Unravelling a Babylonian Mystery: Authentication, Certification or Legalisation?

Saturday, September 13, 2008, 15.45-17.15

Herman de Leeuw, Informatie Beheer Groep, Netherlands - organizer, chair, speaker
Dr. Earl Stephen Hunt, US Network of Education Information, USA - speaker
One Stamp Can Combine Several Functions

Het eindexamen heeft omvat:

1. Nederlandse taal
2. Duitse taal
3. Engelse taal
4. Aardrijkskunde
5. Wiskunde
6. Economie
Stamps often on Basis of Notarized Copy
Also in Indonesia
No Responsibility for Contents …
Seal Stamps: The ABC of Authentication, Certification and/or Legalisation

- **Apostille** – simplified legalisation
- **Authentication** – like certification, ambiguous term, meaning either the act of producing a true photocopy, or the act of legalising a document
- **Certification** – ambiguous term, meaning either authentication/attestation and similar, that is, the act of producing a true photocopy and stamping it, or the act of awarding of a certificate
- **Legalisation** – in many jurisdictions, basically not more than making a document fit for legal purposes abroad; testifies to correctness of signatures
- **Validation** – explicitly mentions implied value to document by competent authority
- **Verification** – contacting competent authority to find out whether document has been legally awarded to recipient
Legalisation/Authentication and Apostilles

- Authentications and Apostilles
- Overseas governments sometimes need proof that Australian documents, or the signatures of Australian officials on documents, are genuine before they will accept them. We are able to certify that a signature, stamp or seal on a document is genuine by checking it against a specimen held on file, and then stamping the document with an Authentication or Apostille.

- This is a legal process. We will only issue stamps once we are satisfied the signature, stamp or seal on a document is not fraudulent. Instances of attempted fraud in the past mean that we need to be cautious about issuing an Authentication or Apostille.

Let’s Start with Legalisations
Legalisation Chain

- Can contain various stamps, from 1 to 5 or more different authorities
- Basically, only the correctness of a signatory is confirmed
- Question is: Which signatory?
- Look out for notarial certifications
Legalisation Chain Peru
Apostille Convention

- **Article 3**
  - The only formality that may be required in order to certify the authenticity of the signature, the capacity in which the person signing the document has acted and, where appropriate, the identity of the seal or stamp which it bears, is the addition of the certificate described in Article 4, issued by the competent authority of the State from which the document emanates.

- **Article 5**
  - The certificate shall be issued at the request of the person who has signed the document or of any bearer.
  - When properly filled in, it will certify the authenticity of the signature, the capacity in which the person signing the document has acted and, where appropriate, the identity of the seal or stamp which the document bears.
  - The signature, seal and stamp on the certificate are exempt from all certification.
Notarial Certifications

- In many countries, notarial certification or legalisation at the basis of Apostille
- Only correctness of notarial certification assured
- Correctness of underlying original document not assured
- Check whether original diploma has been legalised, or whether photocopy stood at basis
Apostille Belarus
Apostille Bosnia-Herzegovina
Apostille Bulgaria
Apostille Croatia
Apostille Georgia
Apostille Latvia
Apostille Lithuania
Apostille Poland
Apostille: Designated Authority Russian Federation

- Служба подтверждения образовательных документов

- Служба подтверждения образовательных документов

- В соответствии с постановлением Правительства Российской Федерации от 21 июля 1998г. № 810, Министерство образования Российской Федерации уполномочено проставлять апостиль на официальных документах об образовании, выдаваемых в Российской Федерации. В настоящее время в Министерстве образования Российской Федерации функционирует специальная Служба подтверждения образовательных документов

- (http://www.ed.gov.ru/int-coop/tema/adapt/374/)
Sample Apostille Certificate, Russian Federation
Feedback on RF Apostille Service

- According to the Deputy Director of InterEducation, an office of the Russian Ministry of Education, every second applicant applying for a verification request of their qualification (60,000 requests per year) presents a false diploma

Apostille Serbia
Apostille Slovakia
Apostille Ukraine
The State of Wisconsin
Office of the Secretary of State
APPOSTILLE

(Convention de La Haye du 5 Octobre 1961)

1. Country: United States of America
2. This public document has been signed by Kevin P Reilly
3. acting in the capacity of President, University of Wisconsin System
4. bears the seal/stamp of said office

CERTIFIED for Netherlands

5. at Madison, Wisconsin
7. by the Secretary of State of Wisconsin
8. No. 161877
9. Seal/stamp:

10. Signature

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State

This Apostille only confirms the authority of the person named in Number 2. It does not mean that the contents of the attached document are correct, or that the Secretary of State approves of the contents.
Certification

- Here: producing a true photocopy of a document and stamping it

DIPLOMA
MIDDELBAAR ALGEMEEN VOORTGEZET ONDERWIJS

Informatie Beheer Groep
Certified copy in accordance with the original

KS/Diploma-erkenning & Legalisatie,
Agency for Educational Credential
Recognition and Legalization,
on behalf of the minister of Education, Culture
and Science, The Netherlands

Fee €

21 APR. 2008

J. Hildebrand
Notarial Certification

Translated from Armenian

DIPLOMA

ЖВ No. 018776

The diploma, issued in Yerevan, is hereby attested in order to certify that
daughter of Suren, to certify that
Yerevan State University in 1978 and
completing the full course in the

Accepted by Board of June 27, 1983

EACHER

Board

/signature/

/signature/

/signature/

The certified translation has been done by the Notary Translator Vania Dumanyan.

Certifying declaration about certifying the authenticity of signature of the translator.

On this day of August 14, 2006 I, A.P.Mekhonyan, the Notary public of Yerevan “Kemtron”
Notarial Territory, certify the authenticity of the signature of the translator of this text from
Armenian language into English language Vania Dumanyan. In accordance with the article 68 of
the Law “About Notary of EA” I confirm, that the translation of the text has been done by the
translator known by me and not the facts stated in it.

Registration No.

The state duty and service payment are exacted according to the “State Duty Law” and “Notary Public Law” of the
Republic of Armenia.

Notary public

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Validation: Brazil
Validation: Mexico
Validation IB-Groep, The Netherlands

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Informatie Beheer Groep

Juistheid van gegevens wordt bevestigd en de handtekening van

[Signature]

handelend in de hoedanigheid van

[Signature]

KS/Diploma-erkenning & Legalisatie, namens de minister van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Nederland

Leges 6 Datum/Handtekening

21 APR. 2008

[Signature]
Forgeries: Iraq. Sample
Authentic Seal Stamp
Forged Iraqi Legalisation
Current Iraqi Legalisation 1
Current Iraqi Legalisation 2
Current Afghan Legalisation Stamp incl. Blind Embossing
Need for Verifications

- “Recently, the Minister for Education [of the RF, *addition Herman de Leeuw*] relaxed strict rules regarding the issue of blank pre-printed diplomas to Russian universities, due to complaints from a group of rectors. Since then, the universities have ordered 200,000 more blank diplomas than they have graduating students (pers comm. Allison Hawley, EducationUSA). One can only assume that a significant number of those will be sold on the black market.”

Verification Request

Dear Madam or Sir,

The Informatie Beheer Groep is an autonomous administrative body specialized in services in the educational sector. The activities of the Informatie Beheer Groep are mainly commissioned by the Netherlands Ministry of Education and mandated by educational legislation (Acts on Education, Act on Study Finance etc.).

The Agency for Educational Credential Recognition and Legalisation is part of the Informatie Beheer Groep. It serves as National Recognition Authority by virtue of the Act on Higher Education and Research. The agency is empowered by the Netherlands Ministry of Education to award national titles and teaching qualifications on the base of foreign educational documents.

In the framework of a request for recognition of a degree, awarded by your institution, I would like you to verify the educational document submitted by Ms. Yvonne K.G.N. Brockhaus (copy is enclosed). Please compare the enclosed document to the information in your records and report to me whether you can confirm the correctness of the data contained in the enclosure, and whether the document submitted to me conforms to the model in use at your institution at the time of awarding.

I ask you to check off the appropriate box below and return this form:

☐ Yes, the data in the enclosure are correct and the document conforms with the model in use at the time of awarding.

☐ No, the data in the enclosure are not correct and the document does not conform with the models in use at the time of awarding. Please explain why on the next page.
АРХИВНАЯ СПРАВКА


Диплом серии МО № 077742, регистрационный № 95, выдан 10 июля 1996 года с присвоением квалификации — бакалавр образования по направлению социально-экономические знания.

Диплом серии МО № 077743, регистрационный № 95, выдан 10 июля 1996 года с присвоением квалификации — учитель истории и географии.

Диплом серии АКМ № 0024193, регистрационный № 109, выдан 24 июня 1998 года с присуждением степени магистра образования.

Основание: личное дело студента дневного отделения Шевляховой Юлии Владимировны;

Примечание: на основании приказа № 4635 от 15.08.2002 года Министерства образования РФ Российский государственный педагогический университет им. А.И. Герцена переименован в государственное образовательное учреждение высшего профессионального образования «Российский государственный педагогический университет им. А.И. Герцена».

Первый проректор
Заведующая архивом

В.А. Кошырев

Ж.Г. Ницифорова
Apostille Certificate Colombia: Check at website
Verification of Apostille Certificate from Colombia

- VERIFICACION DE APOSTILLAS
  Apostille Verification
  Por favor ingrese el numero de la APOSTILLA, la fecha de expedición y pulse "Buscar"
  Please type the Apostille number, the date of issuance and press "Buscar"
  Número de Apostilla / Apostille Number
  Fecha de la Apostilla / Date of issuance (mm/dd/yyyy) / at
  www.minrelex.gov.co/apostilla
Verification Result

- **VERIFICACION DE APOSTILLAS**
  APOSTILLE VERIFICATION
- Resultados de la búsqueda / Results of the search
- Número de Apostilla / Number of Apostille: 2939779
- Número de Etiqueta / Number of Etiquette: AR777761
- Tipo de Documento / Type of Document: ACTO NOTARIAL
- 1Documento / Document: certificado de calificaciones
- A nombre De / Name of the Holder of Document: VERMAAS ERIC
- Fecha del Documento / Date of Document: Tuesday, 9 de 10 de 2007
- Lleva Sello o Estampilla De / Bears the Seal Stamp of: MINISTERIO DE EDUCACION NAL.
- Número de Hojas / Number of pages: 3
- Firmado Por / Has been signed by: YOLANDA CRUZ ALEA
- En Calidad de / Acting in the Capacity of: PROFESIONAL UNIVERSITARIO
- Fecha de la Apostilla / Date of Apostille: Tuesday, 9 de 10 de 2007
Things can (and will) go wrong, though

- “Let’s say you sit down in your kitchen and start a fake school, Godzilla University. You sell me a medical degree for a 1000 dollars. You take the diploma (and the phoney transcript you just typed up) to your local Notary Public, who, for $10, will notarize your signature (that is, compare it with the one on your driver’s license and say, yes, it’s the same). Then you take (or send) the phoney diploma and notarized certificate to your state capital, where they will confirm that it is indeed a certificate signed by a licensed notary, relating to the diploma. And finally, you submit your packet – the fake diploma and transcript, the notarization, and the state confirmation to the federal government and they will issue the Apostille or authentication.” (John Bear, cited in Brown, p. 259)
Don’t Overlook Stamps Anymore ..
Authentic Stamp?
Authentic Stamp?
Thank you for your Attention!

- Herman de Leeuw
- Advisor on authenticity issues and falsifications
- Directie Onderwijsservice/Diploma-erkenning & Legalisatie
- Informatie Beheer Groep
- Postbus 30157
- 9702 LJ GRONINGEN
- The Netherlands