

AAMES Newsletter

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Message from AAMES Chair

Dear AAMES members,

Hello again...hope you all have had a good Spring break and in spite of all the budget cuts and financial woes, are able to preserve your high spirits.

This is my final message to you as AAMES chair. Ms. Triveni Kuchi (kuchi@rci.rutgers.edu), a very capable librarian from Rutgers University, is taking over as AAMES Chair from July 2010 and will manage AAMES affair for the year 2010-11. I am sure you have received a call for volunteers from her and hopefully have responded or agreed to serve as volunteer for one of the AAMES committees. If not, I encourage you to contact her and express your intent to serve.

This year, for the first time in the history, AAMES Executive committee experimented with the first web based midwinter meeting using the Adobe Connect software. And what a successful learning experience it was! Please make sure you visit the web site at <http://aamesacr1.wordpress.com/ala-meeting-minutes/2010-ala-midwinter-meeting-minutes/> and check the minutes of the AAMES 2010 midwinter meeting.

We conducted our online meeting in the middle of this year's worst winter blizzard and I am thankful to all the members who made sure to attend the meeting despite the weather hardship.

I hope you are planning to attend annual ALA conference and the AAMES program for which our preparations are in full swing. This year we have again invited four distinguished speakers and the focus of the program is on using primary sources from special collections for bibliographic instructions. We are thankful to RBMS and CALA for co-sponsoring our program. For details on our program, dates, and speakers etc. please check <http://amesacr1.wordpress.com/announcements/>

This year AAMES is co sponsoring International Relations Committee's annual program as well. We will also hold our annual Executive and All Committees meeting at ALA annual conference. We are planning to hold an AAMES colloquium during the All Committee meeting and shortly we would invite you to submit your presentation. We will post the final details about AAMES program, colloquium and meetings (EC and the All Committee meeting) etc. on the listserv sometime towards April end. Some of these details are posted in this newsletter as well. Be sure to check them and mark your calendars.

Please do consider this message as a personal invitation from me and make all efforts to attend AAMES program/meetings and make them a grand success.

In closing, I would like to mention that we are thankful to Dr. Sharma and his committee for revising the document "Governance Procedures of the AAMES". These procedures are posted on AAMES website and wiki. You can view the revised document at <http://aamesacr1.wordpress.com/governance-procedures-of-aames/>. I would also like to thank all my committee members for working with me to manage AAMES affairs, wiki, newsletters, and web site effectively. My sincere thanks also go to the program planning committee for working tirelessly for the AAMES annual program.

Please do not hesitate to submit your suggestions and comments about AAMES. Thanks again folks....that is all for now....looking forward to hear from you and meet you at the annual program and meetings at Washington, DC.

Anjana Bhatt, AAMES Chair 2009-10.

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The South Asian Oral History Project - University of Washington Libraries, Seattle

by Deepa Banerjee, University of Washington, Seattle

Oral histories are an important way of telling a community's history, and this intriguing South Asian Oral History project from the University of Washington Libraries sheds new light on a very interesting aspect of history in the Pacific Northwest. The goal of this South Asian Oral History Project (SAOHP) is to record pan-South Asian immigrant experiences in the Pacific Northwest using the medium of oral history.

This project was initiated at the University of Washington Libraries in 2004 through a generous grant by Irene Joshi, the former South Asian Studies Librarian which set in motion this exciting project of remembering and celebrating the achievements of South Asians in the Pacific Northwest. With over 100 years of immigration to the region and the expo-


stantial rate of migration following the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, this community continues to build a significant legacy here.

Irene's interest in the oral history project was triggered by the death, around 2000, of one of the first people in the postwar cohort. She realized that this history would be lost if steps were not taken to preserve it." Her gift allowed the UW to contract with the Museum of History and Industry to manage the initial phase of the project.

The first phase of this project documented the lives and careers of seven individuals who immigrated to the region in the 1950s. The first set of narrators shared some of their amazing experiences, such as working on the early Apollo space shuttle launches, joining the Peace Corp, attending the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, and being some of the earliest South Asia

students enrolled at the University of Washington.

This group of immigrants were highly educated. Balraj Sokappa for example, who came to Seattle in 1954 to work on his doctorate at the UW, ended up working for NASA on the guidance systems used in the Apollo program. Many others in this first cohort became professionals in engineering and medicine. The individuals who came in the first wave began quickly to work on establishing local fraternal and cultural institutions. These included schools that taught Indian languages, a Hindu Temple, civic groups such as the Indian American Political Advocacy Council, and Ragamala, which provided traditional South Asian performing arts to the Seattle community. While some of these organizations took decades to bring to fruition, many of the seeds were planted by those early immigrants.





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South Asian Oral History Project



 **1950's**

Phase one contains interviews with individuals who immigrated to the Seattle region in the 1950's.



[View Transcripts](#)

The University of Washington Libraries greatly recognizes the importance of oral histories as an important primary source for historical narratives. This recognition has led to the South Asian Oral History Project (SAOHP) at the University of Washington Libraries. The SAOHP represents one of the first attempts in the U.S. to record pan-South Asian immigrant experiences in the Pacific Northwest using the medium of oral history. This initiative not only has the goal of preserving the history of South Asian immigration to the region, but also of making these historical resources/material available to everyone. This project began in 2005 through a generous grant to

About the Project



Explore the Project Collection

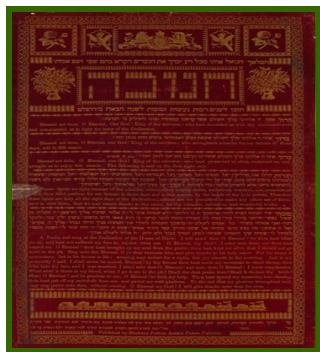
< <http://content.lib.washington.edu/saohcweb/index.html> >

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Jews of the Asias and their Prolific Printing Houses of India and China

By LaVerne L Poussaint

As of January 2010, *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* (an ALA/ACRL publication) was made available online via Stanford University's HighWire Press. Readily accessible now is my Fall 2009 article - [From Babylonia to Bombay to Burma: Sojourning through Asian Hebraica by Way of New York -](#)



Blessings on the Menorah. Calcutta. Late 19th century CE Lithographed blessing sheet. Gold ink on red paper. Courtesy of Sotheby's.

wherein I trace the trek of Oriental Jewry across historic regions of Asia Minor, the Levant, Mesopotamia, Transcaucasia, Greater India, Greater Khurasaan, Greater

Persia, Eurasia, Central Asia, Southern Asia, Southeastern Asia, Western Asia, Eastern Asia, and the Pacific Rim by following their trail of texts.

Commencing with details of my sojourn through Sotheby's 2009 exhibition of the Valmadonna Trust Library collection of Jewish manuscripts, monographs, scrolls, single leaves, entire series, folios, chapbooks, broadsheets, wall calendars, incunabula, codices, periodicals, ephemera, lithographic prints, and woodcut relief illustrations, the article recounts my exploration of the Oriental Diaspora through the penned writings of the earliest BCE First Temple Asian dispersions to the Common Era printed works produced in mechanized pressrooms of the Indo-Judaic and Sino-Judaic publication industries.

Most of the highlighted works in [From Babylonia to Bombay to Burma](#) are products of principal Hebraic presswork from the regions of Aden, Amsterdam, Baghdad, Bangalore, Bombay, Burma, Calcutta, Ceylon, Delhi, Hong Kong, Iran, Karachi, Kerala, Lahore, Madras, Peshawar, Poona, and Shanghai.

The range of literary and liturgical languages, translations and translit-

erations, etymological transpositions and transcriptions, varying alphabetic scripts, dialects, and font types of the Asian works through which I parsed are as vast and varied as the regions: Arabic, Aramaic, Aramaic-Chaldaean-Arabic, Ashkenazic, Balochi, Brahmi, Chinese, Chinese Hebrew, Devanagari, English, Franco-German, Hebrew, Hebrew-Malayalam, Hebrew-Marathi, Hindustani, Judæo-Arabic, Judæo-German, Judæo-Marathi, Judæo-Persian, Judæo-Tat, Malabari, Malayalam, Malayalam-Aramaic, Marathi, Oriental Hebrew, Paleo-Hebrew, Palmyrenean Hebrew, Pashtu, Persian, Perso-Arabic, Portuguese, Punjabi, Rashi, Samaritan, Sindhi, Sinhala, Spanish, Syriac, Syrian-Aramaic, Telugu, Temani Hebrew, Urdu, and Yiddish.



Torah Scrolls, India – Cochini Synagogue. Stephanie Comfort Pictorial-Postcard Collection.

“Send books to Vietnam” Project

By Suhua Fan , University of Alabama

During the AAMES membership meeting at the annual conference followed by the research colloquium in July 2009, a new project idea about sending textbooks to Vietnam was brought to the members' attention. The members discussed how to find solutions to receiving funds in order to send textbooks to certain libraries in Vietnam. In the meeting, Binh P. Le, Associate Librarian, the Pennsylvania State University, Abington College, raised the concern that there were libraries in Vietnam in need of English textbooks for higher education, but there were no funds for shipping the materials. He also stated that a good amount of English textbooks were in hand and available to ship to Vietnam from the resources in the US. In order to make this possible, there is an urgent need to fund the shipmen from the US to Vietnam. Being a devoted member of AAMES, I thus started a new project called “Send Books to Vietnam” endeavoring to find solutions to the funding issue. Based on the theories of Community Informatics that I have learned from the PRCC library project in Chicago, the project uses PAR and Locality Development Approach to encourage all the participants to brainstorm and get involved. On the other hand, the project is designed to target all the online users in the world as an online community to work together to benefit the higher education in Vietnam. Moreover, the trend of applying Web 2.0 social networking tools suggests a more promising way to reach out as many online users around the world as possible to get involved.

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The South Asian Oral History Project cont'd

Throughout the phases of the project, care has been taken to interview a diverse group that includes individuals from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, men and women, and people who married those of other nationalities. While there was a standard series of questions that everyone was asked, the "narrators," as they are called in oral history projects, were able to take the interview in ways that interested them but were still on topic.



Balraj Sokappa
First phase

The second phase of this project was established in 2006 by Ms Deepa Banerjee, South Asian Studies Librarian at the University of Washington. This phase documented the experiences of South Asians who arrived in the mid-1960's through the 1970's. All the second phase interviews were conducted by Ms Amy Bhatt, PhD candidate at the University of Washington. The second phase explored questions such as :

- What was it like to immigrate here during this period?
- What challenges did they face?
- How do they view themselves as both South Asians and Americans today?

This group of immigrants also demonstrated a high level of civic

and cultural engagement, while creating new outlets for cultural concerns and expression. Far from assimilating, these immigrants have carved out important and visible spaces in the fabric of American society. They have also changed the meaning of "Asian-American" in the Pacific

The third phase of the South Asian Oral History Project started in January, 2008. This phase interviewed narrators who came in the 1980's to this area as part of the burgeoning technical industries in the region. This phase is also marked by the passage of new immigration legislation in 1980 allowing for greater family reunification.

The narrators talk about their lives back home before coming to US as well as their lives after immigrating to US. These interviews shed light on life in India before partition and the biases and prejudices of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Other recurring themes include life in US after immigration and educational, financial, career and cultural challenges of the immigrants.



Rajinder Manhas
Second phase

Taken together, these interviews make up a unique record of the lives of South Asians who faced great challenges in coming to this country and who have contributed greatly to the region. They provide rich insight into the diversity and changing ex-

periences of South Asians in the Pacific Northwest.

This project would not have been possible without the funding support from funding support from Indian Association of Western Washington, India American Education Foundation, King County's 4Culture and University of Washington Libraries' 21st Century funding.



Pramila Jaypal
Third phase

This project has gained a lot of media attention such as an interview of Ms Deepa Banerjee with National Public Radio and publication of articles about this project in University Week, India West and India Abroad.

This project has also become a basis of a book publication titled *Roots and Reflections : South Asians Map the Pacific Northwest* co authored by Ms Amy Bhatt and Ms Nalini Iyer. This book demonstrates the South Asian Community's historical and contemporary importance to the Pacific Northwest.

All the interviews from third phase have been completed, transcribed and audio/video recorded. A South Asian Oral History database <http://content.lib.washington.edu/saohcweb/> is accessible to everyone and includes digitized transcripts, audio and video recordings.

The physical copies of the transcripts and recordings are also housed in the UW Libraries Special Collection and are available for research and study by faculty, students and the community interested in the South Asian Diaspora.

Researching South Asia: an exploration of bibliographic tools for article-level discovery

by Aruna P. Magier, PhD, MLS

Associate Editor for South Asia Bibliography of Asian Studies

A recent article on availability of article-level indexing of South Asian journals deplored the sad state of bibliographic (let alone full-text) access to the wealth of journal literature published in South Asia. The situation has indeed been bleak with regard to literature in the languages of the region, and attention to this problem is urgently needed, and is being addressed on several fronts. But, unlike the rest of Asia, there is a vast corpus of research materials published in South Asia in the form of *English-language* journal articles and contributed articles in edited volumes, *festschriften*, conference proceedings, and so on. The research work of many scholars and students *can* be enabled through recourse to this material, and, fortunately, high quality indexing for much of this content is already readily available. This article expands on that of Mary Rader (see footnote 1), and highlights two existing online sources for article-level indexing of western-language research material *from and about* South Asia: the *Social Science Journals Database* published online by the Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (hereafter *ISID*) based in New Delhi; and the *Bibliography of Asian Studies* (hereafter *BAS*), published online by the Association for Asian Studies (AAS), based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

ISID

The ISID Social Science Journals Database provides indexing of articles from 150 English-language Indian social science journals. As of this writing, the database consists of more than 160,000 records. The cita-

tions for these articles consist of journal name, article title, author(s), year, volume number, issue number, and starting page of the article. There are no subjects, notes, or other descriptors. The search interface is very basic. First one selects journals to be searched from the list of 150 titles (or just leaves them all selected), and then enters keywords in the two search boxes (which can be connected by Boolean operators AND or OR). The output format consists of single-line results for each article found, with the keyword highlighted in blue. This database can be a useful resource for quick lookups, but South Asia scholars and students will quickly notice the limitations of this tool. First, although the 150 journals are all important ones, they are only *Indian* journals -- there is no coverage of the large numbers of journals from the other countries of South Asia. Second, the database is limited to social science journals, and cannot serve as a general gateway for interdisciplinary exploration and discovery in South Asian studies. Other limitations include:

Selected results can be gathered into a customized listing ("My List"), but that list can only be printed, not emailed nor downloaded into a citation management tool;

There is no structured searching: only general keyword-anywhere. Indexing is limited to author and title fields only, and these cannot be distinguished in a search;

Browsing of journal issues is not enabled, only keyword searching across the entire run;

There is no linking for navigating to the full-text of the articles (even where the journals do exist online);The citations

list only the starting page for each article, rather than the standard citation format which would include both starting and ending pagination. This omission is unfortunate, since it makes it difficult to use these citations for interlibrary loan requests, paging from offsite storage, or document delivery requests. It also means that one cannot simply use the citation in one's own bibliography.

Despite these limitations, a student or scholar working on contemporary social science topics can use the database as a discovery tool to quickly find citations to articles of value, most of which will be available from US and other research libraries.

BAS

Operations: The Association for Asian Studies (a non-profit scholarly society) published the BAS as an annual printed volume from 1936 through 1991. In the 1990s, foundation grants enabled the AAS to discontinue printing and convert to online publication, and to scan the BAS backfiles back to 1971, in order to create a single, searchable *cumulative* online bibliography that continues to grow. The staff of the BAS, employed by the AAS, consists of an Editor, as well as Associate Editors for South Asia (myself), East Asia, Southeast Asia, and non-area journals (i.e. capturing Asia-related content from European and other publications with occasional Asian content). The entire staff is coordinated by an

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Researching South Asia cont'd

'A key feature of the BAS is the ability to browse'

other scholar of South Asia, the Managing Director (Prof. Frank Conlon of University of Washington). Intellectual and strategic oversight is provided by the voluntary BAS Advisory Board -- a team of librarians and scholars representing all of Asian studies. The low subscription price for the online BAS is on a sliding scale based on size of institution (with special prices for consortia and for libraries in developing countries) and has never increased since its inception. Currently, 200 US libraries (including almost every university with any kind of South Asia program) and 133 libraries outside the US subscribe to the BAS.

Content: The BAS is meant to provide article-level indexing to support all of Asian studies, i.e. it covers materials *from and about* all of Asia. But it includes only western-language materials. (Languages covered include Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, etc.). Significantly, because so much of South Asian scholarly publishing is in English (in contrast with that of East Asia and Southeast Asia), South Asian content makes up the largest portion of the BAS. Unlike the ISID database, the BAS contains indexing records (more than 750,000 as of this writing) on *all* subject areas, including humanities, arts, sciences, social sciences, etc. The content covers articles from thousands of journals from and about Asia (including hundreds *from* South Asia), as well as book chapters and contributed articles on Asia from edited volumes, festschrifts, conference proceedings, etc. *Record structures and search functionalities:* Each BAS record includes full bibliographic citation fields, enhanced with one to six hierarchical subject headings (using BAS's 5-level subject thesaurus), title translations into English, title gloss and explanatory notes, language field, unlimited keywords, and embedded Open-URL links ("Find@Your Library")

"The BAS has very strong regional coverage of all of South Asia"

to local bib records and/or full-text. All fields are in the ALA font, and support full diacritics display (important especially for humanities materials on South Asia).

All record fields in the BAS are fully indexed for general keyword and structured searching by fields. The interface supports simple searching, as well as advanced search with full Boolean operations for combining multiple keywords or phrases. Options include keyword-anywhere, as well as searching by specific fields. Search limiters are provided for date and item type, and a language limiter is soon to be added to the interface. There are search options for revising the search (e.g. to narrow down large results sets), search history, record sorting options, customizing the number of results to be displayed per page, and assembling selected records into a "book bag" for emailing or downloading to citation-management software.

A key feature of the BAS is the ability to browse. One can browse journal titles and then browse specific issues. One can also browse by country and by subject, navigating from the general down the subject hierarchy to the more specific. For example, one can select INDIA, then choose from a list of major subjects (e.g. ANTHROPOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY), and then browse to specific sub-topics (e.g. ETHNIC GROUPS) and finally scroll down and select a very narrowly defined sub-sub-topic. (For example, browsing from India -- Anthropology & Sociology -- Ethnic Groups, one can then select from a list of more than 600 different Indian ethnic groups. See Figure 1 for a screen-shot of results from this kind of browse. Similar browsing could lead, for example, to *Nepal -- Economics -- International Economics -- China*; or to *Bangladesh -- Anthropology & Sociology -- Overseas Communities -- Malaysia*; or to *Sri Lanka -- Philosophy & Religion -- Textual Studies & Translations*, etc.

Strengths for South Asian studies: The BAS has very strong regional coverage of all of South Asia, including many journals and edited volumes from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, as well as from India itself. Key journals identified by librarians in CONSALD (Committee on South Asia Libraries and Documentation) and by

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Researching South Asia cont'd

faculty and scholars are given priority treatment in the BAS fast-track list, and are included right up through the most recent available issues in 2010. The complete list of all BAS journals is available in the journal-browse interface in the BAS itself. But a separate website highlighting all the South Asia journal coverage is maintained at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/cuvl/SABAS.html>

The Associate Editor for South Asia works with librarians, journal publishers from the region, and with the holdings of several major US research libraries to secure access to the journal runs for indexing, and to keep abreast of newly published edited volumes for the creation of analytic entries for the BAS. Given the nearly 50 year history of widespread acquisitions of South Asian journals and books by US research libraries (via the Library of Congress cooperative acquisitions programs), the BAS provides a highly functional discovery mechanism for intellectual access and leveraging the use of the those collections, even when they are stored offsite or otherwise not available for physical browsing.

Key features that make the BAS a uniquely valuable resource for South Asia scholars and students include the links to full-text (where the journal in question is available online from one's own library), the coverage of articles on South Asia from many thousands of edited volumes (including those published in South Asia, as well as the large corpus of such publications from Europe, North America, Australia and elsewhere), and the ability to customize lists of results and integrate them into one's own bibliography via downloading to standard citation-management software.

Faculty members and reference librarians report that they often direct students and researchers to the BAS as a kind of one-stop shop for bibliographic (and increasingly full-text) access to South Asian studies. The most important drawback, though, is the exclusion of South Asian language materials. But with the prospect of collaborative and distributed projects to create secondary bibliographic tools for more access to the vernacular publishing of South Asia, researchers can look forward to being able to assemble a simple "toolkit" of best resources for day-to-day work in this field, consisting of general-purpose broad and deep indexes like the BAS, discipline specific tools like the ISID, and new portals for searching South Asian language journals

Rader, Mary "Indexing South Asia," *AAMES Newsletter* 7.1 Fall 2009 (p.2,4), available online at <http://>

www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/about/sections/aames/aames_fall09.pdf

The ISID's homepage is at: <http://isidev.nic.in/home.html>. To sign up for free access to their *Social Science Journals Database*, go to <http://58.68.105.146/login2.asp> and click on "Sign Up Now". Once you have secured a username and password (free), you can then login and search the database.

The BAS is available by individual and institutional subscription from the scholarly society, the AAS. Most US research libraries are subscribers. Direct access is from <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bas/>. Description and subscription information from the AAS is at <http://www.aasianst.org/bassub.htm>

Bibliography of Asian Studies

revise search | browse countries | browse journals | bookbag | history | help

Bibliographic Records

Database: Bibliography of Asian Studies
Query: Your browse resulted in:

1 to 7 of 7

ALA Display Download Records

1 **Author:** Barua, Indira
Title: Maidam: anthro-historical study of Tai-Ahom burial custom
Citation: In: Desai, Mamata; Raha, Manis Kumar, eds. The dying earth: people's action, nature's reaction. Kolkata: ACB P for Asian Studies, 2004. 504p. 447-456
Subjects: India -- Science & Technology -- Environmental Studies
India -- Anthropology & Sociology -- Ethnic Groups -- Tai-Ahoms
India -- Anthropology & Sociology -- Social Customs
India -- Philosophy & Religion -- Folk Religion
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add to bookbag

2 **Author:** Buragohain, Nirala
Title: Change of socio-economic status of the Tai-Ahoms in Assam
Citation: In: Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Thai Studies. Chiang Mai: s.n., 1996. 8v. v.4, 29-36



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“Send books to Vietnam” project cont’d

Thus, this project started with a user group called “[Send Books to Vietnam](#)” in Facebook on October 1, 2009. As the webmaster of this online group, I would like to announce the news about the project/facebook group here in our *AAMES newsletter* as a kickoff. Please help spread the news to your community to join this group (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=184756440048>). Let’s hope this project will be able to gather online users around the world to work out some solutions to funding the shipment to help improve the higher education in Vietnam as part of our contribution to international librarianship, I will present a report on the progress of this project at our next (VIRTUAL) membership meeting during the 2010 ALA Midwinter Conference. For more information, contribution and your suggestions, please contact me at sfan@ua.edu (Suhua Fan) or the Facebook group webmaster that I created booksforvietnam@gmail.com.

Registration Now Open for ACRL 2011 (Philadelphia March 30– April 2, 2011)

ACRL 2011: A Declaration of Interdependence In today’s fast paced and changing world, keeping current is more essential than ever. Access cutting-edge information, discover new ideas, and engage in conversations with academic and research librarians from around the world at ACRL 2011. You can’t afford to miss it!

Program

ACRL 2011 will feature more than 300 peer-reviewed programs addressing hot topics such as assessment, digital initiatives, information literacy, scholarly communication, and emerging technologies.

Registration

Registration and housing materials are available now at www.acrl.org/acrl/nationalconference. Register by February 4, 2011, to take advantage of discounted early-bird registration fees and save more than 20%! Group discounts are available for institutions that register ten or more employees. Save up to an additional 20% off conference registration fees.

ACRL is offering over 80 scholarships worth over \$40,000 for librarians, support staff and students to participate in the ACRL 2011

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