

## Guide to Foreign Law in English Translation

### I. Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to direct the researcher to sources of foreign law in English translation. The availability of English translations of foreign law varies by jurisdiction and type of law. In general, legislation is more likely to be translated than case law or regulations. Trade, tax, commercial and business laws are more likely to be available in translation than other subjects. Even if a translation exists, it may be inaccurate, unofficial, or out of date. It is therefore necessary to exercise care when working with translations. Some of the sources listed here may not be current. They have been included because they may be the only available source of a translation or they may be translations of historical significance.

A few treatises and journals listed in this guide contain translated excerpts or summaries of foreign law. These have been included, along with several digests, to assist the researcher in instances where a full-text translation may not be available. Additional information on locating foreign law can be found in the library research guide *Researching Foreign Law*.

Parts II through VI of this guide are intended to help you locate sources of translations in general. Part VII of this guide, Sources of Translations by Subject and Jurisdiction, is a selective list of sources of translations for specific legal subjects and jurisdictions. This part was composed with the McGeorge Law School curriculum and faculty interests in mind.

### II. Using the Library Catalog to Locate Translations

The Library's online catalog may be used to locate translations in books and, in some cases, databases. Translations of legislation may be found by performing a keyword search in the library catalog for a code name and country. For example, a search for the terms "civil code France" will retrieve *The French Civil Code* translated by John H. Crabb.

Some resources may contain translations of foreign laws related to a particular subject. For example, the treatise *Doing Business in Japan* contains a translation of the Japanese Civil Code and Commercial Code. These translations may be difficult to locate because, in general, the individual code names do not appear in a treatise's catalog entry if the treatise consists of more than just the text of a code. A list of resources that contain code translations appears in Part V of this guide.

Treatises or databases that contain case law generally have a subject heading that contains the word "cases." You can search for cases by geographic area or subject area. If you are looking for Chinese case law, perform a keyword search for "China" and "cases." If you want cases on environmental law, search for the keywords "environmental law cases."

If you are not finding the information you need on a specific country, consider expanding the search to cover a broader geographical area or exclude the geographical term altogether. Including words such as “international” or “world” in your keyword search may produce results. For example, rather than searching for “constitutions” and “Egypt” search for “constitutions” and “world” or simply “constitutions.” This search will retrieve *Constitutions of the Countries of the World*, a subscription database that contains an English translation of the Egyptian Constitution.

Not every database that contains foreign case law and legislation is described in detail in the library catalog. For example, the bibliographic record for *InterAm*, a database containing translations of law from Latin America, does not contain a subject heading indicating that a translation of the Federal Copyright Law of Mexico is available in this database. The best way to locate an appropriate database for your research is to check the list of databases on the Library’s webpage (<http://mcgeorge.edu/x1635.xml>). The Library has about forty databases on the topic of foreign and international law. A librarian can help you select the proper database for your research.

### **III. Using Internet Search Engines to Locate Translations**

Translations may be available from a number of sources on the Internet. Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), professional organizations, and law firms sometimes post translations on their websites.

You can use a search engine such as Google or Yahoo to locate translations of case law, regulations or legislation. Search for the name or subject matter of the case, regulation or legislation and include the name of the country. For example, a Yahoo search for “Japan copyright law” will retrieve an English translation of the law as published on the Copyright Research and Information Center (CRIC) website. CRIC is a Japanese public service corporation authorized by the government.

### **IV. Translations in Periodicals**

Translations may appear in periodicals as well as in treatises and on websites. The following indexes and full-text databases may be useful in locating a translation that appears in a periodical.

#### **A. Indexes**

*Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals*. Coverage dates: 1985 – .

Location: Database access through the library catalog

*Index to Legal Periodicals*. (Lexis path: Legal > Secondary Legal > Law Reviews & Journals > Index to Legal Periodicals). Coverage dates: 1978 – .

*Index to Legal Periodicals Retrospective*. Coverage dates: 1908 – 1981.

Location: Database access through the library catalog

*InfoTrac: LegalTrac*. Coverage dates: 1980 – .  
Location: Database access through the library catalog

*Legal Journals Index*. (Westlaw database identifier: LJI). This is an index to articles from legal journals published in the United Kingdom and Europe. Coverage dates: 1986 - .

*Legal Resource Index*. (Westlaw database identifier: LRI). This is the Westlaw version of the *LegalTrac* index. Coverage dates: 1980 - .

## **B. Full Text Sources**

*Journals & Law Reviews*. (Westlaw database identifier: JLR). Coverage dates: ca. 1980 - .

*Law Reviews & Journals*. (Lexis path: Legal > Secondary Legal > Law Reviews & Journals > Index to Legal Periodicals). Coverage dates: 1982 - .

## **V. Research Guides, Bibliographies and Digests**

Bibliographies and research guides will help you identify the important sources of foreign law. They may cover individual countries, political or economic organizations, or subject areas. They may appear in print or electronic format. Some research guides and bibliographies on foreign law contain a section on translations. Digests provide a summary of the law and may include citations to published sources in the vernacular or in translation.

Some research guides are available in print format in the library. To determine whether the library has a research guide for a particular country perform a keyword search in the library catalog for the words “legal research” and the name of the country. The same search performed with an internet search engine will retrieve web based guides.

To locate legal bibliographies from a specific country perform a search in the library catalog for the subject “Laws [country] bibliography”. For example, a subject search for “Law Switzerland Bibliography” will retrieve *Swiss Law Bibliography: English Language Materials on Swiss Law*. You can also perform this search with an internet search engine to retrieve web based materials.

## **A. Research Guides**

*Sources of International and Foreign Law in English*. University of Illinois College of Law Library.

This guide lists the names of journals, treatises, and websites that contain translations of foreign laws. Materials are listed according to subject matter and jurisdiction.

Location: [http://www.law.uiuc.edu/library/ref\\_sources\\_intl\\_foreignlaw\\_english.asp](http://www.law.uiuc.edu/library/ref_sources_intl_foreignlaw_english.asp)

*GlobaLex*. New York University Hauser Global Law School Program.

This website contains links to research guides in foreign, comparative and international law arranged alphabetically by country. These guides provide information on the legal system and

sources of law for selected countries. Some of the guides list sources of English language translations.

Location: <http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/index.html>

*International Legal Research in a Nutshell*. Marci B. Hoffman & Robert C. Berring. Appendix C contains a list of websites with translations of foreign law.

Location: Reserve KZ1234 .H64 2008

*LLRX* (Law Library Resource Xchange).

This website consists of a collection of research guides on the topics of foreign, comparative and international law written by attorneys, professors and librarians.

Location: <http://www.llrx.com/category/857>

*Foreign & Comparative Law*. Duke University School of Law J. Michael Goodson Law Library.

Section III. B. of this research guide covers locating translations of foreign law.

Location: <http://www.law.duke.edu/lib/researchguides/foreign.html>

*Germain's Transnational Law Research: A Guide for Attorneys*. Claire M. Germain.

This guide is divided into sections on legal topics and countries. The section on legal topics includes references to some foreign law in translation. The section on countries focuses on 17 European countries and includes a listing of English language translations.

Location: Reference K85 .G47 1991

*Foreign Law Research Guides*. Columbia University Arthur W. Diamond Law Library.

This is a list of research guides for over 100 countries.

Location: [http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research\\_Guides/foreign\\_law](http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research_Guides/foreign_law)

*Basic Guide to Researching Foreign Law*. Mary Rumsey, University of Minnesota.

This guide describes strategies for finding foreign laws, with an emphasis on laws in English translation. The focus is on codes rather than case law.

Location: [http://www.nyulawglobal.org/Globalex/Foreign\\_Law\\_Research.htm](http://www.nyulawglobal.org/Globalex/Foreign_Law_Research.htm)

## **B. Bibliographies**

*Charles Szladits' Guide to Foreign Legal Materials: German*. Timothy Kearley & Wolfram Fischer.

Location: Treatise KK3 .K43 1990

*Chinese Law: A Bibliography of Selected English-Language Materials*. Constance A. Johnson.

Location: Treatise KNQ3 .J64 1990

*Foreign Law Guide: Current Sources of Codes and Basic Legislation in Jurisdictions of the World*. Thomas H. Reynolds & Arturo A. Flores.

This publication lists the sources of law for about 200 jurisdictions. It includes references to original language and translated sources. Legislation and regulations are the focus of this publication; however court reports, treaties and databases are also included.

Location: Web access via the library catalog

*Guide to Foreign Legal Materials: French.* Charles Szladits & Claire M. Germain.

Location: Treatise KJV140 .S95 1985

*Guide to Foreign Legal Materials: Italian.* (1965) Angelo Grisoli.

Location: Treatise KKH47 .G75

*Japanese Business Law in Western Languages: An Annotated Selective Bibliography.* Harald Baum & Luke R. Nottage.

Location: Treatise KNX78 .B87 B38 1998

*The Mexican Legal System.* Francisco A. Avalos.

Location: Reference KGF150 .A95 2000

*Print Sources for Historical Constitutions.* John Trone.

Location: 34 *Int'l J. Legal Info.* 539 (2006)

*Swiss Law Bibliography: English Language Materials on Swiss Law.*

Location: Treatise KKW3 .S95 2005

## **C. Digests**

*Martindale-Hubbell International Law Digest.*

This publication provides summaries of laws for about 60 countries. Citations to the full text of sources are included.

Location: Lexis path: Legal > Find Laws by Country or Region > Search International Law Digests > Martindale-Hubbell(R) International Law Digest

*International Digest of Health Legislation.* World Health Organization.

This site contains selections of national and international health legislation. Texts of legislation are summarized in English.

Location: <http://apps.who.int/idhl-rils/frame.cfm?language=english>

## **VI. Websites**

A number of websites aggregate links to sources of foreign laws on the Internet. Most of these sources are in the vernacular; however you may find some links to English translations.

*Foreign & International Law Resources: An Annotated Guide to Web Sites Around the World.* Harvard Law School Library.

This site is organized alphabetically by country and indicates whether materials are available in English.

Location: [http://www.law.harvard.edu/library/research/guides/int\\_foreign/web-resources/index.html](http://www.law.harvard.edu/library/research/guides/int_foreign/web-resources/index.html)

*Foreign Primary Law on the Web.* University of Houston O'Quinn Law Library.  
This site is organized alphabetically by country. It lists English and vernacular sources of primary law.

Location: <http://www.law.uh.edu/libraries/fi/foreignlaw.html>

*Guide to Law Online.* Law Library of Congress.

This site lists English and vernacular sources of law. It is organized alphabetically by country.

Location: <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide.php>

*World Law Guide.*

This site consists of a collection of links to world legal information on the internet.

Location: <http://www.lexadin.nl/wlg>

*World Legal Information Institute.*

WorldLII provides links to nearly 900 databases from 123 countries and territories.

Location: <http://www.worldlii.org>

## **VII. Sources of Translations by Subject and Jurisdiction**

These sources will provide translations of legislation, regulations or case law. They generally focus on one particular jurisdiction or legal area.

### **A. Subjects**

#### **Business and Commercial Law**

*Digest of Commercial Laws of the World.*

Location: Stack-1 K1004.2 .D54

*Investment Laws of the World.*

Location: Stack-1 K1112 .A48 1972

*RIA Worldwide Commercial Law.*

This publication contains English versions of foreign laws related to business operations including labor, civil, contract, banking, and investment laws.

Location: Web access through the library catalog

*Trade Secrets Throughout the World.*

Location: Westlaw database identifier: TRADESEC

There are a number of treatises that deal with conducting business abroad. Lexis and Juris are important publishers in this area. Some of these treatises contain translations of foreign codes

and regulations related to business. Three of the titles are listed below. For additional titles see Part B: Jurisdictions.

*Doing Business in Argentina.* (Juris).

Location: Treatise KHA333 .B86 D64 1998

*Doing Business in Brazil.* (Juris).

Location: Treatise KHD333 .B86 D65 1979 and web access through the library catalog

*Doing Business in Japan.* (Lexis).

Location: Lexis path: Legal > Find Laws by Country or Region > Japan > Doing Business in Japan

## **Constitutional Law**

*Constitutions of the Countries of the World.*

Location: Stack-1 K3157 .A2 B43 and web access through the library catalog

*Constitutions of Dependencies and Territories.*

Location: Stack-1 K3157 .E5 C65

## **Environmental and Natural Resources Law**

*ECOLEX.* International Union for Conservation of Nature, UN Environment Program & UN Food and Agricultural Organization.

This site provides access to treaties, legislation and cases in the field of environmental law.

Location: <http://www.ecolex.org/start.php>

*FAOLEX.* Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations.

This site provides access to summaries and full text translations of laws and regulations on agriculture, the environment, land, soil and water.

Location: <http://faolex.fao.org/faolex>

## **General**

*International Legal Materials*

ILM will occasionally publish English translations of foreign laws and cases.

Location: Stack-1 K9 .N837, HeinOnline, Westlaw (selected coverage from 1980),

Lexis (1962- )

*University of Texas Institute for Transnational Law Foreign Law Translation.*

This website provides translations of cases and statutes from Germany and France and cases from Israel and Austria.

Location: [http://www.utexas.edu/law/academics/centers/transnational/work\\_new](http://www.utexas.edu/law/academics/centers/transnational/work_new)

## **International Law**

*Oxford Reports on International Law in Domestic Courts.*

This database covers international law as applied in the domestic courts around the world. It contains English translations of cases from about 70 jurisdictions, with a focus on cases decided after 2000. Older cases and additional jurisdictions are expected to be added in the future.

Location: Database access through the library catalog

*International Law Reports.*

This reporter publishes cases in English from national and international courts bearing on public international law.

Location: Stack-1 JX68 .I55 and web access through the library catalog

## **Intellectual Property**

*Collection of Laws for Electronic Access.* World Intellectual Property Organization.

This database provides access to intellectual property legislation from many countries.

Location: <http://www.wipo.int/clea/en>

*Collection of National Copyright Laws.* UNESCO.

Location: <http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php->

[URL\\_ID=14076&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=14076&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

*European Intellectual Property Review.*

The EIPR contains an English abstract of selected intellectual property cases and new legislation from around the world.

Location: Stack-1 K5 .U765

## **Labor**

*NATLEX.* United Nations International Labour Organization.

This database contains national labor and social security legislation. It provides abstracts and some full-text versions in Spanish, French or English.

Location: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex\\_browse.home?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home?p_lang=en)

## **Tax**

*RIA Worldwide Tax Law.*

Location: Web access through the library catalog

## **B. Jurisdictions**

### **China**

#### **Print Publications**

*1997 Criminal Code of the People's Republic of China.* (1998).

Location: Treatise KNQ3794.3199 .A52 1998

*Amended Criminal Procedure Law and the Criminal Court Rules of the People's Republic of China.* (2000)

Location: Treatise KNQ4604.8 2000

*China Law & Practice.*

This journal contains a digest of new national and local laws and regulations and full translations of selected laws and regulations.

Location: Stack-1 K3 .H55 & Internet

*China Law Reports.*

This case reporter covers criminal, civil, administrative and economic law litigation for the years 1991-1994.

Location: Treatise KNQ19 .A35 C48

*China Laws for Foreign Business.* CCH Asia.

Location: Treatise KNQ78 .B87 C48 1985

*Civil Procedure Law and Court Rules of the People's Republic of China.* (2006).

Location: Treatise KNQ1710 .L9 2006

*Competition Law in China.* (2002).

The appendixes to this book contain translations of the unfair competition law, trademark law, product quality law and other related laws.

Location: Treatise KNQ 1234 .J56 2002

*Contract Law of the People's Republic of China.* (1999). Wei Luo.

Location: Treatise KNQ858 A31999 .C49 1999

*Corporate Counsel's Guide to Doing Business in China.* Kenneth A. Cutshaw.

Location: Treatise KNQ78.B87 C67 1999

*Research Guide to Chinese Patent Law and Practice.* (2002). Robert H. Hu.

The appendixes to this book contain translations of the patent law and implementing regulations.

Location: Treatise KNQ1194 H76 2002

## Databases and Websites

### *China Education and Research Network.*

This site provides English translations of Chinese laws, regulations and reports related to education.

Location: [http://www.edu.cn/english\\_1369/index.shtml](http://www.edu.cn/english_1369/index.shtml)

### *Chinese Civil and Commercial Law (CCCL).*

This site contains translations of Chinese civil law including banking, labor and aviation law.

Location: <http://www.civillaw.com.cn/english>

### *Chinese Commercial and Maritime Trial Involving Foreign Elements (CCMT).* The Supreme People's Court of the PRC.

This site provides English translations of maritime and commercial cases as well as English versions of general regulations and legislation.

Location: <http://www.ccmt.org.cn/english>

### *iSinoLaw.*

This is a subscription database that offers both Chinese and English versions of the constitution, legislation, regulations, court judgments and arbitral awards.

Location: Database access through the library catalog

### *Law of Hong Kong.*

This government site contains the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, statutes and treaties.

Location: <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/government/law/index.htm#p2>

### *Laws and Regulations.* Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China.

This government site has a searchable database of English translations of Chinese laws.

Location: <http://english.gov.cn>

### *Legal Reference System.* Judiciary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

This government site contains court cases from Hong Kong and China.

Location: <http://legalref.judiciary.gov.hk/lrs/common/ju/judgment.jsp>

### *Macao SAR Government Portal.*

This government site contains links to English versions of the industrial property code, commercial code, and the basic law of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

Location: [http://www.dsi.gov.mo/index\\_e1.html](http://www.dsi.gov.mo/index_e1.html)

### *SIPO.* State Intellectual Property Office of the PRC.

This site offers English translations of China's intellectual property legislation and regulations and a searchable database of patents.

Location: [http://www.sipo.gov.cn/sipo\\_English](http://www.sipo.gov.cn/sipo_English)

*Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China.*

This site offers full text English translation of laws and regulations.

Location: <http://en.chinacourt.org>

## **Regional (Europe, Middle East, Asia)**

*East European Case Reporter of Constitutional Law.*

This reporter contains selected cases from the courts of Eastern Europe in the field of constitutional law.

Location: Treatise KJC4444.52 .E18

*European Commercial Cases.*

This reporter contains judgments of the national European courts in the area of commercial and business law.

Location: Treatise KJC2044.52 .E96

*European Commission for Democracy Through Law.*

This website of the Council of Europe provides English summaries of European constitutional law cases.

Location: <http://codices.coe.int>

*European Current Law.*

This publication contains English language abstracts of EU case law and legislation, and national and international material from European countries.

Location: Stack-1 K5 .U7672

*Central and Eastern European Legal Materials.*

This publication contains English translations of laws from Central and Eastern European countries.

Location: KJC2044.4 .C45 1990

## **France**

### **Print Publications**

*French Business Law in Translation.*

Location: Treatise KJV2199 .F74 2008

*The French Civil Code.*

Location: Treatise KJV444.21804 .A52 1995

*French Code of Civil Procedure in English.*

Location: Treatise KJV3932.2 .F74 2008

*The French Code of Criminal Procedure.*

Location: Treatise KJV8412.3 1988

*French Commercial Code in English.*

Location: Treatise KJV2194.31807.A52 F74

*The French Penal Code of 1994.*

Location: Treatise KJV7974.31992 .A52 1999

*Materials for the French Legal System: Constitution, Treaty, Codes, Laws.*

Location: Treatise KJV233 .D48 1979

## **Databases and Websites**

*Conseil Constitutionnel.*

The website of the Constitutional Council of the French Republic contains translations of the French Constitution and related case law.

Location: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/english/homepage.14.html>

*Legifrance.*

This French government site contains English translations of French codes.

Location: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr>

*The Napoleon Series.*

In this database the Research Section on Government and Politics contains a subheading for France and its governments. Under this subheading there are English translations of the Penal Code of 1810, the Civil Code (Code Napoleon) and other legislation and decrees.

Location: <http://www.napoleon-series.org/>

## **Germany**

### **Print Publications**

*Business Transactions in Germany.*

This is the German version of the *Doing Business in* series. It contains translations of the Constitution, Commercial Code, Law Against Restraints of Trade and Unfair Competition, Banking Act, Stock Corporation Law, Act Regulating Standard Contract Terms, Works Constitution Act of 1972, Patent, Trademark and Copyright Acts.

Location: Treatise KK2057 .B87 1983 & Lexis path: Legal > Find Laws by Country or Region > Germany > Business Transactions in Germany

*Corporate Law in Germany.*

This publication includes the Limited Liability Company Act and Stock Corporation Act.

Location: KK2455.8 .W57 2004

*Energy Law in Germany.*

Included in this publication are the Act on the Supply of Electricity and Gas, Act Revising Energy Industry Legislation, Law on Excise Tax on Electricity, Renewable Energy Sources Act, Combined Heat and Power Act, Federal Tariff Scale for Electricity, Ordinance Regarding General Conditions for the Supply of Electricity to Tariff Customers, Ordinance on Concession Fees for Electricity and Gas, Associations' Agreement VV Strom II Plus.

Location: KK6848 .C67 2003

*German Commercial Code & Code of Civil Procedure: in English.*

Location: Treatise KK2044.5 2001

*The German Penal Code: as Amended as of December 19, 2001.*

Location: Treatise KK7975.51871 .A52 2002

*German Public Takeover Law: Bilingual Edition with an Introduction to the Law.* Included in this publication are the Securities Acquisition and Takeover Act, Applicability Regulation, Supervision Notice Regulation, Offer Regulation, Advisory Committee Regulation, Objection Committee Regulation, Fees Regulation, Stock Corporation Act, Corporate Governance Code, Commercial Code, Stock Exchange Act, Securities Trading Act, Securities Trading Reporting and Insider Register Regulation, Market Manipulation Regulation, European Merger Control Regulation and the Act Against Restraints of Competition.

Location: Treatise KK2628 .A28 2007

*German Securities Regulation.*

This title includes the Stock Exchange Act, Stock Exchange Admission Regulation, Securities Prospectus Act, Securities Prospectus Regulation, Securities Trading Act and the Takeover Code.

Location: Treatise KK2247 .K73 2001

*The German Stock Corporation Act.*

Location: Treatise KK2452.51965 .A4 2000

*Handelsgesetzbuch. English & German.*

This is a bilingual version of the Commercial Code.

Location: Treatise KK2045.51897 .A52 2003

## **Databases and Websites**

*Centre for German Legal Information.*

This site provides access to full-text translations and summaries of German legislation and case law.

Location: <http://www.cgerli.org/index.php?id=61>

*German Law Archive.*

This site provides translations of legislation and case law.

Location: <http://www.iuscomp.org/gla/index.html>

*German Federal Constitutional Court.*

Most of the case law in this site is in German; however there are a few full text English translations.

Location: <http://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/en>

## **Mexico**

*Commercial, Business and Trade Laws: Mexico.*

These translations were published in 1983.

Location: Treatise KGF1054.59 .C63

*The Federal Civil Code of Mexico.*

Location: Treatise KGF404.32 .F42 2005

*Federal Labor Law / Ley Federal del Trabajo.*

Location: Treatise KGF1784.32006 .A52 2006

*The Immigration Law of Mexico: Statute, Regulations, and Procedures Manual.*

Location: Treatise KGF2983 .I46 2003

*Mexican Commercial Code Annotated.*

Location: Treatise KGF1054.31889 .V37 2009

*Mexican Law: A Treatise for Legal Practitioners and International Investors.*

This treatise contains English translations of Mexican laws and regulations related to business and trade.

Location: Treatise KGF333.B86 .M49 1998

## **Databases and Websites**

*InterAm Database.* National Law Center for Inter-American Free Trade.

This database contains original language (Spanish or Portuguese) and English translations of legislation and case law from Latin American countries. The focus is on commerce, but other topics are also covered.

Location: Database access through the library catalog.