty-three countries.²

Their work, workplaces, and processes are beginning to look less and less like science of the old days and are rather prototypical for changes happening in many if not all scientific disciplines.³ (Given the purpose of my talk, I will exclude archival efforts to the contrary when archivists actively participated in imperial looting and destruction of records).

make communication among archivists challenging and one wonders how we read each other’s literature and communicate in international digital projects for example. This is particularly imperative for the archival literature published in English since many international archivists do keep up with that literature. To address these difficulties we have long discussed publishing an international thesaurus mapping how terms are used in a few select languages. This will be a huge project that could use the initiative and energy of current and future members.

We are so entrenched in our own archival traditions and terminology that the lesson has to be learned again and again: we see it even within our relatively small board consisting of 12 members from 9 countries.

Responses here will likely lead to a different conceptualization of the kind of history of science and research questions that will be possible in the future and what kind of archives will be necessary to make that future possible.

Egil Lillestol, a Norwegian particle physicist, briefly describes working for CERN.⁴ “more of the detector components are developed, tested and built by the outside groups.”

hundred years ago archivists were in good company there: the exposition had to open its doors already in 1907 to give time and space for

More recent attempts to build a global archival organization resonate this history and build on it.

All these: the impact of larger historical context, theft, war, inventions and semi-privatizations are archival issues that are largely absent in our literature while they are somewhat discussed in the foreign literature.

Can we learn something from these examples? I think we can and we miss out as a profession and as professionals if we do not know about larger trends, do not help shape them or learn from them or do not get involved in archival solidarity. But even more: collectively we are likely to come up with better operative responses even if it only means to have more minds working on the same issue or if it means to have archivists from resource rich countries assist those from resource poor areas whose overwhelming problems make it harder to take a step back or to find assistance.

² Participating countries include: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and USA.

³ See for instance, http://home.fnal.gov/~rafael/Brazil_500_page.html

⁴ <http://public.web.cern.ch/public/en/People/UniqueExperience-en.html>

And the commission itself represented a rapprochement between nations helping to restore the intellectual contacts and symbolizing mutual understanding and good will ... as the finding aid to its collection reads at the United Nations Office in Geneva.

the Commission Internationale de Cooperation Intellectuelle,

Comite Internationale des Sciences Historiques,