

# AAMES Newsletter

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## Letter from the Chair

This spring, our thoughts and prayers are with our friends and colleagues in Japan as they recover from the devastating effects of the earthquake and Tsunami. Furthermore, as you know several fundamental and transforming events in the Middle East and Africa, while both exciting and daunting, have important implications for members of this section. I encourage AAMES members to share your thoughts and experiences through the AAMES listserv, website, or through this newsletter.

For a second year, AAMES has successfully conducted the virtual ALA Midwinter meeting. Although we all had to compromise in some ways and lost some of the advantages a face-to-face meeting, the future of using virtual meeting technologies continues to hold promise and a way around our abysmal and falling travel budgets. Notwithstanding the inevitability of the adage *anything that will go wrong – will*, I have found that having some technical help, planning and preparing well before the meeting, and conducting a trial before the actual meeting, is key for increasing comfort and success at managing such virtual meetings. My heartfelt thanks go to all the members who were able to attend and patiently participated through the two long virtual meetings on January 18, 2011. We had very productive discussions and the minutes were distributed to the AAMES-L listserv soon after the meeting. I think our plan to hold one virtual ALA Midwinter and one face-to-face meeting at ALA Annual works very well and I believe also meets our expectations for academic and professional interactions and networking opportunities.

The AAMES Conference Program committee under the leadership of Deepa Banerjee has done an outstanding job bringing together diverse speakers on the topic of models for librarianship in the globalized world. The AAMES Conference will be held on June 25 1:30 – 5:30 p.m. and is being co-sponsored along with IRC, CALA, APALA, Sage Publications and OCLC. Please come, listen to experts, and share your experiences with your AAMES/ACRL/ALA colleagues. Details at <http://aamesacrl.wordpress.com/announcements/>.

There is still time to send your topic and abstract for the **ACRL/AAMES Annual Research Colloquium** to Binh Le, AAMES incoming chair. It will be held on Saturday, June 25, 2011, from 9:30 - 10:30 AM, during the 2011 ALA Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Deadline for submission is May 31, 2011.

I am very pleased that AAMES membership continues to grow every month! February figures show that our membership has increased by almost 6% compared to last year. I would like to extend my warm welcome to all NEW members! Please be in touch and send us your comments about what you would like to see programmatically and otherwise within AAMES.

On June 25, after our annual conference program, I will be handing over the AAMES Chair wand (magic) to Binh Le, our incoming chair for 2011-2012. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve in the capacity of chair for AAMES/ACRL for 2010-2011. I'm very pleased with the AAMES team assembled this past year and congratulate them all for their teamwork and contributions. Binh Le has been a wonderful colleague through all these years and an active participant in AAMES. He has served in several capacities within AAMES in the past and will bring experience as well as fresh perspectives to this position. Please make your acquaintance with him at New Orleans.

Hope to see many of you in June!

Triveni Kuchi, AAMES Chair, 2010-2011

## Brooklyn Museum Online Collections

*Raymond Pun is a Librarian in the General Research, Periodicals, and Microforms Division, Schwarzman Building, of the New York Public Library.*

The Brooklyn Museum Online Collections can be found at

<http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/>

[collections/](#)

This digital gallery showcases a variety of images scanned from the extensive and rich collection of the Brooklyn Museum. As of April 18, 2011, there are currently 95,043 records online for users to browse, save, research, comment and tag. According to BM, the gallery contains only a fraction of the collection. From East Asian porcelains to West African tiles, this digital resource is invaluable for those who are researching particular materials and are unable to visit the BM to view them first hand. Items on display focus on the social, cultural, and artistic traditions of specific regions including the Islamic World, America, Europe and Asia.

(Main page of the Brooklyn Museum's Digital Gallery)

By integrating web 2.0 features into the digital gallery, the site engages users on a whole different level; most museums manage a Flickr account and allow users to “tag” or write comments about these images, making the collection much more interactive and user friendly. For BM, users can search for images from “tagged” terms created by other users, and also input their own “tagged” terms. By signing up with a Google ID, users can post comments (known as Talk) and tags, and save images into their accounts. Some popular collection tags include: African, Religious Art, Byzantine, Tile, and Photography, just to name a few. There is also a basic search box that allows users to run a search by keyword. In addition, users can also search for images with an advanced search option that allows one to limit by collection, time period, or even copyright status. The images are clean and clear and the summaries of the items are satisfying and not written in academic prose.

For this review, we will briefly examine the Arts of the Islamic World section. In this region, BM includes blog posts, images, tags, comments, favorites, past exhibition pages, and other digital resources that are related to the Islamic world. These additional resources include books that are related to this area of study: users can purchase these books from BM's online shop as well. A short summary of the collection history is also provided: BM currently has over 2000 objects from Spain to India. Some of

## Brooklyn Museum Online (continued from p. 2)

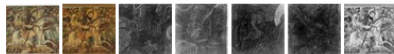
their notable acquisitions include medieval ceramics from Iran (Ninth-Fifteenth Centuries) and Ottoman Turkish carpets, textiles and manuscripts. Another interesting feature is the references to blog posts from BM staff, as the blogs offer a more personal glimpse of the history of the object and how it is being used in a recent presentation or exhibition.

### Brooklyn Museum

#### Collections: Arts of the Islamic World: Battle of Karbala

Collection Home | Arts of Africa | Arts of the Pacific Islands | American Art | Arts of the Americas | Arts of the Islamic World | Asian Art | Contemporary Art | Decorative Arts | Egyptian, Classical, Ancient Near Eastern Art | European Art | Libraries and Archives | Photography | Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art | Exhibitions | Research | Tags | Tag! You're In!! | Freeze Tag! | On-View | Favorites | Recent Images | Labs | API | News

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#### Battle of Karbala

This painting commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad and the third *imam*, or leader, of the Shi'a Muslims. Husayn was killed by the forces of the Umayyad caliph

Search advanced search

#### Tags Talk

Tags  
 Day of Ashura [x]  
 Shia [x]  
 Imam Husayn [x]  
 Dramatic [x]  
 IMLS [x]  
 hierarchical scale [x]  
 death [x]  
 myth [x]  
 fable [x]  
 Islamic [x]  
 Al-Musavi [x]  
 Abbas [x]

#### Tagged 'Islamic'



#### Tagged 'IMLS'



#### Tagged 'massacre'

(Battle of Karbala, a 19<sup>th</sup> century painting from Iran)

When one looks at a particular object in the page, the details are given: name of the artist, medium, place made, dates and periods, inscriptions, signatures, museum location (whether it is currently on view), accession number, rights statements, image size, catalog description, etc. This gives users an idea what the item really looks like in 3D and where it is exhibited in the museum.

The Talks section offers an educational experience for users where they can share their insights, ideas and questions in a public forum for other users or BM administrators to comment on. After browsing through a series of images related to AAMES, I find very interesting comments from users around the world viewing the collections at different dates and times. This really shows us that any cultural institution regardless of the size can create an impact in anywhere in the world.

### New to AAMES?

Make sure that you're subscribed to the AAMES listserv. If you are not already subscribed, you can do so by sending SUBSCRIBE AAMES-L [your name] in a message to [sympa@ala.org](mailto:sympa@ala.org) (leave the subject line blank).

Visit AAMES online at: <http://aamesacr1.wordpress.com>

## World Beat

*Blake Robinson is a library science student at Florida State University and works in Circulation Services at the University of Central Florida Library. He holds a master of arts in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the University of Sydney, Australia, where he completed his thesis on the historiography of Islamic Spain.*

Welcome to the Spring 2011 edition of World Beat! This issue, I will focus on print and electronic resources related to the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa, which will dominate the news cycle for the foreseeable future and provide both students and teaching faculty with ample material for assignments. For those readers who missed my first column, my goal is to suggest AAMES-related area studies resources so that librarians and other information professionals can help patrons conducting research on these topics.

Some basic reference sources will help the undergraduate who is not well acquainted with Middle Eastern geography, history, and culture. The *CIA World Factbook* is an excellent place to start: the online version is free, updated weekly, and the information is compact and easy to scan. For more in-depth research, however, I recommend *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*, whose content on political and religious information is particularly strong. The cross-disciplinary arrangement of the entries allows for easy browsing and facilitates leaps of intuition not possible in less comprehensive works; however, the encyclopedia's wealth of detail can be overwhelming at times, so it is a better resource for students who have already done some initial research.

To supplement these more traditional sources, there is a multitude of free web sources that can assist students in their research. Several universities maintain authoritative lists of resources, including Columbia

University, Fordham University, and the University of Georgia. Also, don't forget about your fellow librarians; a trip to the LibGuides Community site can be useful whether or not your library has its own Middle Eastern studies research guide. Georgia State University, Cornell University, and the University of Southern California all have well-designed guides.

Additionally, there are several free news resources of great value. First and foremost among regional sources are Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, although one must be cautious of their alleged pro-Palestinian/pro-Qatari and pro-Saudi/pro-American biases, respectively. BBC News and Voice of America also extensively cover the Middle East; due to their pro-Western bias, librarians can use these sites during instruction sessions to illustrate the difference between popular and scholarly resources and/or the importance of choosing from a variety of sources. For longer-term analysis of regional events, *The Economist* and *Foreign Policy* are good choices; the latter in particular offers a variety of viewpoints through its editorials. Finally, the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) analyzes and translates regional news into multiple languages.

Last but not least, a number of books have been reviewed in the last few months that directly pertain to the events in the Middle East. Since this is an ACRL column, I thought it appropriate to draw reviews from the last three months of *Choice* rather than the full range of review sources. *Algeria since 1989* discusses the long-term

impact of that country's elections in 1992, while *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity* chronicles Turkey's political experience from the late Ottoman period to the present. Finally, two books on international relations, Yoram Dinstein's *The Conduct of Hostilities under the Law of International Armed Conflict* and James Lebovic's *The Limits of US Military Capability: Lessons from Vietnam and Iraq*, discuss international law and the limits of US military power, respectively, and would be useful for students studying the uprisings in Libya in particular.

In sum, there are a number of resources available, both print and electronic, to help the enterprising academic librarian assist his or her patrons. Of course, these resources are merely suggestions to supplement one's own print and electronic resources; databases like *Index Islamicus*, for instance, are unparalleled for serious research in Middle Eastern studies. However, I hope these resources will prove useful for all academic librarians, regardless of the size of their institutions and/or budget.

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## *New Book on Chinese Diaspora*

Tao Yang, East Asian Librarian at Rutgers University and AAMES member, recently co-edited (with Ivy Lee) *From Immigrants to Citizens: Records of Chinese Political Participation in New Jersey, 1991-2010*, (Edison, NJ: Sino Media, 2011).

Here is a description:

For the first time in a book-length treatment, *From Immigrants to Citizens* systematically describes the long-term experiences of a contemporary Chinese diaspora community in their own language and through the unique lens of political engagement.

According to the 2010 census data, the percentage of Asian population in New Jersey (8.3%) is the third highest among 50 states in the U.S., only after Hawaii and California. As one of the oldest and biggest Asian groups in New Jersey, the Chinese community here is representative of the national trends for the last two decades, such as the movement of a large number of highly skilled new immigrants into suburbs and the political awakening of middle-class Chinese Americans.

Using political engagement as the central theme, *From Immigrants to Citizens* systematically collects and organizes primary sources in Chinese lan-

guage accumulated over a period of 20 years. It has four sections, divided into 12 chapters. The Community section introduces the changes in the Chinese community in New Jersey, the active civic and political organizations, and the incidents relevant to interracial relationships. The People section has the interviews and profiles of over 20 leaders and government employees, including senior officials in the federal and state governments, a judge in the state court, mayors, and city council members. The Voices section gathers observations on national and local elections and various personal commentaries. The Data section includes a survey of the Chinese attitude toward American politics, an analysis of the 2000 population census, and a review of the Asians in the state government.

*From Immigrants to Citizens* is published in traditional Chinese, with a total of about 200,000 characters. It also has a table of contents in English. As a collection of primary sources and readable articles, this book is appropriate for the collections of both academic and public libraries.

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## *World Beat (continued from p. 4)*

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## *Lubuto Library Project Exhibition at ALA*



**Two Lubuto artists with their work.**

The International Relations Roundtable (IRRT) and the Lubuto Library Project ([www.Lubuto.org](http://www.Lubuto.org)) invite the ALA membership to view an exhibition of artwork created by vulnerable youth in Zambia who have participated in the libraries' LubutoArts program.

The artwork is on display at the gallery throughout June but a special "ALA opening" will take place on Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 5:30pm at the Stella Jones Gallery, considered one of the U.S.'s premier galleries specializing in African and Africa Diaspora art. Ms. Jones is launching this exhibition free of charge and all of the proceeds will support the artists and their training. Award-winning children's book illustrator Bryan Collier will also attend the event and offer his own artwork for sale to benefit Lubuto Library Project.

Lubuto Libraries target the most vulnerable children and youth in Zambia with excellent libraries and programs that enable out-of-school and street children to develop their knowledge, talents and self-expression. LubutoArts is a self-sustaining art training program, led by former head of Zambia's Visual Arts Council, artist and art teacher Victor Makashi. Offered weekly in Lubuto Libraries, the program is supported by a percentage of the proceeds of the sale of artworks. In 2009 the youth who participated in the program had a very successful exhibition and sale of their work at Lusaka's Henry Tayali Gallery.

The Lubuto Library Project is seeking in-kind and financial support to send a Zambian delegation of 5 to New Orleans for the exhibition. ALA's Young Adult Services section would also like the youth to participate in some of their conference programming – to show American librarians the impact on disadvantaged youth of arts programming in libraries. Bringing the artists to New Orleans will dramatically broaden their horizons and growth as artists and people in the rich artistic and educational environment of that city, Stella Jones' community and the ALA conference. It is a wonderful story about the power of libraries and the result of reaching out to develop the talents of underserved youth.



### **Lubuto artists show their work to Zambia's founding president, Kenneth D. Kaunda, at the opening of the second Lubuto Library.**

Presentations on the innovative work of the Lubuto Library Project, which opened its second library in Lusaka, Zambia in November 2010, will be made at the ALA 2011 Conference in the IRRT Preconference on June 24, the International Paper Session on June 25 at 1:30pm, the International Sustainable Library Development (ISLD) Interest Group program on June 27 at 10am, and at the International Poster Session on June 26 at 11am. And whether or not the artists will be present, the Stella Jones event, which is free of charge, will be held on June 25 at 5:30pm. The gallery ([www.stellajonesgallery.com](http://www.stellajonesgallery.com)) is located near the French Quarter 201 St. Charles Avenue.

## *From the Editor:*

Dear AAMES Members,

I hope you have enjoyed another issue of the *AAMES Newsletter*. I certainly enjoyed being in touch with more AAMES members who contributed to this expression of our community.

In this issue, Ray Pun reviews the Brooklyn Museum's digital collections. I had only recently learned of the Brooklyn Museum's efforts to put more content online, and I appreciate Ray's willingness to explore this resource on our behalf. I hope to have more reviews of online collections in future issues, so if you have resources you would like to share with your fellow AAMES members, please be in touch.

Keep in mind that the *Newsletter* can only be as good as its contributors. We have been fortunate to have had many excellent contributions and I hope that many more AAMES members will consider offering their talents in the future.

John Russell  
Editor and Co-Chair,  
Publications Committee

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## *Section News*

The minutes from the Midwinter meeting are available online: <http://aamesacr1.wordpress.com/ala-meeting-minutes/2011-ala-midwinter-meeting-minutes/>

AAMES at ALA Annual:

- Conference Program, "Asian African and Middle Eastern Librarianship in 21st Century: Effective Models in an Age of Globalization," Saturday, June 25, 1:30-5:30pm
- AAMES Meeting, including the Annual Research Colloquium, Saturday, June 25, 8:00am-noon

I look forward to meeting lots of AAMES members at ALA in New Orleans!

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