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Inside this issue:

Letter from the Chair 1

Art of the Book in Japan 2

News and Notes 4

Letter from the Chair

Dear AAMES members,

I take this opportunity to welcome you all. I am honored to serve as a chair and enthusiastically look forward to this wonderful leadership opportunity.

First of all, I would like to extend my thanks to AAMES members who have graciously accepted their new appointments. Thanks to Ping Situ, Qian Liu, Liladhar Pendse, Yue Li, John Russell and Ruby Bell-Gam for their new appointments as committee chairs and members. My special thanks to Binh Le, Chair 2011-12 for his successful leadership last term and past AAMES committees chairs who did a wonderful job as well.

AAMES has been successfully planning and hosting meetings and programs for several years, producing newsletters and providing a platform for research presentations. AAMES now has a site and a wiki to keep everyone informed of AAMES activities. AAMES has also successfully transitioned to virtual midwinter meetings. I hope that AAMES continues to strive for excellent service through its meetings, programs and publications, and smoothly adopt changes being proposed by ACRL if required.

As you might know that ACRL is making an important strategic move by recently proposing some changes for ACRL sections and Interest Groups. The Task Force is recommending the development of sections from existing interest groups that have maintained a level of at least 400 members for three continuous years. The Task force is also recommending that sections whose membership goes below 400 members for three consecutive years work with ACRL staff to explore and consider other transition options such as merging with another section or converting to an interest group etc.

What it means for AAMES is that it needs to consider all the options carefully and make important decisions about whether to continue as a section or to merge with another section or convert to an interest group.

I look forward to listening to your ideas and suggestions about what would be best option for AAMES. If we decide to continue as a section, AAMES committee and other members would need to work on increasing memberships, creating innovative programs, contributing articles for the newsletters, doing outreach and promotion. I would do my best to support these ideas and their implementations in collaboration with other members. Please feel free to contact me with your suggestions and ideas anytime. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes for the year ahead.

Deepa Banerjee
South Asian Studies Librarian
University of Washington

The Art of the Book in Edo and Meiji Japan

Kevin McDowell is the Japanese Studies Librarian at the University of Oregon.

During the Edo period (1603-1868) as an urban culture centered on the cities of Edo (now Tokyo), Osaka and Kyoto, as well as numerous castle towns, flourished, the publishing industry and the market for printed materials expanded dramatically. The Rare Book School, based at the University of Virginia, offers two courses that cover these significant developments with a focus, in particular, on illustrated books (*ehon*): Japanese Illustrated books, 1615-1868 and The Art of the Book in Edo and Meiji Japan, 1615-1912. With financial support from the University of Colorado Libraries and the Rare Books School (RBS) I was able to attend the course on the Art of the Book held at the Smithsonian Institute's Freer-Sackler Gallery in Washington D.C. in October, 2011.

The Rare Books School, which was established in 1983, offers courses on a wide range of topics related to various forms of printed materials with a chronological span that runs from the earliest forms of publishing to materials that were "born digital." Subject areas include courses on printing techniques, the preservation and cataloging of rare books, book history, bibliographic description, the digitization of rare books, and others. The Art of the Book in Edo and Meiji Japan, 1615-1912 covered the history of illustrated books in Japan, printing processes, types of illustrated books, the Edo period publishing industry, erotic works, and the "book diaspora" that accompanied the opening of Japan to Westerners and Western markets.

The Art of the Book workshop was held from Monday, October 3rd to Friday, October 7th with sessions starting at 8:30 and ending around 4:30. The eight students in the class included Japanese Studies professors, museum curators, academic librarians, booksellers and art collectors. Each morning the students gathered in a small classroom as carts of Edo and Meiji period (1868-1912) books were wheeled in to the room. As the instructor, Ellis Tinios, a prominent scholar of Japanese prints and illustrated books, outlined the main points of the lectures, he used the books and other materials (such as carving tools, etc.) from the Freer-Sackler collection as a means of expounding on and visually demonstrating the development of the illustrated book art form as publishers and artists responded to changes in government regulations, shifting trends in readership, and technical advances such as the introduction of new ink pigments. Being able to see the texts as well as listen to the lectures created both a sensory and intellectual context for connecting with the culture of the book in early modern



Art of the Book (continued from p. 2)

Japan. This combination of informed lecture along with the physical presence of the texts, something that is not normally possible in a standard classroom setting, greatly enhanced the learning experience by making the materials tangible and clearly linking the illustrations in the books to the culture of the period. Attending the Rare Books School workshop in Washington D.C. provided an opportunity to learn from an expert in the field of Japanese illustrated books, to have lively discussions with scholars, museum curators and academic librarians and, most importantly, to get a close-up view of the texts and tools of the early modern Japanese book.

For more information on Rare Book School: <http://www.rarebookschool.org/>

More information on Rare Book School scholarships: <http://www.rarebookschool.org/scholarship/>

*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 (leave the subject line blank).

Visit AAMES online at: <http://amesacr1.wordpress.com>

News and Notes

The Vincent Voice Library at Michigan State University (<http://vvl.lib.msu.edu/>) has acquired a collection of oral history interviews with survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, at the end of World War II. The bombing of Hiroshima took place on August 6, 1945 and the bombing of Nagasaki took place on August 9, 1945.

The interviews were collected by filmmaker Shinpei Takeda, director of the documentary *Hiroshima Nagasaki Download*. Since 2005, Takeda has traveled throughout North and South America to interview survivors of the bombings who later emigrated to the West.

Speaking with survivors and their families in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru, Takeda explored the complex journeys of people who crossed national and cultural boundaries in an era of grave geopolitical tension and mistrust.

"This is the world's largest, most multi-national oral history collection of Bomb survivors living in the Americas," says MSU history professor Naoko Wake (Lyman Briggs College & Dept. of History). "It is truly exciting that MSU is the first in the U.S. to acquire it. This collection is a great asset for MSU faculty, students, and scholars world-wide who want to understand the issue of nuclear disaster more globally."

More than 60 hours of interview footage will be accessible to students and researchers in the Vincent Voice Library, part of the Michigan State University Libraries. Excerpts are available online at *Hiroshima Nagasaki Download: Memories from the Americas*, a website created jointly by Takeda and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

For more information on the Vincent Voice Library and to access the *Hiroshima Nagasaki Download* collection, contact John Shaw, head of the VVL: shawj@msu.edu or 517-884-0866.

Dr. Ravindra Sharma, Dean of the Monmouth University Library, has recently edited *Libraries in the Early 21st Century: An International Perspective* (Berlin: De Gruyter Saur, 2012). This two-volume collection offers a global survey that emphasizes the impact of technology on libraries and library services. Each chapter has been written by library leaders and educators from around the world and Ellen Tise, past President of IFLA, has written the introduction. At the IFLA Conference in Helsinki in August, Dr. Sharma was invited to present "Introducing Libraries Through Technology in the 21st Century," a paper based on these volumes. Dr. Sharma also gave two presentations at Nanjing University in China in June: "Academic Libraries and Technology in Developing Nations" and "IFLA: The Voice of International Library and Information Science."

The Lubuto Library Project recently received a grant supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its partners World Vision and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) for innovative programs to improve child literacy. Lubuto's winning proposal is "LubutoLiteracy: Zambian Teaching and Learning," a pioneering program creating high-quality mother-tongue materials to teach children to read on an accessible, low-cost digital platform, and sustainably deploying them at national scale in Zambia in partnership with government and other stakeholders. The interactive materials are developed locally by teachers and youth in line with the national curriculum and leverage the open access learning environment and outreach of Lubuto Libraries to particularly benefit highly vulnerable and out-of-school children. Library staff provides supported access

News and Notes (continued from p. 4)

to interactive computer-based lessons in Zambia's seven major languages that adapt the printed curriculum to incorporate more familiar vocabulary. The project builds on the lessons of Lubuto's unique pilot program in its two libraries in Lusaka. The materials are developed on open source software that can run on any computer platform, and they are ultimately envisioned to be widely accessible on other devices such as e-readers and mobile phones.

Lubuto Library Project website: <http://www.lubuto.org/>

The Library Education Assistance Foundation for Vietnam (LEAF-VN) has selected Tom Larsen, PhD, Associate Professor and Head of Monographic Cataloging at Portland State University Library to initiate LEAF-VN's new Targeted Training program. LEAF-VN has also selected the University of Da Nang's Learning and Information Resource Center as the training site. LEAF will provide Mr. Larsen a \$3000 stipend for travel expenses.

The aim of LEAF-VN's Targeted Training program is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the cataloging staff of a specific library in Vietnam. Much of the training that LEAF-VN has provided to date has targeted large audiences of library staff and has concerned issues such as AACR2, DDC, LCSH, MARC, etc. This strategy continues to play an important role in fulfilling the training requirements of Vietnamese libraries. But a more focused type of training is also required to supplement the lecture approach and address the specific concerns of specific libraries.

The Targeted Training Program engages an expert cataloger to develop and implement a one week curriculum focused specifically on the training requirements of the cataloging staff of a single library in Vietnam. The Targeted Training Program strives to engage expert catalogers whose sympathies and values are aligned with LEAF-VN's mission and goals. As such the program connects experienced national and international librarians with the relatively small library staffs of Vietnamese libraries who often lack access to expert catalogers and mentors. In this way, the project will have the extended result of building a nascent network of ongoing support for Vietnamese catalogers.

Learn more about LEAF-VN: <http://www.leaf-vn.org/english.html>

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