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A Translator's Toolbox: The Law, Moreau-Lislet's Library, and the Presence of Multilingual Dictionaries in Nineteenth-Century Louisiana

*Agustín Parise**

INTRODUCTION

The private law of Louisiana—as encapsulated prominently in the Louisiana Civil Code—presents two interesting features: this law is applicable in a mixed jurisdiction and is drafted in the English language. Louisiana indeed combines aspects of both common and civil law, and jurists who intend to implement continental European principles may value this interaction of systems while undertaking their practices and studies in the common law and vice versa.¹ After all, Louisiana may be considered a “Civil Law island” partially surrounded by a “sea of Common Law”—a status that has to be safeguarded to survive.² In addition, although the *lingua franca* now is English, the previous *lingua franca* applied in Louisiana for a significant time period. The fact that the Louisiana Constitution of 1845 instructed the bilingual publication in French and English is relevant for understating the legal history of civil

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This Article was drafted on the occasion of the *Louisiana Law Review's* 2016 Symposium of the Civil Law held in Baton Rouge on March 18, 2016 to celebrate the life and work of Alain A. Levasseur. The Author is indebted to Georgia D. Chadwick and Vicenç F. Feliú for facilitating, in 2009, a copy of the 1832 manuscript inventory of Moreau-Lislet's library. The title of this Article found inspiration in the study by Robert Feikema Karachuk, *A Workman's Tools: The Law Library of Henry Adams Bullard*, 42 AM. J. LEGAL HIST. 160 (1998).

1. Agustín Parise, *Report on the State of Louisiana to the Second Thematic Congress of the International Academy of Comparative Law*, 31 MISS. C. L. REV. 397, 403 (2013).

2. Agustín Parise, *Non-Pecuniary Damages in the Louisiana Civil Code Article 1928: Originality in the Early Nineteenth Century and Its Projected Use in Further Codification Endeavors* 14 (May 18, 2006) (unpublished LL.M. thesis, Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Louisiana State University) (on file with the Louisiana State University Law Library).

law codification in Louisiana.³ The Louisiana Constitution of 1868, however, returned to mandatory promulgation in the English language.⁴

Spanish, another language that had significant presence in the founding years of Louisiana,⁵ plays a significant role in fully understanding the current private law in Louisiana vis-à-vis the private law in Latin American jurisdictions. Scholars both of continental European and common law systems may look to Louisiana for civil law terminology in English.⁶ Alain A. Levasseur is well aware of those two interesting features, as his work has reflected for a number of decades.

Levasseur defends the civil law from his position at Louisiana State University, acting also as director of its Center for European Studies. He holds law degrees from *Université de Paris* and Tulane University, and honorary degrees from *Université d'Aix-Marseille* and *Université de Paris Panthéon Assas*.⁷ Among his many works are the *Louisiana Civil Code Précis Series*,⁸ where he showcases the unique composition of private law in Louisiana, and his *Dictionary of the Civil Code*,⁹ where he excels in presenting civil law terminology in English. Levasseur was one of the members of the expert committee for the 2014 translation of the French Civil Code into English by David W. Gruning, a major step undertaken to showcase the civil law tradition among the English-language legal discourse.¹⁰ Levasseur was also one of the translators of the *Catala Avant-*

3. See KATE WALLACH, RESEARCH IN LOUISIANA LAW 10 (2d ed. 1960) (citing LA. CONST. art. 132 (1845)).

4. LA. CONST. art. 109 (1868).

5. AGUSTÍN PARISE, HISTORIA DE LA CODIFICACIÓN CIVIL DEL ESTADO DE LUISIANA Y SU INFLUENCIA EN EL CÓDIGO CIVIL ARGENTINO 31–54 (2013).

6. Parise, *supra* note 1, at 403.

7. See *Alain A. Levasseur: Biography*, LSU LAW CENTER, <http://www.law.lsu.edu/directory/profiles/alain-a-levasseur/> [<https://perma.cc/J5FM-3MLW>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2016).

8. For additional information on the *Louisiana Civil Code Précis Series*, see Susan Gualtier, Book Review, *Louisiana Civil Code Précis Series*, 5 J. CIV. L. STUD. 305 (2012), and *Louisiana Civil Code Précis Series*, RUSSELL LONG CHAIR & CCLS NEWSL. (Ctr. of Civil Law Studies, Baton Rouge, La.), June 2010, at 3, available at <http://www.law.lsu.edu/ccls/newsletter/> [<https://perma.cc/X74J-8WPG>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2016).

9. For additional information on the *Dictionary of the Civil Code*, see *Dictionary of the Civil Code*, RUSSELL LONG CHAIR & CCLS NEWSL. (Ctr. of Civil Law Studies, Baton Rouge, La.), Dec. 2014, at 1, available at <http://www.law.lsu.edu/ccls/newsletter/> [<https://perma.cc/X74J-8WPG>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2016).

10. See *Legifrance Translations*, LEGIFRANCE, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Traductions/en-English/Legifrance-translations> [<https://perma.cc/46SV-DEEP>] (last visited Dec. 1, 2015).

Projet of the French Law of Obligations and the French Law of Prescriptions, and in that context he correctly stated that civilian concepts such as *solidarity* and *confusion* should not be translated or interpreted with common law terminology because they could easily generate misunderstandings.¹¹ Clearly, the knowledge of the Louisiana civil law scholars is invaluable,¹² and other scholars should esteem the more than 200 year-old tradition of English language civil law codification in Louisiana.¹³

Levasseur is the world-renowned expert on the life and work of an emblematic codifier of Louisiana law—Louis Casimir Elisabeth Moreau-Lislet. Levasseur masterfully reconstructed the biography of Moreau-Lislet,¹⁴ the man behind the Digest of 1808¹⁵ and the Civil Code of 1825.¹⁶ Thanks to Levasseur and his work, Moreau-Lislet has gained for Louisiana a place on the podium together with other great American codifiers, such as Eduardo Acevedo, Andrés Bello, David Dudley Field, Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield, and Augusto Teixeira de Freitas. Levasseur excelled on that research project as a legal historian, combining his private-law and comparative-law knowledge with the archival skills and meticulousness of a historian.¹⁷ Knowing the work and life of the great American codifiers

11. Alain Levasseur & Vicenç Feliú, *The English Fox in the Louisiana Civil Law Chausse-Trappe: Civil Law Concepts in the English Language; Comparativists Beware!*, 69 LA. L. REV. 715, 735–39 (2009).

12. See generally *id.*

13. See generally Olivier Moréteau, *Les frontières de la langue et du droit: vers une méthodologie de la traduction juridique*, 61 REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE DROIT COMPARE 695 (2009) (Fr.).

14. See, e.g., ALAIN A. LEVASSEUR, LOUIS CASIMIR ELISABETH MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW (1996) [hereinafter LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW]. There is a new edition of that work, with the assistance of Vicenç Feliú. ALAIN A. LEVASSEUR, LOUIS MOREAU LISLET: THE MAN BEHIND THE DIGEST OF 1808 (2008).

15. For additional information on the Digest of 1808, see Agustín Parise, *A Constant Give and Take: Tracing Legal Borrowings in the Louisiana Civil Law Experience*, 35 SETON HALL LEGIS. J. 1, 6–14 (2010).

16. For additional information on the Louisiana Civil Code of 1825, see *id.* at 17–21.

17. The reconstruction of the life of Moreau-Lislet by Levasseur motivated the following statement:

Levasseur's research in original materials from such diverse sources as the French National Archives, the New Orleans Notarial Archives, and even the parish records of Dondon, Haiti, where Moreau Lislet was born, has resulted in a collection of facsimile materials spanning and

might assist in better understanding and appreciating the seminal *corpora* they bequeathed.¹⁸

This Article scrutinizes the works included in Moreau-Lislet's library and identifies a number of dictionaries that may have served the Louisiana codifier to elaborate his seminal digest, codes, and translations. Previous studies have already highlighted the comparative richness of law libraries and their holdings in nineteenth-century Louisiana.¹⁹ The legal production of Moreau-Lislet—similar to that of Levasseur—crossed languages and jurisdictions and required command of the English, French, and Spanish laws and languages, among others. This Article also aims to illustrate that nineteenth-century Louisiana jurists developed libraries that served as translators' toolboxes when dealing with a multiplicity of foreign texts. Part I of this Article will address the life and work of Moreau-Lislet, devoting special attention to the translations of the *Siete Partidas* that Moreau-Lislet and Henry Carleton undertook in 1818 and 1820. Part II will expound on the contents of the Louisiana codifier's library, focusing on a number of dictionaries and reference works that may have assisted in the daily activities of Moreau-Lislet. This expounding is relevant today, because scholars are continuing to develop translators' toolboxes in Louisiana—Levasseur himself has developed a toolbox that one can find in his office and in the stacks of the Louisiana State University Law Library. One can grasp changes in legal order by looking at the law books that comprise the libraries of actors behind those changes, because books have always been fundamental tools of the legal profession.²⁰ Books help jurists find answers to legal questions, to identify useful and needed citations,²¹ and to ultimately erect their argumentative designs.

documenting the life of Moreau Lislet which is presently held in the Rare Book Collection of the Paul M. Hebert Law Center Law Library.

Vicencç Filii et al., *A Closer Look: A Symposium Among Legal Historians and Law Librarians to Uncover the Spanish Roots of Louisiana Civil Law*, 38 INT'L J. LEGAL INFO. 295, 306 n.46 (2010).

18. José María Castán Vázquez, *Los Libros Jurídicos Españoles Consultados por Vélez Sársfield*, in ESTUDIOS EN HOMENAJE AL DR. GUILLERMO A. BORDA 73 (1984).

19. See generally Mitchell Franklin, *Libraries of Edward Livingston and of Moreau Lislet*, 15 TUL. L. REV. 401 (1941).

20. See Rosemarie Davis Plasse, *Tools of the Profession: New Orleans Attorneys and Their Law Libraries from Statehood to Secession (1813-1861)*, at 1 (May 2000) (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Orleans).

21. Angela Fernandez, *Albert Mayrand's Private Law Library: An Investigation of the Person, the Law of Persons, and 'Legal Personality' in a Collection of Law Books*, 53 U. TORONTO L.J. 37, 37 (2003).

I. MOREAU-LISLET AND LEGAL TRANSLATIONS²²

Moreau-Lislet²³ was born on the island of Saint-Domingue on October 7, 1766²⁴ and studied law in France.²⁵ He also lived one year in Cuba, where he took advantage of this opportunity to improve his Spanish-language skills, before moving to New Orleans.²⁶ Moreau-Lislet was a successful lawyer who acted as a judge, attorney general, and senator for Louisiana.²⁷ He also served as a law editor²⁸ and was fluent in the three fundamental languages of Louisiana: English, French, and Spanish.²⁹ Fluency in those three languages enabled him to participate in the drafting of the Digest of 1808 and the Civil Code of 1825, among others, because a significant number of sources were available in those three languages. Moreau-Lislet gained a reputation by participating in codification endeavors in Louisiana, being one of the few codifiers worldwide who drafted and saw the enactment of two of his code-like texts on the same area of substantive law and for the same jurisdiction.³⁰ Moreau-Lislet died on December 3, 1832,³¹ in poor financial condition,³² due to—among other

22. This section draws, often verbatim, from Agustín Parise, *Codification of the Law in Louisiana: Early Nineteenth-Century Oscillation Between Continental European and Common Law Systems*, 27 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 133 (2012) [hereinafter Parise, *Codification of the Law in Louisiana*], and Agustín Parise, *Translators' Preface to the Laws of Las Siete Partidas Which are Still in Force in the State of Louisiana: Introductory Essay on the Translators' Preface to Las Siete Partidas*, 7 J. CIV. L. STUD. 311 (2014) [hereinafter Parise, *Translators' Preface*].

23. For additional readings on Moreau-Lislet, see LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 69–166.

24. There is some debate, however, that is the most probable date. *Id.* at 80, 83.

25. *Id.* at 95.

26. *See id.* at 114.

27. SHAEL HERMAN ET AL., THE LOUISIANA CIVIL CODE: A HUMANISTIC APPRAISAL 25 (1981).

28. René R. Nicaud, *The French Colonists from St. Domingue and, in Particular, Louis Moreau Lislet*, 20 LA. B.J. 285, 291 (1973).

29. LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 114.

30. Awareness of this fact was triggered during a presentation by Olivier Moréteau. Olivier Moréteau, Presentation, How Codes Connect to Legal Systems: Revisiting the Concept of Code Through a Study of Peripheral Provisions at the European Private Law Inst., Maastricht University (Neth.) (June 1, 2015).

31. LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 83.

32. Alain A. Levasseur, *A "Civil Law" Lawyer: Louis Casimir Elisabeth Moreau Lislet*, 42 LOY. L. REV. 202, 263 (1996).

reasons—the life of debauchery of his daughter.³³ Even when facing insolvency, however, Moreau-Lislet opted for preserving his library, making a clear statement about his affection towards the books he had gathered during his lifetime.³⁴ Moreau-Lislet was laid to rest at St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 in New Orleans.³⁵

Moreau-Lislet was involved in translation works during his lifetime. Translations of seminal texts and procedures were available in Louisiana because courts proceeded in both French and English.³⁶ Working knowledge of not only French, but also Spanish, was more than a convenient tool; it was a requirement.³⁷ Records indicate that in October 1804, Moreau-Lislet was already acting as Official Translator to the Orleans Territorial Legislature in New Orleans.³⁸ Moreau-Lislet was not only gifted in French and Spanish, but he also became a master of English after moving to the United States. All of these facts combined reflect that he was gifted in languages.³⁹ Levasseur has pointed out that Moreau-Lislet built a reputation by acting in that official capacity until June 1805,⁴⁰ and he also highlighted a number of 1805 resolutions by the Louisiana Legislature in which Moreau-Lislet certified translations of documents from French and Spanish into English.⁴¹ Moreau-Lislet did not find that experience fully rewarding,⁴² yet he did not give up his interest in translations. For example, in 1806 he translated Lewis Kerr's *Exposition of the Criminal Laws of the Territory of Orleans* into French,⁴³ showing his audience that his skills were not limited to private law. In April 1813, Moreau-Lislet made public his intention of translating, together with Étienne Mazureau, the Spanish *Siete Partidas*⁴⁴ into

33. LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 154–66.

34. Florence M. Jumonville, “Formerly the Property of a Lawyer”—*Books that Shaped Louisiana Law*, 24 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 161, 167 (2009).

35. Nicaud, *supra* note 28, at 305.

36. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 2.

37. *Id.* at 3.

38. Vernon Valentine Palmer, *The Strange Science of Codifying Slavery—Moreau Lislet and the Louisiana Digest of 1808*, 24 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 83, 89 (2009).

39. Filiu et al., *supra* note 17, at 301–02.

40. Levasseur, *supra* note 32, at 233.

41. *Id.* at 232.

42. *Id.* at 233.

43. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 171. On the importance of the work of Kerr, see Parise, *Codification of the Law in Louisiana*, *supra* note 22, at 142.

44. The *Siete Partidas* are traditionally attributed to the reign of Alfonso X, being drafted between 1256 and 1265. They were subject to several text alterations through time, and the most circulated edition is the one of 1555,

French.⁴⁵ Later, in 1818, Moreau-Lislet translated into English with Henry Carleton the titles of the *Siete Partidas* that dealt with promises and obligations, sale and purchase, and exchange—which comprised *Partida V*, Titles XI, V, and VI, respectively.⁴⁶ That work was published in New Orleans by the Roche Brothers.⁴⁷ The single volume filled 197 pages, placing the original Spanish text on the verso and the English translation on the recto. Moreau-Lislet and Carleton acknowledged that the structure, terms, and orthography of the Spanish they translated were 500 years old and were even difficult to understand by a nineteenth-century native Spanish speaker.⁴⁸ In 1820, a second translation of other titles of the *Siete Partidas* was published in New Orleans by James McKaraheer.⁴⁹ The second translation, also by Moreau-Lislet and Carleton, included titles from six of the seven *partidas*, neglecting the second *partida*, which dealt mainly with matters relating to the king.⁵⁰ The translation was presented in two volumes, continuously paginated until page 1248, including an index of titles for each volume and a general index, but did not include the original Spanish text. The first volume also included a *Translators' Preface*.⁵¹ Moreau-Lislet's translating works were of great influence on Louisiana's private law and legal history.

containing glosses by Gregorio López. The *Siete Partidas*, different from other corpus of that time, were systematical and integral. Each *partida*, or part, was divided into titles and laws, and dealt with an area of the law: (i) sources of law, Catholic faith, and church; (ii) kings, royal officials, and war; (iii) administration of justice and rights on things; (iv) marriage and persons; (v) contracts and other civil institutions; (vi) successions; and (vii) crimes and punishments. 1 ABELARDO LEVAGGI, *MANUAL DE HISTORIA DEL DERECHO ARGENTINO* 89–90 (2001); WALLACH, *supra* note 3, at 214–15.

45. John W. Cairns, *The de la Vergne Volume and the Digest of 1808*, 24 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 31, 51 (2009); *see also* LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 130–31, 189–91.

46. L. MOREAU & HENRY CARLETON, *A TRANSLATION OF THE TITLES ON PROMISES AND OBLIGATIONS, SALE AND PURCHASE, AND EXCHANGE FROM THE SPANISH OF LAS SIETE PARTIDAS* (1818).

47. *Id.*

48. *Id.* at v–vi.

49. 1 L. MOREAU LISLET & HENRY CARLETON, *THE LAWS OF LAS SIETE PARTIDAS, WHICH ARE STILL IN FORCE IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA* (1820). The legislative history indicates that the translation work, especially for volume 2, was not completed by 1820. 1820 La. Acts 20; 1821 La. Acts 22; LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 141–43.

50. Headings for the titles of the second *partida* were included in the English translation. 1 MOREAU LISLET & CARLETON, *supra* note 49, at 17–19.

51. *Id.* at iii–xxv. For more information on the preface, *see generally* Parise, *Translators' Preface*, *supra* note 22.

The translation work of Moreau-Lislet also had an impact on the legal community. Commerce tends to require the translation of legal information,⁵² and that need already existed in New Orleans in the nineteenth century, mainly due to the city's role as an important port.⁵³ The English translations of the *Siete Partidas* had an undisputed impact on the legal community of Louisiana, and many scholars deem these translations a significant accomplishment in American legal history.⁵⁴ In February 1822, the Louisiana Legislature instructed that copies of the 1820 translation were to be distributed to the judges of the different Louisiana state courts, the United States District Court for Louisiana, the legislature,⁵⁵ the executive branches of other American states, and to the President of the United States.⁵⁶ The secretary of state was also to preserve a number of copies, and the remaining copies were to be sold to the general public.⁵⁷ The aim was, as originally stated in the 1819 Act, to allow the legal community to gain "knowledge of this important branch of our civil jurisprudence."⁵⁸ A study shows that, after the publication of the translations, the frequency with which the *Siete Partidas* were cited by courts in Louisiana increased by 100%.⁵⁹ The English translation of the *Siete Partidas* also reached other American states, being cited by courts beyond the borders of Louisiana.⁶⁰

II. LIBRARY OF THE LOUISIANA CODIFIER

Mitchell Franklin has claimed that Louisiana's antebellum law libraries outshined those existing in other American states, which is in line with the daily operation in a continental European system of law.⁶¹ The diversity of common law and civil law materials from different

52. Gerard-René de Groot & Conrad J.P. van Laer, *The Dubious Quality of Legal Dictionaries*, 34 INT'L J. LEGAL INFO. 65, 65 (2006).

53. It should be noted that the need also exists today due to globalization.

54. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 404.

55. 1822 La. Acts 20; *see also* WALLACH, *supra* note 3, at 214. The Author is indebted to Mr. Alexandru-Daniel On for facilitating the copy of the abovementioned Act.

56. 1822 La. Acts 20.

57. *Id.*

58. 1819 La. Acts 44.

59. Raphael J. Rabalais, *The Influence of Spanish Laws and Treatises on the Jurisprudence of Louisiana: 1762-1828*, 42 LA. L. REV. 1485, 1505 (1982).

60. *See, e.g.*, Peter L. Reich, *Siete Partidas in My Saddlebags: The Transmission of Hispanic Law from Antebellum Louisiana to Texas and California*, 22 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 79, 82 (2007).

61. Mitchell Franklin, *Library of Michel de Armas*, 4 LA. L. REV. 573, 573 (1942).

jurisdictions served as the building blocks of the Louisiana legal system.⁶² Translators and codifiers many times work at random with the holdings of their private libraries, and Moreau-Lislet was no exception. Libraries were fundamental tools for translators and codifiers, because they provided the building blocks for their designs. Knowing the content of a library was and still is a requirement for the full understanding of law, particularly of comparative law. Gathering collections of books from different jurisdictions was the duty of nineteenth-century jurists. For example, in Spanish America—which included Río de la Plata and Louisiana—a comparative law library was very expensive,⁶³ and the most important libraries were placed in convents or universities.⁶⁴ Moreau-Lislet, being a renowned jurist in Louisiana, held a library with extensive collections that also included comparative law materials.⁶⁵ Nineteenth-century codification endeavors excel in illustrating the transfer of legal ideas not only across jurisdictions, but also across continents. That transfer required the elaboration of translations to fully achieve its potential. These would ultimately enable the effective reception of legal ideas in jurisdictions that did not share the same vernacular means of communication. Codification necessarily benefited from translations and did not encounter a deceleration process. Translations provided craftsmen with tools that helped them work with materials that resulted from codification endeavors undertaken in languages they did not master. Dictionaries were often the keys used to access or elaborate those translations, and they were therefore present in many private libraries.

A. *An Inventory as Final Opus*

The creation of libraries—including law libraries—has been considered the final opus of distinguished actors throughout centuries.⁶⁶ Providentially, an inventory was made of Moreau-Lislet's library, although that inventory did not include the full bibliographical information

62. *Id.* at 574. The claim was made with regards to the library of Michel de Armas, but may be also applied to Moreau-Lislet's library.

63. For information on Río de la Plata, see VICTOR TAU ANZOÁTEGUI, *LA CODIFICACION EN LA ARGENTINA (1810-1870)*, at 275–81 (1977), and Castán Vázquez, *supra* note 18, at 74. For information on Louisiana, see David Combe, *The Louisiana Lawyer's Roman-Law Library: Recollections of an Antiquarian Bibliophile*, 70 *TUL. L. REV.* 2003 (1996).

64. See José María Castán Vázquez, *Vélez Sársfield, Jurista Bibliófilo*, in *IV HOMENAJE A DALMACIO VÉLEZ SÁRSFIELD* 519, 523 (2000) (Arg.).

65. Combe, *supra* note 63, at 2017.

66. Castán Vázquez, *supra* note 64, at 520.

for the different books it contained.⁶⁷ Louis T. Caire undertook that inventory on December 19, 1832, a few weeks after the death of Moreau-Lislet.⁶⁸ The codifier had left his library to his testamentary executor, Jean Baptiste Desdunes, Jr., in his will on July 2, 1829.⁶⁹ Previous studies have indicated that the library included 410 titles, of which 383 were law books, altogether covering slightly over 1000 volumes.⁷⁰ Moreau-Lislet probably acquired a very significant number of these books within the first two decades of his arrival in New Orleans.⁷¹ The library included 175 titles in French and 168 in English, while other volumes were in Spanish and Latin.⁷² Moreau-Lislet also gathered books that addressed the law from other jurisdictions, particularly from France.⁷³ He was also familiar with Spanish legislation, as were other distinguished codifiers of the law, such as Vélez Sarsfield.⁷⁴ Moreau-Lislet devoted 42% of his library to treatises and commentaries of the law, covering mainly civil, commercial, maritime, and inheritance law.⁷⁵ The inventory of Moreau-Lislet's library suffered from some limitations, however. For example, readers encounter limitations in their analyses due to the language used by the notary or due to the lack of references to specific editions or volumes.⁷⁶ Similar limitations are encountered in other inventories of antebellum libraries.⁷⁷ Further, the spelling in the manuscript of the inventory and in Mitchell Franklin's reproduction also presents some errors.⁷⁸ One should note that inventories were made of the private law libraries of a number of the 1,403

67. See Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405–09; WALLACH, *supra* note 3, at 216.

68. See LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 165; Levasseur, *supra* note 32, at 262; Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 172.

69. See Moreau-Lislet Olographic Will, filed Dec. 6, 1832, 4 Recorded Folio 417 (on file with the Louisiana State University Law Library).

70. On the one hand, Franklin and Levasseur indicated that the library included 1008 volumes. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409; LEVASSEUR, MOREAU-LISLET: FOSTER FATHER OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW, *supra* note 14, at 165. On the other hand, Jumonville indicated 1002 volumes. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 172.

71. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 172.

72. *Id.* at 173.

73. *Id.*

74. Castán Vázquez, *supra* note 18, at 76.

75. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 173.

76. *Id.* at 169–71.

77. See generally *id.*

78. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 404–05.

Louisiana lawyers that were admitted for practice between 1813 and 1861.⁷⁹

Libraries are fundamental objects when trying to reconstruct the biography of an actor.⁸⁰ Moreau-Lislet's library, like every private library—and those libraries of other distinguished actors like Vélez Sarsfield in Río de la Plata—reflects the personality of the owner because it exposes areas of interest, guiding authors, and the owner's building blocks.⁸¹ Studying a private library may reveal the true interests of a specific actor.⁸² The holdings of nineteenth-century Louisiana private libraries may be divided into five broad groups: (1) case reports, including decisions from English and American courts; (2) statutory compilations, encapsulating the enactments from Congress and the state legislatures, including legislation from the Spanish and French periods; (3) digests, offering an expedited access to the abstracts of decisions, arranged according to topics or alphabetically; (4) treatises, offering doctrinal explanations on different areas of the law; and (5) dictionaries, being fundamental tools to fully unveil the nuances of the different terms of art.⁸³ Moreau-Lislet's library included materials that fell within each of these five groups. Many Louisiana antebellum libraries were rich in Spanish materials, and Moreau-Lislet's library was no exception.⁸⁴ Libraries in Louisiana were well garnished with civil and common law authorities.⁸⁵ Further, Moreau-Lislet's library held some *exotica* due to the diversity of legal sources in his jurisdiction, a situation that also took place in libraries of other mixed jurisdictions, like Quebec, during the nineteenth century.⁸⁶ Libraries of antebellum lawyers—including Moreau-Lislet—contained translations of foreign-language works, such as Domenico Alberto Azuni's *The Maritime*

79. A total of 58 inventories were made of the libraries of the lawyers that died before 1861. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 3.

80. Agustín Parise, *Estudios biográficos de alcance ius-historiográfico: reflexiones sobre nuevas tendencias y líneas de trabajo*, REVISTA DE HISTORIA DEL DERECHO, July–Dec. 2013, at 159, 165 (Arg.).

81. Castán Vázquez, *supra* note 64, at 528.

82. M.H. Hoeflich & Louis de la Vergne, *Gustavus Schmidt: His Life & His Library*, 1 ROMAN LEGAL TRADITION 112, 115 (2002).

83. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 7–8.

84. Reich, *supra* note 60, at 80.

85. Shael Herman, *The Louisiana Code of Practice (1825): A Civilian Essay Among Anglo-American Sources*, 23 TUL. EUR. & CIV. L.F. 51, 67 (2008).

86. Eric H. Reiter, *Imported Books, Imported Ideas: Reading European Jurisprudence in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Quebec*, 22 LAW & HIST. REV. 445, 459 (2004).

Law of Europe.⁸⁷ This work by Azuni⁸⁸ was included in Moreau-Lislet's library⁸⁹ and was also mentioned in the preface to the 1820 translation of the *Siete Partidas*.⁹⁰ Viewing the library as an object could indicate if owners of libraries were permeable to foreign works and ideas, or if by the contrary the owners would deal in isolation with law in their specific jurisdictions.

Practitioners, scholars, courts, and translators welcomed literature that would succeed in making the law accessible to them. Encyclopedias, repertories, vocabularies, and dictionaries excelled in assisting the legal community in the interpretation of the laws. Analytical works were therefore well received, providing a universal approach to the different areas of the law. The formation of a common terminology had motivated the need to develop specialized dictionaries and encyclopedias, and those works provided legal communities with small libraries of the multiple volumes of legislation. Moreau-Lislet, in his capacity as Louisiana codifier, certainly worked with the holdings of his library—a library that included a number of encyclopedias and reference works in multiple languages, particularly works that dealt with Roman, Canon, French, Spanish, and United States law.⁹¹ For example, the library included the 1809 *La clef des lois romaines*⁹² by Fieffé-Lacroix,⁹³ which in France served as a means to legitimize the provisions of the Civil Code by offering a historical perspective and by offering a Roman law vocabulary that could be linked to the terms of the Napoleonic codes.⁹⁴ The library also included

87. M.H. Hoeflich, *Translation & the Reception of Foreign Law in the Antebellum United States*, 50 AM. J. COMP. L. 753, 771 (2002).

88. 1-2 M. D. A. AZUNI, *THE MARITIME LAW OF EUROPE* (1806).

89. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 407. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Azuni's maritime law (2)."

90. 1 MOREAU LISLET & CARLETON, *supra* note 49, at xvi n.1. The *Translators' Preface* incorrectly referred to Azum. *Id.*

91. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405-09.

92. FIEFFE-LACROIX, *LA CLEF DES LOIS ROMAINES, OU DICTIONNAIRE ANALYTIQUE ET RAISONNE DE TOUTES LES MATIERES CONTENUES DANS LE CORPS DE DROIT* (1809).

93. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Clef des lois Romaines (2)."

94. *Id.*; Pierre-Nicolas Barenot, *A View of French Legal Lexicography – Tradition and Change from a Doctrinal Genre to the Modern Era*, in LEGAL LEXICOGRAPHY: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE 11, 19 (Máirtín Mac Aodha ed., 2014).

the well-circulated *Dictionnaire du Digeste*,⁹⁵ a reference work of the Digest of Justinian by Claude François Thévenot de Saules.⁹⁶

Canon law was also present in the Louisiana codifier's library. A copy of the eighteenth-century Catholic encyclopedia *Prompta bibliotheca*⁹⁷ by Lucius Ferraris was included in the holdings of the library.⁹⁸ That work was deemed the "world's first true Catholic encyclopedia,"⁹⁹ although which edition Moreau-Lislet held is not certain. Multiple editions had been published since 1746, and among the most recent to Moreau-Lislet's time was the one of 1795 in ten volumes.¹⁰⁰ The library further included the French *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence*¹⁰¹ by Philippe A. Merlin,¹⁰² which in its fourth edition comprised 17 volumes and was published from 1812 to 1826.¹⁰³ Merlin's encyclopedic work was found in law libraries in Louisiana, and lawyers often referred to it.¹⁰⁴ The library also included the analytical *Teatro de la Legislación*¹⁰⁵ by Antonio Javier Pérez y López,¹⁰⁶ which was deemed a fundamental auxiliary literature that was developed to assist readers in the interpretation of the Spanish laws. John W. Cairns indicated that Moreau-Lislet relied on the extensive

95. 1 CLAUDE FRANÇOIS THÉVENOT DE SAULES ET AL., *DICIONNAIRE DU DIGESTE, OU SUBSTANCE DES PANDECTES JUSTINIENNES* (1808).

96. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Dictionnaire du Digeste (2)."

97. F. LUCII FERRARIS, *PROMPTA BIBLIOTHECA CANONICA, JURIDICA, MORALIS, THEOLOGIA, NEC NON ASCETICA, POLEMICA, RUBRICISTICA, HISTORICA* (1795).

98. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Ferraris biblioteca (5)."

99. *Resource Page on Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca*, CANONLAW.INFO, http://www.canonlaw.info/canonlaw_IUSPROMPT.htm (last visited Feb. 17, 2016).

100. It should be noted that the inventory indicated five volumes, yet the holding in the library of Moreau-Lislet could have been incomplete. *See* Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405.

101. 1-17 PHILIPPE A. MERLIN, *RÉPERTOIRE UNIVERSEL ET RAISONNÉ DE JURISPRUDENCE* (4th ed. 1812–1826).

102. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Répertoire de Jurisprudence (17)." That entry could refer to the work of Merlin.

103. WALLACH, *supra* note 3, at 197.

104. *See id.*

105. ANTONIO JAVIER PÉREZ Y LÓPEZ, *TEATRO DE LA LEGISLACION UNIVERSAL DE ESPAÑA E INDIAS* (1791).

106. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Teatro de la legislacion de España &c (do)."

historic introduction included in Pérez y López's *Teatro de la Legislación* when drafting the 1820 *Translators' Preface* to the English translation of the *Siete Partidas*.¹⁰⁷ Again, encyclopedias and reference works provided the legal community with small libraries of the multiple volumes of foreign legislation.

B. Presence of Dictionaries and Reference Works

Dictionaries—both general and specialized—occupied a place in Moreau-Lislet's library, and Lévasséur most probably would consider that fact relevant. Louisiana private libraries included reference works, and particularly dictionaries, that were consulted when dealing with the daily activities of the legal profession.¹⁰⁸ General and specialized dictionaries were indispensable tools for the legal community in Louisiana.¹⁰⁹ Specialized dictionaries assisted in dealing with terms and phrases that were present in legislation and court decisions, and they often contained a historical explanation of the law.¹¹⁰ After all, jurists can use dictionaries as life jackets on a boat: not always needed, but extremely useful on a specific occasion.¹¹¹ Ownership of dictionaries—mainly of specialized dictionaries—also reflected that the owner aimed to attain at least some basic information on a multiplicity of matters.¹¹² Unsurprisingly, other jurists and codifiers also held a number of dictionaries in their private libraries during the nineteenth century. For example, the emblematic codifier Vélez Sarsfield held dictionaries in his Río de la Plata library.¹¹³ Library holdings with dictionaries were likewise not uncommon in Louisiana, as they have been found in the libraries of, among others, Henry Adams Bullard,¹¹⁴ Michel de Armas,¹¹⁵ Christian Roselius and Alfred

107. Cairns, *supra* note 45, at 73.

108. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 168–69.

109. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 18.

110. *Id.*

111. This expression was borrowed from Michele Graziadei, *Il Giudice e Il Dizionario*, in STUDI IN ONORE DI ALDO FRIGNANI: NUOVI ORIZZONTI DEL DIRITTO COMPARATO EUROPEO E TRANSNAZIONALE 859, 867 (Gianmaria Ajani et al. eds., 2011).

112. Abelardo Levaggi, *La Biblioteca del Doctor Francisco Pombo de Otero*, 8 REVISTA DE HISTORIA DEL DERECHO 475, 480 (1980) (Arg.).

113. CATÁLOGO DE LA DONACIÓN DEL DOCTOR DALMICO VÉLEZ SARSFIELD 43–45 (Córdoba Biblioteca Mayor ed. 1980).

114. Robert Feikema Karachuk, *A Workman's Tools: The Law Library of Henry Adams Bullard*, 42 AM. J. LEGAL HIST. 160, 189 (1998).

115. See generally Franklin, *supra* note 61.

Phillips,¹¹⁶ and Gustavus Schmidt.¹¹⁷ These types of holdings were also found in the library of Pierre Auguste Bourguignon Derbigny,¹¹⁸ who was another important codifier of the law in Louisiana.¹¹⁹ Bilingual and monolingual legal dictionaries could occupy a paramount place in the translation processes, often providing linguistic contexts for terms.¹²⁰ Bilingual legal dictionaries, monolingual legal dictionaries, and lexicons were—and still are—fundamental elements within a comparative law library,¹²¹ because they are used to translate statutes, rules, jury instructions, and contract terms.¹²² General dictionaries also occupied a fundamental place in private libraries.

Moreau-Lislet's library included a number of dictionaries and reference works, as indicated in the 1832 inventory.¹²³ This Article will only mention a few of those holdings to illustrate their diversity and the role those texts may have played as tools, both for daily practice and for the elaboration of legislation and translations. The two-volume edition of the seventeenth-century *Lexicon Iuridicum*¹²⁴ by Johannes Calvinus deserves special mention due to the influence it had in the elaboration of

116. See generally Mitchell Franklin, *The Library of Christian Roselius and Alfred Phillips*, 23 LA. L. REV. 704 (1963).

117. See generally MICHAEL H. HOEFELICH ET AL., THE 1877 SALE CATALOGUE OF GUSTAVUS SCHMIDT'S LIBRARY (2005). Once more back in South America, and again as illustration, dictionaries—both general and specialized—were found in the libraries of, among others, Francisco Pombo de Otero, Levaggi, *supra* note 112, at 480; Francisco Gutiérrez de Escobar, Daisy Rípodas Ardanaz, *Francisco Gutiérrez de Escobar: Su biblioteca y sus escritos*, 2 REVISTA DE HISTORIA DEL DERECHO 173, 186–88 (1974); and Mariano Izquierdo, Daisy Rípodas Ardanaz, *La Biblioteca de Mariano Izquierdo: Un repositorio jurídico atípico en el Buenos Aires finicolonial*, 12 REVISTA DE HISTORIA DEL DERECHO 303, 316 (1984). In 1807, Izquierdo claimed to use these books to “further develop the mother tongue and to learn the foreign.” (*Id.* (Author's translation)).

118. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 18.

119. See PARISE, *supra* note 5, at 85–86.

120. See de Groot & van Laer, *supra* note 52, at 65.

121. See Dennis C. Kim-Prieto, En la tierra del ciego, el tuerco es rey: *Problems with Current English-Spanish Legal Dictionaries, and Notes Toward a Critical Comparative Legal Lexicography*, 100 LAW LIBR. J. 251, 252–53 (2008).

122. For references to the use of dictionaries in the United States during the twentieth century, see Sergio D. Stone, *A Study of Dictionaries in U.S. and Latin American Courts*, 36 COLO. LAW. 115, 116 (2007).

123. See generally Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405–09.

124. JOHANNES CALVINUS, LEXICON IURIDICUM IURIS CAESAREI, SIMUL ET CANONICI: FEUDALIS ITEM, CIVILIS, CRIMINALIS (1622); see also *Johannes Calvinus (1550–1614)*, TARLTON L. LIBR., https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/dictionaries/roman_law/calvinus.html [https://perma.cc/924D-9XX7] (last visited Feb. 17, 2016).

dictionaries. That work was in Moreau-Lislet's library,¹²⁵ and although the exact edition that the codifier held is uncertain, the *Lexicon Iuridicum* offered solid information on *Ius commune* terminology—a fundamental building block for the civil law system in Louisiana.

Moreau-Lislet also held in his library a number of law dictionaries. For example, he had the four volumes of *Le nouveau Ferrière*,¹²⁶ probably in the 1804 edition by Ch D'Agar and Jean-Baptiste-François de Laporte.¹²⁷ That dictionary offered information on the *ancien* and the new law in France for the different entries, and that contrast could be useful to contextualize and eventually better understand the meaning of particular entries. The library included generic references to a *Law Grammar*,¹²⁸ a *Dictionnaire de droit*¹²⁹—Law Dictionary—in two volumes, and a *Dictionnaire des Lois*¹³⁰—Dictionary of Laws. The vagueness of the inventory makes the identification of those works impossible. The Law Dictionary and the Dictionary of Laws could even be in another language, the titles perhaps having been translated into French by the notary who elaborated the inventory. The text could refer to *A Law Grammar: Or, An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of English Jurisprudence* of 1791, a handy work offering elaborated definitions and explanations of laws of nature, laws of God, law of nations, and civil law. That work included a *Vocabula artis* in the final chapter with a selection of terms of law, resembling a modern dictionary.¹³¹ According to the authors of that “law grammar,” the terms of law were “artificial or technical words and terms of art particularly used in, and adapted to, the profession of the Law.”¹³²

125. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Calvini—Lexicon Juridicum (2).”

126. C.H. DAGAR, *LE NOUVEAU FERRIERE, OU DICTIONNAIRE DE DROIT ET DE PRATIQUE CIVILE, COMMERCIAL, CRIMINEL ET JUDICIAIRE* (1804); see 2 J.-M. QUÉRARD, *LA FRANCE LITTÉRAIRE OU DICTIONNAIRE BIBLIOGRAPHIQUE* 368 (1828).

127. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 405. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Le Nouveau Ferrière (4).”

128. *Id.* at 407.

129. *Id.* at 405.

130. *Id.* at 406.

131. *A LAW GRAMMAR: OR, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ENGLISH JURISPRUDENCE* 531–44 (1791).

132. *Id.* at 531.

Moreau-Lislet owned a copy of *The Law-Dictionary*¹³³ by Giles Jacob,¹³⁴ the important English lexicographer who first compiled that work.¹³⁵ Copies were also found in the library of Derbigny, another Louisiana codifier. Lexicons were very common in French and Spanish; for example, Derbigny also held texts used in the translation of works into German and Chinese.¹³⁶ Moreau-Lislet also owned a copy of Richard Burn's *A New Law Dictionary*,¹³⁷ of which a first edition was published posthumously in 1792.¹³⁸ Moreau-Lislet held a one-volume edition, one could therefore speculate that he owned an edition published in Dublin, which was pirated and presented in one single volume.¹³⁹

Moreau-Lislet also owned general dictionaries. For example, his inventory included a reference to the seminal *Dictionary of the English Language*¹⁴⁰ by Samuel Johnson, first published in 1755.¹⁴¹ The codifier may have owned the 1812 edition in two volumes by Robert Gordon Latham.¹⁴² Moreau-Lislet also owned a copy of *A Dictionary of the English*

133. GILES JACOB & T. E. TOMLINS, *THE LAW-DICTIONARY: EXPLAINING THE RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE, OF THE ENGLISH LAW* (1811). On the 11 editions of that dictionary, see Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 18 n.28, and *Giles Jacob (1686-1744)*, TARLTON L. LIBR., https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/dictionaries/common_law/jacob.html [<https://perma.cc/B8NK-EUXE>] (last visited Feb. 16, 2016).

134. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 408. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Jacob's law dictionary (6)."

135. Plasse, *supra* note 20, at 18.

136. *Id.*

137. RICHARD BURN, *A NEW LAW DICTIONARY* (1792); *see also Richard Burn (1709-1785)*, TARLTON L. LIBR., https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/dictionaries/common_law/burn.html [<https://perma.cc/P96N-NR6U>] (last visited Feb. 16, 2016).

138. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 408. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Burn's law dictionary."

139. *Richard Burn (1709-1785)*, *supra* note 137. It could be also assumed that the second volume of the original edition was lost before the inventory was completed.

140. On the dictionary, see HENRY HITCHINGS, *DEFINING THE WORLD: THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF DR JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY* (2005).

141. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 408. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Johnson's dictionary (2)." Moreau-Lislet held a two-volume edition. There is a third edition of 1766 by Johnson himself, for example. However, due to the moving of Moreau-Lislet to the U.S. and to the amount of books he bought since his arrival to Louisiana, the reference in the inventory might refer to a nineteenth-century edition. *See supra* note 71, and accompanying text.

142. 1-2 ROBERT GORDON LATHAM, *A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE* (1812). It should be noted again that this claim is only speculation due to the lack of precise information in the inventory.

Language by Johnson and John Walker,¹⁴³ perhaps in the 1827 edition.¹⁴⁴ That work attended especially to English-language pronunciation, an aspect developed mainly by Walker, and not a minor tool for a French-speaking immigrant in Louisiana. The library indicated further interest of the codifier in pronunciation, as reflected by the three-volume edition of *A New Universal and Pronouncing Dictionary of the French and English Languages*¹⁴⁵ by Nicolas Gouin Dufief,¹⁴⁶ perhaps in the edition of 1810.

The interest to improve the English language was present in another book held by Moreau-Lislet. The library included an edition of *The Idioms of the French and English Languages* by Louis Chambaud.¹⁴⁷ The title of that book, in a 1793 edition, made the content of the book very attractive for a French immigrant in Louisiana, as it read: “Equally necessary to the French, and other Foreigners understanding *French*, to learn *English*: and The best, if not the only, Help extant to attain to the Knowledge of that Tongue.”¹⁴⁸ Moreau-Lislet as well had a copy of the *Nouveau Dictionnaire de Sobrino*.¹⁴⁹ Francisco Sobrino worked in his multilingual dictionary during the early eighteenth century.¹⁵⁰ It is not possible to identify precisely of which edition Moreau-Lislet held one copy in one volume. For example, a 1789 edition was divided into two volumes.¹⁵¹ The first

143. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Johnson & Walker’s dictionary.”

144. R. S. JAMESON, A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D. AND JOHN WALKER. WITH THE PRONUNCIATION GREATLY SIMPLIFIED AND ON AN ENTIRE NEW PLAN. REVISED, CORRECTED, AND ENLARGED, WITH THE ADDITION OF SEVERAL THOUSAND WORDS (1827).

145. 1-3 N. G. DUFIEF, A NEW UNIVERSAL AND PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES (1810).

146. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Dufief’s do (3).”

147. *Id.* at 408. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Chambaud’s idioms.”

148. LEWIS CHAMBAUD, THE IDIOMS OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES (1793).

149. That work was incorrectly referred to by Franklin as Sobimo, though correctly identified for this Article upon scrutiny of the manuscript of the inventory. See Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: “Dictionnaire de Sobimo.”

150. On the life and work of Sobrino, see *Vida y Obra de Francisco Sobrino (con breves noticias sobre Félix Antonio de Alvarado y Fray Gerónimo de Gracián)*, UNIVERSITAT DE VALENCIA, <http://parnaseo.uv.es/Lemir/Textos/Sobrino/INTRO.htm> [<https://perma.cc/954G-KADG>] (last visited Feb. 16, 2016).

151. FRANCISCO SOBRINO, SOBRINO AUMENTADO O NUEVO DICCIONARIO DE LAS LENGUAS ESPAÑOLA, FRANCESA Y LATINA (Francisco Cormon ed., 1789).

volume, divided into two parts, explained Spanish entries in French with references to the Latin translation of the specific entry, while the second volume explained French entries in Spanish with references to the Latin translation of the specific entry. This dictionary was indeed a fundamental tool for a translator in Louisiana, when building, for example, the Digest of 1808 or the translation of the *Siete Partidas*.

Even more general dictionaries embellished Moreau-Lislet's library. He owned a copy of the well circulated *Le Dictionnaire universel de la langue française*¹⁵² by Pierre-Claude-Victor Boiste, first published in 1800.¹⁵³ That dictionary included, since the second edition, the Latin equivalents for the different entries.¹⁵⁴ Moreau-Lislet further held a copy of the authoritative *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* in one of its first five editions.¹⁵⁵ The inventory is too vague to identify three more dictionaries. On the one hand, a *Dictionnaire Latin-Français* is very handy to move between Roman-law terminology and the terminology included in the French codes.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, it points to a *Dictionnaire universel, Français-Anglais*¹⁵⁷ in two volumes and to a *Dictionnaire Anglais-Français*,¹⁵⁸ hence enabling the double access to an entry from

152. PIERRE-CLAUDE-VICTOIRE BOISTE, *DICIONNAIRE UNIVERSEL DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, AVEC LE LATIN ET LES ETYMOLOGIES: MANUEL DE GRAMMAIRE, D'ORTHOGRAPHE ET DE NNÉOLOGIE* (1800); see also *Dictionnaire universel de la langue française*, *DICIONNAIRES*, <http://www.dictionnaires.culture.fr/fichedic/Universel-boiste.html> [<https://perma.cc/F4GX-X2DN>] (last visited Feb. 16, 2016).

153. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Boiste, dictionnaire universel."

154. *Dictionnaire universel de la langue française*, *supra* note 152. Again, it is not possible to know which edition Moreau-Lislet held, though it is for certain that he could not own beyond the seventh edition, because the inventory was made in 1832 and the eighth edition was published in 1834. See PIERRE-CLAUDE-VICTOIRE BOISTE, *DICIONNAIRE UNIVERSEL DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, AVEC LE LATIN ET LES ETYMOLOGIES; MANUEL ENCYCLOPÉDIQUE ET DE GRAMMAIRE, D'ORTHOGRAPHE DE VIEUX LANGAGE, DE NÉOLOGIE* (7th ed. 1829); PIERRE-CLAUDE-VICTOIRE BOISTE, *DICIONNAIRE UNIVERSEL DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, AVEC LE LATIN ET LES ETYMOLOGIES. MANUEL ENCYCLOPÉDIQUE DE GRAMMAIRE, D'ORTHOGRAPHE DE VIEUX LANGAGE, E NÉOLOGIE* (Charles Nodier rev. 8th ed. 1835).

155. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 409. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Ditto de l'académie française." The sixth edition was published only in 1835. See INSTITUT DE FRANCE, *DICIONNAIRE DE L'ACADEMIE FRANÇAISE* (6th ed. 1835).

156. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 406.

157. *Id.* at 409.

158. *Id.*

French to English and from English to French. The latter was a fundamental exercise when elaborating translations as the ones Moreau-Lislet undertook, for example, in his capacity of Official Translator in 1804–1805.

Two final notes that relate to dictionaries need to be pointed out. First, the presence of a specialized dictionary deserves particular attention, due to the important trade activities in New Orleans. The library held a copy of Joshua Montefiore's *A Commercial Dictionary: Containing the Present State of Mercantile Law, Practice and Custom*¹⁵⁹ in three volumes and first published in 1804.¹⁶⁰ Several pages were devoted to Louisiana in that dictionary,¹⁶¹ as New Orleans was an important hub, with its privileged position on the mouth of the main North-American water artery. Second, Moreau-Lislet held a copy of the *Éléments de la Langue Italienne*, showing his interest in the language of the Apennine Peninsula and reflecting curiosity in languages beyond French or Spanish.¹⁶² That work, which was published in Paris, could have been the one elaborated by Pierre-Louis Siret,¹⁶³ or the one by François Joseph Michault de Lannoy.¹⁶⁴

A look into the holdings of Moreau-Lislet's library indicated that the most-authoritative and best-circulated dictionaries and reference works of his time found a place within the universe of the Louisiana codifier. These dictionaries and reference works were his tools when moving from one language to another, within the realm of the law, building *corpora* that benefited from sources in a multiplicity of languages, including English, French, Latin, and Spanish. These dictionaries and reference works indeed comprised a translator's toolbox.

159. JOSHUA MONTEFIORE, *A COMMERCIAL DICTIONARY: CONTAINING THE PRESENT STATE OF MERCANTILE LAW, PRACTICE AND CUSTOM* (1804).

160. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 407. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Montefiore's commercial Dictionary (3)."

161. 3 MONTEFIORE, *supra* note 159, at 85–113. In the words of the editor of that dictionary:

So little has hitherto been known of this province [Louisiana], and so interesting to the people of this country [United States] has it in many respects become, that the editor thinks it proper to publish under this article [entry] such documents furnished by the Executive of the *United States* to Congress, as tend to illustrate its character and its importance.

Id. at 85.

162. Franklin, *supra* note 19, at 408. The entry in the reproduced inventory read: "Éléments de la Langue Italienne."

163. *See, e.g.*, PIERRE-LOUIS SIRET, *ÉLÉMENTS DE LA LANGUE ITALIENNE, OU MÉTHODE PRATIQUE POUR APPRENDRE FACILEMENT CETTE LANGUE* (1797).

164. *See, e.g.*, FRANÇOIS JOSEPH MICHAULT DE LANNOY, *ÉLÉMENTS DE LA LANGUE ITALIENNE* (1778).

CONCLUSION

Moreau-Lislet's library, which included a number of dictionaries, may have enabled the Louisiana codifier to elaborate his seminal Digest of 1808, Civil Code of 1825, and translations. The produced works of Moreau-Lislet required command of English, French, and Spanish law and language. That requirement is still present in Louisiana, where local civil law scholarship must benefit from the interaction with its civil law sister jurisdictions in other parts of the globe—for example, Latin America, Quebec, and continental Europe. Further, bilingual legal dictionaries will be needed as long as transactions grow across the Americas, as there will be a need to access the languages that articulate the different laws across the continent.¹⁶⁵ The requirement to move across languages moved nineteenth-century Louisiana jurists to develop libraries that served as translators' toolboxes when dealing with a multiplicity of foreign texts. Alain A. Levasseur is indeed familiar with that requirement, and devoted efforts to bridge Louisiana with its civil law sister jurisdictions.

This Article addressed two main aspects. First, the Article highlights events in the life and work of Moreau-Lislet, stressing his work as a codifier and translator. Moreau-Lislet—mainly due to the biographical work of Levasseur—gained for Louisiana a place on the podium together with other great American codifiers. He also elaborated translations that linked the Louisiana civil law with that of sister jurisdictions. Second, the Article informs on the contents of the library of the Louisiana codifier. A number of dictionaries and reference works showed that Moreau-Lislet had in his library the best tools a codifier and translator could have accessed during the nineteenth century in Louisiana, where fluency in foreign languages “was an asset if not a necessity.”¹⁶⁶

Louisiana has a rich legal culture. The life and work of Moreau-Lislet, together with the holdings of his library, attest to that value. Private libraries of antebellum Louisiana shaped the current legal culture in that southern state of the Union,¹⁶⁷ and their holdings attest to the knowledge of the Louisiana legal community at that time.¹⁶⁸ The holdings of those libraries indeed played a fundamental role in the shaping of Louisiana's distinctive legal culture,¹⁶⁹ and the state's unique legal heritage would have been different if actors would have been deprived of rich libraries and if translations would have not been undertaken. Louisiana actors were

165. Kim-Prieto, *supra* note 121, at 271.

166. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 163.

167. See Karachuk, *supra* note 114, at 188.

168. Jumonville, *supra* note 34, at 190.

169. *Id.*

searching for their own authorities,¹⁷⁰ and two building blocks—libraries and translations—offered actors a fertile ground to develop their own legal culture. These two building blocks played a fundamental role. The legal community considered books fundamental tools of the legal trade and important resources—the legal community depended on those tools, which one may consider equivalent to a hammer for a blacksmith or a hoe for a farmer.¹⁷¹ Language could have offered a barrier for the circulation of legal ideas, but translations secured a free movement.¹⁷² Those translations required a context in which to develop,¹⁷³ and this Article shows that, by looking at the life and work of Moreau-Lislet, an adequate context was present in nineteenth-century Louisiana. The context is also favorable today, and the two building blocks can be used to continue moving forward. The life and work of Alain Levasseur offer a prime example of the current need for complete libraries and effective translations in a globalized legal society.

170. *Id.* at 164.

171. Karachuk, *supra* note 114, at 160, 184, 187.

172. Hoeflich, *supra* note 87, at 775.

173. *Id.*