

Envisioning South Asia: Texts, Scholarship. Legacies

Introduction

From the times of Marco Polo to the British Empire to the postcolonial nation, South Asia has been imagined, pictured, explored, and studied. This exhibition introduces the Regenstein Library's extraordinary resources related to South Asia through visual metaphors of imagination, representation, and engagement. How did explorers, missionaries, colonial officials, and scholars view South Asia? What did South Asian self-representations look like? From palm leaf manuscripts to historical maps, and from rare books to digital projects, *Envisioning South Asia* offers a kaleidoscopic tour through scholarly and popular imaginations in text and image.

Since the opening of the University of Chicago in 1892, scholars and students have explored the languages and civilizations of the Indian subcontinent. As the University celebrates its 125th anniversary, the exhibition also marks the 60th anniversary of the Committee on Southern Asian Studies and the 50th anniversary of the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations. Many of the artifacts on display, including treasures from Special Collections, are presented to the public for the first time, providing visitors a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich and diverse histories and cultures of South Asia.

Lenses

A poet, essayist, folklorist, linguist, and translator, A. K. Ramanujan (1929-1993) was an influential scholar of South Asian languages and literatures and one of the twentieth century's celebrated transcultural poets.

Born in Mysore, India, Attipat Krishnaswami Ramanujan came to the United States in 1959 to pursue a doctorate in linguistics at Indiana University. In 1962 he joined the University of Chicago, where he helped shape the South Asian Studies program and became an important presence among the pioneering generation of South Asia scholars. Ramanujan taught as a professor in the Departments of South Asian Languages & Civilizations and Linguistics, and in the Committee on Social Thought until his death in 1993.

A true cosmopolitan who with characteristic wit referred to himself as "the hyphen in Indo-American," Ramanujan was a discerning and sensitive cultural mediator between India and the West. In 1976 the Indian Government honored him with the Padma Shri, its fourth-highest civilian award.

Self-portrait
I resemble everyone
but myself, and sometimes see,
in shop-windows

despite the well-known laws
of optics,
the portrait of a stranger,
date unknown,
often signed in a corner
by my father.

—A.K. Ramanujan, *Collected Poems* (1995)

While Ramanujan wrote poetry mostly in English, he translated from Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam. His many books of poetry and translation, including *Speaking of Siva* (1973), now a modern classic, introduced English-speaking audiences to the rich world of South Indian literature and folklore. Throughout his prolific career as a scholar and poet, Ramanujan engaged the complexities of the cross-cultural encounter. His oeuvre spans the worlds of East and West in an exemplary fashion, looking at South Asia from both inside and outside and through multiple lenses.

Glimpses of the Past

South Asian manuscript culture is one of the richest and most diverse in the world. Featured here are treasures from India's scribal past. Manuscripts were written on a variety of materials, including birch bark, palm leaf, and paper. They came in many sizes and formats, two of the most common being the oblong *pothi* format and the Western codex.

The *pothi* format was dictated by the shape of the palm leaf. The leaves were cut to size and incised with a stylus. By rubbing ink into the incisions, the writing was made visible. The leaves were tied together by a cord that was strung through one or two holes, as can be seen here in the small palm leaf manuscript of a Sinhalese medicinal text. The large gilded manuscript of a Buddhist monastic text is typical of the Burmese tradition. It is held together by small sticks put through the holes in the folios.

The *pothi* format was retained for religious texts even after the introduction of paper to India in the thirteenth century. In the paper folio from an illustrated Jain *Kalpasutra*, the stringhole is replaced by a decorative emblem. The Sanskrit ritual text from the White Yajurveda was meant for recitation: the notations in red ink are Vedic pitch accents.

Also on display are two rare Tibetan Buddhist manuscripts. The black paper is created by applying a lacquer made of animal brains, powdered soot, and cooked hide glue, which is then burnished to create a lustrous surface.

Mughal manuscripts are famous for their lavish illustrations and illumination. Two exquisite eighteenth-century codices shown here are the *Razm-nama* (Book of War), a Persian translation of the *Mahabharata*, and an Indo-Persian *Faras-nama*, or treatise on horses.

The more recent Pashto manuscript combines plain calligraphy with surprisingly fine illustrations emulating Persian Safavid style. The illustrations appear to be a later addition and bear no relation to the text, a commentary on an Arabic logic text.

MS 341

Razmnāma

Ink opaque watercolor and gold on paper

Persian [mid-18th c]

Codex Manuscript Collection

On display here are the illustrations belonging to an exquisite eighteenth-century manuscript of the *Razm-nama* (Book of War), a Persian translation of the *Mahabharata*. The *Mahabharata* is one of the two great Indian epics and was composed in Sanskrit in the early centuries of the common era. The central story concerns five brothers, the Pandavas, who struggle for sovereignty against their cousins, the Kauravas. A great war ensues, from which the Pandavas emerge victorious. This plot, however, constitutes only a small part of the text, which includes many stories and myths closely identified with religious and moral precepts, as well as the famous philosophical teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The translation of the *Mahabharata* into Persian was originally commissioned by the third Mughal emperor, Akbar, and undertaken by scholars employed in his *maktab khana* (translation bureau) in the 1580s. This manuscript includes the famous preface (*muqaddama*) by the scholar Abu'l Fazl, one of Akbar's closest advisors. Abu'l Fazl is pictured in the first illustration, where he is shown receiving the emperor's command to "make the preparation for compilation and translation of [the] Mahabharata." Akbar is seated on a low throne and his advisor, Birbal, stands behind him. While the portrait of Akbar is immediately recognizable, the dress of the figures is, anachronistically, very much in keeping with fashions of the eighteenth century.

The second illustration in this manuscript shows the group of scholars in the translation bureau working on the text. At the top right is Abu'l Fazl; he is shown in discussion with two Brahmins identified as belonging to the city of Kashi (Benares). The labels, in both Nagari and Persian scripts, identify Muslim and Hindu scholars from various parts of India and even a European (*firangi*), pictured third from the top on the left side. The manuscript contains eighty illustrations executed by multiple artists, all of which bear Persian labels to indicate the names of the figures.

The beautiful calligraphy and high quality of the illustrations suggest that the manuscript was produced under imperial or sub-imperial patronage. The first page of the manuscript bears a seal with the date 1169 AH (1755 CE), which likely marks the year when the book entered the library of a Muslim nobleman. The stamped seal reads "Al-Majdu Lillah" (Greatness is for Allah). The colophon identifies the scribe as Muhammad Zaman Gujarati and dates the manuscript's production to the reign of the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1721-1748).

Asia in the Eyes of Europe: Imaging, Exploring, Mapping

Maps

As European interests in South Asia shifted toward territorial rule, the production of accurate maps became an imperative. Early surveying efforts were undertaken by James Rennell (1742-1830), the first Surveyor General to the East India Company. Known as the “father of Indian geography,” Rennell produced a series of pioneering maps that are remarkable for their precision and detail. The large historical map on display here is based on his masterful map of Hindoostan (1782), famous for being the first nearly accurate map of India.

Rennell’s mapping enterprise was superseded in the nineteenth century by the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India, which applied scientific techniques to the systematic documentation of the subcontinent. The Trigonometrical Survey became part of the larger Survey of India, a monumental undertaking begun in 1767, that has since produced an unparalleled wealth of topographical and other maps.

The geography of India and neighboring regions was of interest not only to colonial military experts and administrators but also to the general public in Europe. German, French, and English publishers such as Edward Stanford (1827-1904), retailer of maps in London, capitalized on an emerging market for maps that traced the growth of the British Empire and the conflicts on its borders. Stanford’s 1878 “Shilling Map of Afghanistan and Adjoining Countries” depicts the region on the cusp of the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

The large maps of Bombay and Lahore are striking examples of urban maps produced by the Survey of India in the 1930s. Stylized mapmaking combined with the marketing of imperial goods in the pictorial map of Ceylon of the same period.

The Regenstein Library houses an extraordinary collection of some 20,000 modern and historical maps showing the physical, topographic, political, and thematic landscapes of South Asia.

Texts

European accounts of South Asia shifted dramatically over the last five hundred years. Trade, missionary endeavors, scientific exploration, and artistic pursuits were among the many motivations for Europeans to journey eastward. Dutch, Portuguese, British, French, and Italian explorers documented their impressions of India and her people, giving colorful accounts of the Mughal court, the markets related to trade, local customs, and specific localities.

These accounts were integral to a gradual shift from narratives of an imagined and mystical

East to reports of India based on actual observation, however biased and orientalizing it may have been. Of special note here is the *Travels in India* by French gem merchant Jean Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689), who resided in the court of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. Tavernier gave a vivid account of his eastward journey and of life and trade in the Mughal empire.

The earliest text on display, published in 1631, is by Flemish geographer Johannes De Laet (1581-1649), a director of the Dutch East India Company. Equally precious is the autograph manuscript by the French Catholic missionary Jean Antoine Dubois (1765-1848), who resided in the South Indian town of Mysore from 1799 to 1823. The unique manuscript contains Dubois' observations on South Indian castes and precedes his famous *Description of the Characters, Manners, and Customs of the People of India* (London 1817).

Accounts of the colonial period addressed audiences in both British India and Europe. *A Picturesque Tour Along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna* (1824) by British military officer Charles Ramus Forrest (1787-1827) chronicles his journey from Calcutta to Delhi. Forrest was a talented artist, whose work contains exquisite sketches and color drawings of India's people, flora and fauna, and the palaces, forts, and towns he encountered along the way.

Pious Perspectives

European missionaries were present in India from the sixteenth century. Alongside often aggressive conversion efforts, missionaries pioneered the study of indigenous languages, advanced print technology, and engaged in educational reform. The earliest text on display is by Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1683-1719), a German Lutheran missionary who established the Tranquebar Mission in South India. Ziegenbalg was one of the first Europeans to master Tamil. His 1715 translation of the New Testament is the first of its kind in any Indian language.

Missionaries brought with them two principal tools of conversion, the schoolhouse and the printing press. Printing was key to disseminating the Gospel and Christian tract literature, as well as school books in Indian languages. Among the eminent pioneers of vernacular printing was William Carey (1761-1834), who established a mission in the Danish colony of Serampore near Calcutta in 1800. The legendary Serampore Press printed bibles in almost 50 languages, most of them translated by Carey and his associates. Carey's New Testament in Bengali (1801) is shown here. Printed bibles were only a fraction of an estimated 2,120,000 copies of both religious and secular works that were issued from Serampore between 1800 and 1832.

Christian missions in India proliferated in the wake of the Company Charter Act of 1813, which opened British territories to missionary activity. While missionaries played an important role in the expansion of literacy and primary education, their work remained deeply controversial. This was especially true for efforts at educating Indian women, which consolidated from mid-century onward with the *zenana* missions, when female missionaries

entered into the privacy of Indian homes. The beatific image of *zenana* work in *Children of India* (1883) projects a benevolent relationship that often did not correspond to reality.

Bound in Translation

European study of Indian languages gained momentum in the eighteenth century, when Sir William Jones (1746-1794) and other Orientalist scholars postulated the common origin of Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, laying the foundation of Indo-European comparative philology. At the same time, European Romanticism sparked an interest in the great texts of Indian civilization, reflected here in Jones's famous 1789 translation of Kalidasa's Sanskrit drama *Shakuntala*.

Advances in print technology aided Orientalist endeavors. The creation of movable type fonts for Indian languages enabled the production of works such as Nathaniel B. Halhed's *A Grammar of the Bengal Language* (1778), the first book printed with Bengali type.

From the late eighteenth century onward, the expansion of East India Company rule made it imperative to train British military and civil servants in the modern languages of South Asia. The three additional grammars shown here were among the first standard works for European learners of Urdu, Tamil, and Marathi.

Despite Orientalists' reliance on Indian linguistic expertise, the contribution of their learned assistants and interlocutors often remained unacknowledged. Recent scholarship has begun to highlight the role of indigenous intellectuals in the philological encounter. A notable example is Mohammad Ismail Khan, an Afghan scholar of Arabic, Persian, and Islamic law, who worked as Inspector of Schools. Khan produced some of the earliest handbooks on Pashto, including *Khazana-i Afghani* (1889), a collection of Pashto idioms with English translations.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the rise of public education and literacy created a demand for primers and other linguistic aids in Indian languages. Some of the earliest schoolbooks, such as the *First Reading Book in Asamese* (1842) shown here, were produced by missionaries. The *Bengali Alphabet and Spelling-Book* (1907), published in Macmillan's 'Text Books for Schools in India' series, reflects British publishers' investment in the burgeoning subcontinental print market.

John Borthwick Gilchrist (1759-1841)

A Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language, or Part Third of Volume First, of A System of Hindoostanee Philology

Calcutta: Chronicle Press. 1796

Rare Book Collection

One of the most exciting finds for the exhibition's curators is this rare volume from the Library's Special Collections. Incorrectly catalogued as John Borthwick Gilchrist's *The Oriental Linguist* (Calcutta 1802), it is actually an incomplete copy of Gilchrist's *A Grammar of the*

Hindoostanee Language (Calcutta 1796), bound together with the first pages of the *Oriental Linguist*.

John Borthwick Gilchrist (1759-1841) was a prolific author, translator, and one of the foremost linguistic scholars of Persian and Urdu in British India. Born and educated in Edinburgh, Gilchrist came to India in 1782 as an assistant surgeon in the East India Company's Medical Service. He developed a keen interest in Urdu (which he termed Hindoostanee) and in 1801 was appointed head of the Hindustani Department of the newly established College of Fort William, Calcutta, a training institution for the Company's civil servants. Some of the earliest printed books in Urdu and Hindi were published under his direction. Following his return to England in 1804, Gilchrist continued to publish on Oriental languages and briefly taught at the East India Company College, Haileybury, and at University College London. He left England in 1828 and spent the rest of his life in France. He died in Paris in 1841.

The copy of Gilchrist's *Grammar* featured here is unique in that its interleaved pages not only contain hand-written annotations and an entire narrative text in Urdu, but also sixty drawings and paintings by one or more unidentified amateur artists who used the *Grammar* as a sketchbook. The uneven quality of the paintings suggests several hands. The numbered illustrations, some of which are painted over the annotations, are mostly in watercolor and start at No. 44.

The illustrations are in both European and Indian styles. While some are inspired by Indian paintings, others are drawn from observation and depict fascinating scenes from Anglo-Indian life, civilian and military, in Calcutta, Benares, and other places at the turn of the 19th century. The uniforms worn by the Company soldiers, the women's dresses, and the furniture are typical of the period.

The artists seem to have been connected to the family that is shown seated around the dining table in illustration No. 58. Some of the persons depicted in this and other paintings are identified by name, which may eventually help to establish the artists' identities.

The Imperial Gaze

The British first established their presence in South Asia in 1600, when the East India Company received a royal charter to pursue trade across the subcontinent. As its economic stakes in the region increased over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the East India Company secured its operations through military force and territorial acquisition. Company rule was formalized across much of the subcontinent from 1757 onward and lasted for a century until 1858, when in the aftermath of the Indian Uprising of 1857 the British Crown assumed direct rule over India.

As trade gave way to governance, the nature of the British presence in South Asia changed. In addition to merchants, soldiers, and administrators, the presence of missionaries, scholars, and

family members of Company employees altered the social landscape of South Asia. Bestowing European civilization on a society perceived as backward became an imperative of empire.

Due to this so-called civilizing mission, the imperial project was as much an intellectual and cultural phenomenon as it was political and economic. British innovations in the legal and revenue systems in South Asia were coupled with techniques of collecting and codifying information about imperial subjects that contributed to what Chicago scholar Bernard Cohn termed “the colonial project of control and command.” Archaeology, photography, and linguistics were among the colonial forms of knowledge that held South Asia in a multifaceted imperial gaze and persisted until the middle of the twentieth century.

The colonial administrative records displayed in this case reflect the scope and scale of this information edifice, as gathering knowledge about South Asia and its people was refined into a technique of imperial control.

Covering Modernity : A Fresh Look

The decades following Indian Independence in 1947 were a period of vibrant cultural and literary activity, in which the young Indian nation sought to define itself. Sustained by a growing middle-class readership, literature became a primary site of reflection on Indian modernity. The novel, in particular, explored themes of identity, individual freedom, equality, and the status of women.

The novels and short story collections on display are from the 1960s, a decade that saw the rise of Indira Gandhi as India’s first female Prime Minister. As Indian women consolidated their place in the nation’s public, political, and economic life, the constitutional promise of equality was often not matched by reality. The novels depict women’s ongoing struggle against oppressive patriarchal structures and for a self-determined life. Reflecting a contemporary hybrid aesthetic, their covers feature prototypes of the new Indian woman, as she walks the line between tradition and modernity. While referencing traditional motifs, the covers project images of an independent, assertive, and seductive femininity against a backdrop of shifting gender roles.

Cover design had become a well established and flourishing commercial art by the 1960s, a decade marked by bold experiments and innovations in graphic design. Book covers were often inspired by European models and fused Indian and Western elements, a result of India’s greater engagement with the international art scene. The most famous cover design artists, among them future film director Satyajit Ray, worked creatively and successfully across various media: in advertising, book illustration, and film poster design.

Representing ten different languages, the items on display also metaphorically cover the Regenstein Library’s vast and diverse collection of literature in modern South Asian languages other than English, comprising more than 300,000 volumes.

Seen from Within: India Popular

Modern South Asia is a region of amazing linguistic diversity where 29 languages are each spoken by more than a million people; in India alone, there are an estimated 780 different languages. The Library's unique collection of popular media reflects this diversity. It includes pamphlets, religious works, magazines, posters, children's books, political tracts, and ephemera in all of South Asia's official and many of its unofficial languages and dialects.

Myth and history entwine in popular stories handed down through generations and across regions. Featured here is a well-known book of folk tales about the third Mughal emperor, Akbar, and his witty advisor Birbal. These clever moral stories are part of an oral tradition that stretches back centuries. The comic-book version of the legend of Rani Durgavati tells the story of the valiant Rajput queen who led her army against Akbar's forces and died on the battlefield.

From the first full-length Indian film of 1913 to the global blockbusters of Bollywood, the commercial film industry has dominated modern visual culture in South Asia. Cinema songbooks and magazines richly illustrated with pictures of film heroes and celebrities reflect the fame of professional actors, composers, and vocalists across the subcontinent.

In big cities and small villages alike, images of film heroes compete for attention and devotion with those of celebrated religious and political figures. The posters on display here might adorn private homes, shops, and offices, while the devotional booklets are mostly for personal use.

In addition to the materials housed in Chicago, the Library also owns local collections that remain in South Asia and serve researchers and students there. The Roja Muthiah Research Library in Chennai (Madras), founded in 1994, is the first such collection. It is named for Roja Muthiah, a graphic artist and designer who began collecting books, journals, and artworks in the 1950s. This extraordinary collection now contains more than 300,000 works of classical and modern literature and literary criticism, as well as a range of ephemeral print items such as gramophone records, songbooks, oleographs, theater handbills, and invitation cards.

Unfolding Before Your Eyes

Pabuji ki phad

Imagine gathering in the dark, by torchlight and candle, to listen to the story of a hero, sung and intoned by performers and musicians, and illustrated by holding an oil lamp to just a small part of this vast painted cloth. That is how this painted textile from the Indian state of Rajasthan would have been used in nighttime performances that tell the story of Pabuji, a deified folk hero. Pabuji is the large central figure seated on the throne. He is said to have lived in the fourteenth century, and is remembered as the king who first brought camels to Rajasthan.

The painted scroll, or *phad*, is considered a sacred object by those who worship Pabuji. Itinerant priests and performers, known as *bhopas* (male) and *bhopis* (female), traditionally traveled from village to village with their instruments and painted scroll. The *phad* is the illustrative backdrop for the story told by the *bhopas*, who describe their performance as “reading the *phad*.” Episodes from the epic of Pabuji are arranged on the scroll according to where, and not when, they occurred. Thus, the same figures are repeated in various parts of the painting, though each iteration represents a different point in time.

The scroll is a portable icon, unfurled only for performance, and only during the auspicious months of the year. Rituals invite Pabuji to inhabit the sacred scroll, making the performance an act of worship and divine viewing (*darshan*). The performance will last all night, concluding in the early hours of the morning.

Warli Paintings

Paintings of this type originated in Western India in present-day Maharashtra, and are named for the indigenous communities that developed this style. Warli paintings were originally executed on the walls of buildings, in white pigment made of rice paste and gum on reddish-brown mud walls, for festivals such as the harvest or a wedding.

The large painting here depicts a dance around a long horn-shaped instrument known as the *tarpa*, which we see at the center of the circle of dancers. Paintings on this theme are hence known as *Tarpa Dance* paintings. As in all Warli paintings, geometric shapes, such as the square, triangle, and circle, figure prominently in the design of the figures and overall composition of the painting.

Warli paintings are distinctive for their use of geometric shapes and patterns. The painting of Palghat Devi, the goddess of marriage, features a large image of the goddess whose body is composed of two triangles, one inverted on the other. The bride and groom are shown at the top of the painting, galloping away on a white horse. Peacocks, musicians, and a cart pulled by a pair of bullocks decorate the village scene. This is a popular composition and subject, and would have traditionally been painted at the bride’s house at the time of marriage.

Trees, surrounded by animals, are another popular theme in contemporary Warli painting. Here, two flying peacocks frame the upper part of the tree, while a cow, its keeper, and other animals shelter at its base.

Until the 1970s, Warli painting was a women’s art. At that time, the support of the Handicrafts Board and the growing tourist trade led to greater interest in Warli paintings, and to a rejuvenation of the art form. Men also began to produce paintings in this style, and some became well known artists in their own right. That each of the three paintings bears the artist’s signature in the lower right corner is a testament to the commercialization of this tradition. Nathu Devu Sutar painted the *Tarpa Dance* and the tree, while the image of Palghat Devi is signed by Kisan Dama Shelar.

Visionary Scholars: The Chicago Pioneers

South Asia has been a focus of scholarly attention at the University of Chicago since its opening in 1892. Carl Darling Buck, a Sanskrit scholar and chair of the Department of Sanskrit and Indo-European Comparative Philology, initiated a tradition of eminent scholarship in South Asian languages that continues to this day.

Whereas the early academic focus was on ancient languages, World War II changed the field by creating a pressing need for expert knowledge in the living languages and contemporary cultures of Asia. Chicago took a lead in the study of non-Western civilizations through the Comparative Civilizations Project designed and directed by Robert Redfield and Milton Singer. These two visionary scholars created a set of core courses in Indian and other non-Western civilizations. As Singer wrote, these civilizations “deserved to be introduced into an American university on a par with the classics of any European civilization.”

Chicago became a hub of South Asian studies with the establishment of the Committee on Southern Asian Studies (COSAS) and the South Asia Language and Area Center in the 1950s. Scholars across the disciplines joined together through COSAS to secure resources, develop new academic programs, and recruit new faculty. The first generation of renowned South Asia faculty at Chicago included J.A.B. Van Buitenen, Edward Dimock, Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph, A.K. Ramanujan, Bernard Cohn, and McKim Marriott. In 1966, the University formally established a Department of South Asian Languages & Civilizations, which over the next fifty years helped shape the course of South Asian studies and continues to be one of the foremost departments of its kind in the world.

The materials on display here showcase institutional and personal dimensions of the Chicago pioneers’ extraordinary scholarly vision that fostered creative, rich, and lasting engagement with the subcontinent.

Digital Dimensions

For more than fifteen years, the Digital South Asia Library (DSAL) program, a collaboration of the University of Chicago and other partners, has digitized invaluable materials for both specialist and general audiences around the world. These exceptional materials include the Digital Dictionaries of South Asia (DDSA), the 1911 Census of India, gramophone recordings from the Linguistic Survey of India, and India Place Finder (a GIS tool for locating geographic information on Indian toponyms). DSAL has also digitized fascinating images and print products, such as the postcards, maps, periodicals, and cinema songbooks featured in the exhibition.

Recent digitization efforts include the addition of monolingual dictionaries for the DDSA, the 1931 Census of India, and a Tamil-English dictionary application for mobile devices. Among

the languages that will be represented in the expansion of monolingual dictionaries are Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Panjabi, Prakrit, Sindhi, Sinhala, and Telugu. The addition of the 1931 Census of India is also of critical import as one of the most extensive accounts of South Asia prior to Independence. The inclusion of a Tamil-English dictionary as an application for mobile devices is a path-breaking innovation in language study via global media in that it allows users to input words with a stylus or fingertip either in Tamil script or in transliteration. The DSAL program has pioneered the digitization of rare, important, and high-quality resources for the study of South Asia, enhancing and extending the possibilities of scholarly inquiry in the future.

Historical Postcards

The Regenstein Library has digitized nearly 12,000 postcards of colonial India from the private collection of Graham Shaw, former Head of Asia, Pacific, and Africa Collections at the British Library, London. Most of the postcards date from the 1880s to the 1930s. They depict a variety of scenes from everyday life in colonial South Asia, in addition to topics that would have been of interest to tourists and British residents alike. The collection is a unique visual record of colonial culture. As material objects, the postcards with their stamps and traces of correspondence offer fascinating glimpses of life in British India.

Maps

The Digital South Asia Library (DSAL) contains an important collection of digitized maps. The atlases of the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (1909 and 1931 editions) capture multifaceted information on the geographical, historical, ethnic, linguistic, economic, and administrative aspects of British India. Joseph Schwartzberg's pioneering *Historical Atlas of South Asia* (1978) covers geographic, historical, and topical changes in South Asia from prehistoric times to the twentieth century. These exceptional resources document South Asia from a variety of cartographic perspectives.

Cinema Songbooks

The Regenstein Library is currently digitizing a superb collection of cinema songbooks from South Asia as part of a special collecting initiative aimed at preserving the sound culture of South Asia. The collection contains lyric books of Hindi and Tamil films from the 1930s to 1960s, some of which have been transliterated into other scripts such as Urdu, Gujarati, and Sindhi. The songbooks are a rich record of the immensely popular and innovative musical traditions of South Asian cinema.

Gujarati Periodicals

The digitization of two rare Gujarati women's journals, *Stribodh* (1857-1944) and *Sundari Subodh* (1904-1921), is part of the South Asia Materials Project (SAMP), a collaboration

between the Library, the Center for Research Libraries, and the B.J. Institute in Ahmedabad. The journals contain articles and stories about and by women. They are particularly important for their documentation of social reform and nationalist politics, in addition to giving a public voice to the concerns of Gujarati women and female writers.

Urdu Periodicals

The exceptional private collections of Pakistani intellectuals Niaz Fatehpuri and Farman Fatehpuri contain literary journals, college magazines, conference proceedings, travelogues, and a variety of political documents from several cities in Pakistan. The remarkable materials capture the social, cultural, and political life of Pakistan in the first part of the twentieth century. The collections have been digitized by the Library in collaboration with the British Library's Endangered Archives Programme and with the Mushfiq Khwaja Library and Research Center in Karachi, Pakistan.