

SOUTH ASIA AT CHICAGO: FIFTY YEARS OF SCHOLARSHIP
September 1997 – January 1998

CASE 1 INTRODUCTION

The modern study of South Asia at American universities dates from the late 1940s, when the United States government first took a practical interest in area studies. The social and political turmoil of World War II forced Americans to consider more closely many previously unfamiliar regions of the world, particularly the peoples and cultures of Asia. Government officials also began to view American universities and their scholars as vital resources in the development of international relations. Research and scholarship in the post-war era made important contributions to these changing attitudes, and with increased interest and financial support from both the federal government and private American foundations, the new field of South Asian studies was created.

“South Asia at Chicago” examines the significant and ongoing exchanges between South Asia and the United States that were begun fifty years ago. The exhibition takes its themes and approaches from the innovative and influential scholarship of faculty and students in South Asian studies at the University of Chicago. It marks, as well, the fiftieth anniversary of the tumultuous events that climaxed in the early hours of August 15, 1947, when India and Pakistan were finally freed from colonial European rule and began their lives as independent nations. In the fifty years since independence, as South Asian studies at the University of Chicago have grown and developed, the South Asian subcontinent has been deeply affected by modern social and political forces. This exhibition explores the continuing, dynamic relationship between tradition and change in South Asia, and the ways in which South Asian studies at Chicago have analyzed and defined that relationship from cultural and historical perspectives.

“South Asia at Chicago” comprises four principal sections: the institutional history of South Asian studies at Chicago; highlights from the University of Chicago Library’s holdings on the region; University of Chicago research projects concerning the subcontinent; and recurrent themes in the representation of South Asia. In each section, a series of display cases presents a related group of themes, accompanied by selected historical documents, photographs, publications, and artifacts. Materials in the exhibition are drawn from the wealth of the South Asia holdings of the University of Chicago Library and from the personal research collections of faculty, students, and friends of the South Asian studies program at Chicago.

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This exhibition is a collaborative venture with roots in meetings and discussions over the course of a year between Bernard Cohn, James Nye, Daniel Meyer, William Alspaugh, and Susan Seizer. Susan Seizer wrote much of the narrative and Gerald Hall and Bronwen Bledsoe made additional contributions. Valarie Brocato made the vision reality.

Richard H. Davis’s succinct monograph, *South Asia at Chicago: A History* (Chicago: Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago, 1985), has been an important source of information and interpretation. South Asian studies faculty at the

University, many of whom were consulted as the exhibition was being prepared, also made valued contributions.

CASE 1 OBJECTS

1.

Wooden decorative carving, n.d. Roja Muthiah Research Library Collection.

CASE 2 WORLD WAR II AND ITS AFTERMATH

CASE TEXT

Modern academic studies of South Asia began in the United States only after World War II, but some features of Indian culture were studied in American universities well before then. During the nineteenth century, Indian religions and languages fascinated American Orientalists, who considered Sanskrit a key to discovering “the original source-language of the civilized world,” a central aim of the contemporary comparative philology. When the University of Chicago opened in 1892, among its faculty were two members of the American Oriental Society: William Rainey Harper, the University’s first president, who taught Arabic and Hebrew; and Carl Darling Buck, a Sanskritist who headed the Department of Indo-European Comparative Philology. The early focus was on ancient South Asian languages, and only students in the field of Missionary Studies had any concern with contemporary India.

World War II changed all this. There was a new, pressing need for people who understood both the living languages and contemporary cultures of Asia. As Richard Davis notes in *South Asia at Chicago*, “there came about a redefinition and radical expansion of what the United States considered its ‘foreign interests.’ With the disintegration of European colonial empires (including the demise of British rule in India), United States policy-makers felt obliged to fill the ‘power vacuum’ before Communist or anti-American forces could gain a foothold.”

As part of the national effort to provide newly-needed skills, the University of Chicago housed two crash-course language learning programs begun by the government in 1943. The Army Specialized Training School and the Civil Affairs Training School each offered three-month language training courses so surprisingly effective that observers suggested universities adapt some of their methods in language instruction after the war.

These wartime experiences had important lasting effects on universities. They pushed universities toward curricular relevance in international studies, suggested new educational methods, and brought the government and the academy into a new relationship of cooperation. The government began to see universities as a “national resource,” and universities began to see the government as a source of financial assistance for programs “in the national interest.”

At Chicago, studies of the non-Western world developed largely through the Comparative Civilizations Project begun by anthropologist Robert Redfield. Redfield doubted whether the continuation of military-style area programs after the war had a

useful role in general education. As an alternative to the military area programs, he proposed the long-range development of “area institutes.”

After a failed proposal to the Carnegie Corporation for an “Institute of Cultural Studies,” the Comparative Civilizations Project was finally funded in 1951 by the Ford Foundation. With Robert Redfield and Milton Singer as its co-directors, its aim was to stimulate scholars and social scientists already working in the University to compare cultures and thus foster understanding of “the persisting and influential characteristics of the principal cultures of the world.” Concepts of particular interest to Redfield and Singer were “worldview,” “total cultural pattern,” “ethos,” “value system,” “group personality,” and “the self.”

By 1953, the focus of the Project began to shift from other world areas — China, Europe, and Islamic civilization — to India. As Singer later noted, the organizers “decided to concentrate the Project’s resources on the study of Indian civilization because of the interest and availability of anthropologists who had recently done Indian village studies.” Redfield and Singer also “sketched somewhat speculatively a conceptual framework for studying the formation and transformation of cities” within particular civilizations, including that of India. Subsequently they created a set of core courses in non-Western civilizations at Chicago and established South Asia as an area of particular interest to Chicago scholars pursuing questions of social change in a rapidly modernizing world. The shift towards India within the Redfield Project, as it came to be known, was given its most explicit expression in a memo from Singer to Redfield, written shortly after Singer’s return from his first trip to India in 1955:

India remains, in my opinion, the best place to study the interaction of little and great traditions, the social organization of tradition, “cultural structure,” and related problems. The coexistence of different levels of culture for a very long period of time has produced types of mutual interaction and continuity which in other civilizations can only be guessed at but which in India can be observed first-hand.

During the ensuing decade, Redfield’s Comparative Civilizations Project fostered new projects focused on South Asia. The Project established a model of cultural study which, largely through Singer’s efforts, influenced the developing South Asian program at Chicago. It emphasized study of other cultures for broadly humanistic reasons, rather than the “national interest” as was fashionable in the 1950s. It was directed not at producing useful expertise, but at increasing international understanding. Finally, it stressed the study of India as a civilization, not (as most area studies did) as a geographical or political entity. The emphasis on classical traditions and cultural history still informs the Chicago program today.

CASE 2 OBJECTS

1.

University College: Public Lectures. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1942. Milton Singer Papers.

Among the courses offered to University College students at the Art Institute was Milton Singer's "War and Peace: A Human Pattern Examined."

2.

Milton B. Singer, "Unity of Science: Humanizing Movement." *The Humanist* (Autumn, 1941). Milton Singer Papers.

3.

Milton Singer. "Unifying Science in a Disunified World." *The Scientific Monthly* (January, 1941). Milton Singer Papers.

4.

Glenn Hensley studying war news on squadron bulletin board. Photographer unknown. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

5.

Poster produced in India during World War II. Southern Asia Department.

6.

University of Chicago Round Table. "Gandhi's Life and Death: Its Meaning for Mankind". Transcript of radio broadcast, February 1, 1948. University Archives.

7.

Robert M. Hutchins to Charles Dollard, November 23, 1949. Robert Redfield/Ford Foundation Cultural Studies Papers.

8.

Governor-General Lord Louis Mountbatten and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India's Constituent Assembly, in Parliament House on the occasion of the assumption of power by the Dominion of India, August 15, 1947. Photograph by Maureen L.P. Patterson. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

Maureen Patterson was South Asia Bibliographer at the University of Chicago Library from 1959 to 1984. Dr. Prasad was later the first President of India when the Dominion became the Republic of India on January 26, 1951.

9.

Robert Redfield and Milton Singer. "The Cultural Role of Cities." *Man in India* (July-September, 1956). Milton Singer Papers.

This article, first presented at a conference on urbanism in 1954, was presented to the Comparison of Civilizations seminar and led to Singer's first trip to India in 1954.

CASE 3

A COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

CASE TEXT

South Asian studies at the University of Chicago is reflected in a number of interrelated institutional units, each contributing to the breadth of Chicago's scholarly programs. The next section of the exhibition traces developments in six of these units: 1) the Committee

on Southern Asian Studies (COSAS); 2) the South Asian Civilization teaching program in the undergraduate College; 3) the South Asian Languages and Area Center (SALAC); 4) the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations; 5) the South Asia library collection; and 6) the University of Chicago Press.

South Asian studies at the University of Chicago was made possible by the arrival in the early 1950s of several professors who shared a deep interest in the area. India was a newly independent democracy with a long historical tradition. Many established scholars chose to pursue their particular disciplines in India when the recently-created Fulbright and Rockefeller grants began supporting research abroad. By 1954, professors at Chicago who had benefited from such grants — including Robert Redfield, Milton Singer, Edward Shils, Richard McKeon, Bert Hoselitz, Donald Lach, Philip Hauser, Gilbert White, Francis Chase and Robert Crane — began to meet as an informal planning committee. In 1955 that informal planning developed into the Committee on South Asian Studies (COSAS). The name was later changed to the Committee on Southern Asian Studies, reflecting the contribution of Southeast Asian specialists to the program.

The formation of a committee composed of faculty from different academic departments was assisted by a tradition of interdisciplinary cooperation at the University of Chicago. COSAS became an official committee with four major aims: coordinating research activities, recommending and preparing undergraduate-level teaching materials, developing advanced programs for graduate students specializing in South Asia, and providing facilities and guidance for South Asian students. In 1956, COSAS members began working actively to initiate a new academic program by coordinating courses and recruiting new faculty. By 1961, they had largely achieved their initial goals and established a solid foundation for South Asian studies at the University of Chicago.

CASE 3 OBJECTS

1.

W. Norman Brown to Milton Singer, telegram, December 21, 1955. Agenda for the Second Meeting of the Committee on South Asia of the Far Eastern Association. New York. January 5, 1955. Milton Singer Papers.

While COSAS was developing at Chicago, the Far Eastern Association, a national organization, was established in 1948 by scholars of China and Japan. Scholars of India, including Milton Singer, urged the Association to change its name and recognize South Asia as a valid and viable sub-field of Asian studies. Renamed the “Association for Asian Studies” in 1957, the organization played an important role in developing the embryonic field of South Asian studies.

2.

“The World’s Great Religions: Part 1, Hinduism.” *Life* (April 4, 1955). Milton Singer Papers.

Life magazine’s cover story indicates the general American interest in India during the 1950’s.

3.

Richard L. Park to Milton Singer, December 4, 1964.

Milton Singer to Richard L. Park, letter, December 8, 1964.

Richard L. Park to Milton Singer, letter, December 14, 1964.

Milton Singer Papers.

4.

Edward C. Dimock, Jr., reading a tribute on the occasion of the retirement of George V. Bobrinskoy, 1967. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

Bobrinskoy is flanked (l.) by Milton Singer and Dean Robert E. Streeter.

5.

Members of the Committee on Southern Asia Studies at the retirement luncheon for George V. Bobrinskoy, 1967. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

Gathered in the Foster Hall Lounge are (l to r): Ronald Inden, McKim Marriott, Marc Galanter, Richard McKeon, S. William Halperin, Clifford Geertz, Lloyd Rudolph, Reuben Smith, Susanne Rudolph, and Norman Zide.

6.

University of Chicago, Committee on South Asian Studies. *Announcements, 1958-1961*. Milton Singer Papers.

7.

Programs and Dissertations in Southern Asian Studies at the University of Chicago.

Chicago: University of Chicago, Committee on Southern Asian Studies, 1977. Southern Asia Collection.

8.

Richard H. Davis. *South Asia at Chicago: A History*. Chicago: Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago, 1985. Southern Asia Collection.

Davis's monograph has been a basic source for the institutional history of South Asian studies at Chicago and for this exhibition.

CASE 4 "INDIA IS BEST STUDIED AS A CIVILIZATION" THE SOUTH ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS COURSE AND ITS ARGUMENT

CASE TEXT

In 1954, two members of COSAS — Milton Singer and Francis Chase from the Department of Education — were appointed to a University committee charged with creating links between the College B.A. program and the Social Sciences Division. They proposed that the College create a number of year-long courses on “non-Western civilizations” and argued that these “would, we believe, not only familiarize the student with a civilized tradition other than his own, and thus permit him to glimpse the world and his own civilization as others see them, but might also enable him to understand his own cultural heritage by comparing it with another.” The idea was approved for

introductory courses on Far Eastern, Indian, and Islamic civilizations. A series of generous grants from the Carnegie Corporation provided both the necessary staff (teaching fellows from the Carnegie internship program) and equipment.

The “Introduction to the Civilization of India” course was an ongoing pedagogical experiment. It was first offered in 1956-57 as a three-course sequence. The initial approach was Redfield’s: India is best understood as a civilization, complex and multi-faceted, and therefore to be studied from multiple disciplinary angles. Redfield’s essay “Thinking About a Civilization” was often used as the initial reading of the course.

The pedagogical problem that quickly arose in the presentation of India as a civilization was finding a proper balance between complexity and coherence. The original design had different professors and scholars lecturing each week; this however proved “disaggregating” for students. Eventually Susanne Rudolph of the Department of Political Science, who taught the course in the early 1960s, suggested that the course be taught with an eye to “broad strokes” that would help students get some sense of the overall shape of the phenomena they confront. The coherent picture of India produced by this approach might then be complicated or exploded by later courses that would demonstrate the real diversity of India.

McKim Marriott of the Department of Anthropology responded by redesigning the course in 1966-68 to focus on contrasting holistic constructions of India. Students would be presented with the varying views of Louis Dumont, Robert Redfield, and D. D. Kosambi, for example, each of whom provided a different totalizing picture of India. The student would no longer be asked to formulate his or her own construction of Indian civilization, but rather to evaluate the various conflicting constructions of other scholars. Not only was India itself a phenomenon of great diversity, but by this time scholars, in trying to depict India as a unified phenomenon, had developed diverse and conflicting interpretations and constructions.

The pedagogical issues at the heart of the new core course proved productive of scholarly self-reflection. Singer wrote: “Most of us who started to teach the Introduction to Indian Civilizations course in 1956 soon discovered that our students brought with them popular images and stereotypes of India and Asia through which they approached the readings, discussions and performances in the course. More surprising was our discovery that we the staff shared some of these ‘scratches on our minds’ too. As a result of this discovery, I wrote ‘Passage to More than India’ (the opening essay of *When A Great Tradition Modernizes*) in order to sketch the history of changing European and American images of Asia.”

The Indian Civilization course was an important first step towards creating a South Asia program of study at Chicago. Singer points to the course’s central and sustaining role in an almost visionary plan for a Chicago school of South Asian studies in a letter he wrote to A. K. Ramanujan in 1967:

What has been so unique about this program is the vision which launched it ... and which still animates it. At the very beginning we asked the University administration to support

an Indian studies program not because it was good cold war politics, or because India was an exotic foreign culture or because it was an underdeveloped nation. We argued the most difficult and the boldest case for support: that Indian civilization represented a great tradition of learning and culture and deserved to be introduced into an American university on a par with the classics of any European civilization. Neither the administration nor the faculty ruling bodies were quickly persuaded to accept our position. Except for Sanskrit, there simply were not enough Indianists or courses on India around to demonstrate the validity of our contentions. So for a few years from about 1954 to 1959 we lived with our grand vision in the limbo of hopes, with only the undergraduate course on Indian Civilization and a few social science courses to keep them alive.

CASE 4 OBJECTS

1.

Milton Singer. "The Asian Civilizations Program at the University of Chicago," *Asian Studies in Liberal Education*. Washington: Association of American Colleges, 1959. Milton Singer Papers.

2.

University of Chicago, Committee on South Asian Studies, Social Science 232, Introduction to the Civilization of India, bibliography and course syllabus, Spring Quarter, 1959. Southern Asia Collection.

3.

Young girl writing. Photograph by Bernard S. Cohn. On loan from Bernard S. Cohn.

4.

Milton Singer to A. K. Ramanujan. Letter. Chicago. December 7, 1967. Milton Singer Papers.

4a.

Teacher with students in village school, Senapur Village, Uttar Pradesh, 1953. Photograph by Bernard S. Cohn. On loan from Bernard S. Cohn.

5.

Milton Singer. "Chicago's Non-Western Civilizations Program," ca.1956. Milton Singer Papers.

6.

Maureen L. P. Patterson and Ronald B Inden. *South Asia: An Introductory Bibliography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962. Library General Collection.

7.

University of Chicago, *Changing Dimensions of Indian Society and Culture*, syllabus for the course "Introduction to the Civilization of India." Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957. Library General Collection.

CASE 5
CASE TEXT

SOUTH ASIA LANGUAGE AND AREA CENTER

Over the decades, the South Asia Language and Area Center (SALAC) has organized a variety of programs given priority and funding by the federal government. Primarily an administrative body, SALAC has sought and received support from a number of governmental agencies and dispersed those funds to the benefit of both University and wider communities. As Maureen Patterson writes, SALAC's *raison d'être* has always been the promotion of academic specialization in South Asian languages:

As the new field of South Asian studies began to take shape in the U.S. in the 1950s, it was faced with a complex problem. What languages should be taught as entrée to India's diverse cultural traditions? The classical languages — Sanskrit, Pali, and the Prakrits — had served Indological study well for the past century, but those who were developing centers for the study of modern India knew that courses in modern languages would be necessary. But which one or ones from among India's fifteen major literary languages, each spoken by millions of people?

Americans interested in modern India began their language study with Hindi. As early as 1948 Cornell University, with Carnegie Corporation and later Ford Foundation funds, ran a program of concentrated anthropological research, studying culture change in the politically important North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. This work, which required intensive use of Hindi, lasted for the entire decade of 1948-58. The photographs taken in U. P. villages in the 1950s by Bernard S. Cohn which are included in this exhibit document Cohn's participation in the Cornell program. Maureen Patterson notes in a forthcoming publication: "The Cornell experience made it clear that American fieldwork in India required intensive language training, but not only in Hindi."

The experiences of such programs made other U.S. universities eager to develop both materials and personnel for teaching South Asian languages. The Rockefeller Foundation began to show interest in furthering linguistic study, and in 1954 it funded a broad program of linguistics training at an Indian institution, the Deccan College, in Poona. Veterans of the Deccan College linguistics program soon began to teach Indian languages at many of the newly-funded South Asian centers in America. No longer was Hindi the only language offered: Bengali, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Marathi, Sinhala, Oriya, and Urdu also became available to American students.

In 1958, the U.S. Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), which allocated federal funding for university language centers. As Richard Davis says, "The NDEA was a direct response to the Soviet launching of Sputnik in October 1957 and the widespread fear of an 'education gap' that Sputnik ignited in the U.S." In addition to the U.S. desire to consolidate its own position in a newly ordered postwar world, American competition with Russia impelled a concern with the political fate of the 400 million people of India, and the question of whether they would be "Communist" or "free." The Russians were training students in Hindi, as well as in local languages such as Telugu; the U.S. had to be able to compete on equal terms. All of these factors meant that in the

U.S., funding for language education appealed to conservatives and liberals alike: conservatives could see such expansion as a necessary weapon in the war with the communists, while liberals could recognize in language learning a way both to promote “active benevolence” and to further “international understanding.” Both groups saw foreign language learning as an activity useful to the national interest.

The federal funds for language centers were earmarked for “critical” or strategic areas and subjects, which included “neglected” languages “where adequate instruction in such languages is not readily available in the U.S.” These included not just Hindi-Urdu, but also Bengali and Tamil. Administrators at the U.S. Office of Education invited research universities to apply in national competition for funding under Title VI of the NDEA to establish “Language and Area Centers” focused on the nine major world regions identified under the act. At the highest point in this funding history, over 100 such centers for various world regions existed. Six of the original Title VI centers for South Asian language and area studies established as early as 1959-60 still exist today, at the University of California-Berkeley, the University of Chicago, the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell University, the University of Texas-Austin, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. They are now called National Resource Centers, under the successor act to the NDEA, the Higher Education Act of 1965.

From 1958 to 1963, Davis reports, the NDEA “ploughed over one billion dollars into education, of which \$74 million went into foreign language programs. The effects of this Act on the entire education industry in the U.S. were profound, but perhaps nowhere more so than on the field of area studies. The NDEA grant received by Chicago funded very specific language study and research: it could provide fellowships for graduate students (known as Title VI grants), and it could support projects improving language instruction. A great deal of Chicago faculty research was funded on this basis; for instance, Edward C. Dimock’s *Introduction to Bengali; An Urdu Reader* by John Gumperz and C.M. Naim; Kali Charan Bahl’s *Studies in the Semantic Structure of Hindi*; and James Lindholm and K. Paramasivam’s *A Basic Tamil Reader and Grammar*.

The South Asia Language and Area Center also houses the South Asia Outreach program, which is oriented towards disseminating knowledge of India to the general public. Outreach has sponsored a wide range of cultural events and brought presentations of South Asian performing arts to Chicago over the years.

CASE 5 OBJECTS

1.

C. M. Naim. *Readings in Urdu: Prose and Poetry*. Honolulu: East-West Center Press, for the South Asia Language and Area Center, University of Chicago, [1965]. Library General Collection.

2.

K. Paramasivam and James Lindholm. *A Basic Tamil Reader and Grammar*. Chicago: South Asia Language and Area Center, University of Chicago, 1980. Library General Collection.

East-West Center publications displayed here carry the following statement: “This volume is one of a series of experimental language textbooks in South Asian languages written and prepared in the South Asia Language and Area Center at the University of Chicago under contract with the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C.”

3.

Edward C. Dimock, Jr. and Somdev Bhattacharji, with Ronald Inden and Arati John. *A Bengali Prose Reader for Second Year Students*. Draft, n.d. Southern Asia Collection.

4.

University of Chicago, South Asia Language and Area Center. *Technical Report, 1967-68*. Milton Singer Papers.

5.

National Defense Education Act of 1958 (Public Law 85-864 — September 2, 1958). Library General Collection.

6.

Norman H. Zide, Colin P. Masica, K. C. Bahl, and A. C. Chandola. *A Premchand Reader*. Honolulu: East-West Center Press, for the South Asia Language and Area Center, University of Chicago, [1962]. Library General Collection.

7.

Edward C. Dimock, Jr., Somdev Bhattacharji, and Suhas Chatterjee. *Introduction to Bengali, Part I*. Honolulu: East-West Center Press, for the South Asia Language and Area Center, University of Chicago, [1964]. Library General Collection.

8.

C. M. Naim. *Introductory Urdu*. Chicago: Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago, 1975. Library General Collection.

9.

South Asia Newsletter (Spring 1977 and January 1985).

CASE 6 DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGES AND
 CIVILIZATIONS

CASE TEXT

At the same time COSAS drew up its application for NDEA funding, the Committee learned that the Ford Foundation was becoming interested in international studies. In 1960 the Ford Foundation expressed a desire to help “selected American universities make non-Western and international teaching part of their permanent academic programs.” COSAS sent an application for a language center to the federal government and the Ford Foundation as well. The Committee proposed “to guarantee the continuance of what is being achieved and to provide for advance” of the Chicago

program. Both grants came through, and together they enabled the originally small program in South Asian studies to expand at an unanticipated speed.

The COSAS application for this support was entitled “Operational Plan for an Area Training Research Program, 1961-1970.” The proposed lines of development included expanding faculty, library acquisitions, and support for research. The South Asian program received funds of over a million and a half dollars for the ensuing ten year period. With this solid financial grounding, the program began to hire new faculty. The number of graduate students rose proportionally and a productive and prosperous era of expansion was well underway.

In Singer’s five-year progress report to the Ford Foundation in 1965, he noted that all the original goals had been met. When the program began, South Asian studies was seen as exotic and irrelevant, whereas by 1966 it had already become “a familiar and essential feature of the University,” says Davis. In 1965, the University established a Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations in the Humanities Division, granting degrees in area-specific — rather than discipline focused — studies. A full and formal program for the advanced study of South Asian languages and literatures was now an institutional reality at Chicago.

CASE 6 OBJECTS

1.

Milton Singer. *Ford Foundation Funds for South and Southeast Asian Studies: A Midway Report, 1964-65, 1965-66*. Chicago, June 20, 1966. Milton Singer Papers.

2.

University of Chicago. *Graduate Programs in the Divisions: Announcements, 1967-1968*. University Archives.

3.

Historical Scrapbook of the Southern Asia Collection of the University of Chicago Library. Compiled by Maureen L. P. Patterson. Southern Asia Collection.

4.

Mahendra Kumar Premi. “Sikago Visavidyalaya ka Bhasha-Vijnana Vibhaga [The University of Chicago Linguistics Department],” *Saptahika Hindustana*, July 21, 1963. Library General Collection.

This article in a popular Hindi weekly discusses the teaching of South Asian languages at the University of Chicago and the new “PL-480” library program.

CASE 7

THE SOUTHERN ASIA LIBRARY COLLECTION

CASE TEXT

From the earliest days in its history the University of Chicago Library has collected books related to South Asia. Most notably, the Berlin Collection, which was purchased in 1891 as the core of the new University’s library, contained numerous publications in Sanskrit and on Indic philology. During the first half of this century, works in the

classical languages of India were collected along with some government documents and accounts by missionaries, travelers, and officials.

In the 1950's, when "area studies" developed in American higher education, there was both an increase in the number of titles on South Asia acquired by the Library and also a change in the range of subject matter. All areas of the humanities and social sciences were encompassed. At the same time, the University began systematic acquisition of books in the regional languages of South Asia, such as Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Tamil. Previously, few American libraries collected volumes in these modern languages.

The majority of books and serials in the Southern Asia collection were received under the Library of Congress Foreign Acquisitions Program. Beginning with the 1958 passage of Public Law 480, the Food for Peace program supplied American agricultural products to third world countries on very favorable terms. Repayment could be made in local currencies rather than in dollars, pounds, or other "hard" currencies. As the U.S. government built up sizable holdings of foreign soft currencies, the 1958 act provided a way of spending those funds. It permitted purchase of local publications for deposit in American libraries. In the case of South Asia, books were acquired at the Library of Congress offices in New Delhi and Karachi. There were also programs in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and later Bangladesh. For a nominal participation fee, the University was able to acquire thousands of monograph and serial volumes, and later audio and video recordings. Most of these programs have been converted to dollar-based programs in which each library pays for its own materials plus a fee to cover acquisitions and cataloging. This Cooperative Acquisitions Program continues to be the Library's main source of material, but retrospective purchase and gifts also add to the collection.

In 1958, Maureen L. P. Patterson, who had come to the University of Chicago as a Carnegie teaching intern for the Indian Civilization course, became Bibliographic Specialist for South Asia and later Bibliographer for Southern Asia, as Southeast Asia was added to her responsibilities. In the twenty-five years before her retirement in 1984, Patterson built what is arguably the finest collection of South Asia materials in the country. She also was a leader of South Asia library activities on the national level. In recognition of her lifetime contribution, she received a Distinguished Service Award from the Association for Asian Studies in 1986.

In 1984, James Nye became bibliographer for Southern Asia. Under his leadership the collection has developed in new directions. The Southern Asia Department has undertaken a number of focused projects to acquire large bodies of South Asian materials and make them accessible to the North American scholarly community. In many cases these projects are in cooperation with other libraries in the United States, India, or Great Britain. Almost all of these activities have required successful competition for grant funds from government or private sources. These projects include: preparation of a database for *South Asian Books in Series: Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Pali*; preservation by microfilming of thousands of brittle books; purchase of an extensive library of Tamil books from a private collector, creation of the Roja Muthiah Research Library, and on-going cataloging and microfilming of its holdings; establishing a consortium of

American libraries to acquire the Urdu Research Center in Hyderabad, India; arranging for deposit at Chicago by the British Library of over 23,000 duplicate volumes of the Official Publications of India.

Southern Asia Department staff have played a major role in planning and implementation of two projects undertaken by other libraries. The Library of Congress, National Library of India, and the Center for Research Libraries are microfilming about 55,000 volumes published in the subcontinent during the first half of this century. In another long-term project, the Center for Research Libraries aims to microfilm thousands of volumes in Indic languages from the nineteenth century. Together these projects will correct American libraries' deficient holdings of earlier titles in South Asian languages.

The greatest challenge the Library faces as we move forward is to continue building a collection worthy of the South Asia scholars at the University. As Maureen Patterson said in a 1977 essay on "The Southern Asia Library Collections":

The availability of library materials often opens up new vistas, and it is the responsibility of a research library to be in a position of imaginative leadership in relation to research. Restriction of collections to known and tried fields does not augur well for a dynamic research future. In such new areas of work as South and South East Asia we are simply unable to define the outer limits or forms of potential research materials.

CASE 7 OBJECTS

1.

South Asia Bibliographer Maureen Patterson and then-student assistant Ronald Inden sorting newspapers in the South Asia Collection, 1979. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.
Ronald Inden is currently Professor of History at the University.

2.

Dr. Jai Kohli reading Indian newspapers, 1981. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

3.

A. K. Ramanujan consulting Bibliographer Maureen Patterson in the South Asia Collection, 1979. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

4.

C. M. Naim reviewing Urdu books, 1979. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

5.

Mchog-'gyur-glin-pa. *Bla ma'i thugs sgrub bar chad kun sel gyi Tshe dban 'chi med srog ster zes bya ba bzugs so*. [Solu, Nepal: s.n., 1970.] Library General Collection.

Sirshendu Mukhopadhyaya. *Manojadera adbuta bari*. Calcutta: Ananda Publishers, 1978. Library General Collection.

Stamps on these Tibetan and Bengali books show they were acquired for the University by the Library of Congress New Delhi Field Office under the “PL-480” (Public Law 480) program.

6.

Franz Bopp. *Glossarium Sanscritum*. Berlin: 1828. Library General Collection.

Franz Bopp. *Ausführliches Lehrgebäude der Sanskrita-Sprache*. Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1827. Library General Collection.

This Sanskrit-Latin glossary and Sanskrit grammar were acquired as part of the Berlin Collection, the 1891 purchase that formed the basis for the library of the new University of Chicago.

7.

Maureen L. P. Patterson, in collaboration with William J. Alspaugh. *South Asian Civilizations: a Bibliographic Synthesis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981. University of Chicago Press Collection.

8.

University of Chicago Library, Bibliographer for Southern Asia. “Rank Order by Language of South Asia Cooperative Acquisitions Programs Monograph Titles Accepted,” Annual Report, 1995-1996. Southern Asia Collection.

9.

University of Chicago Library. Berlin Collection bookplate, 1891. University Archives.

CASE 8 “AN INDEX OF THE UNIVERSITY CHARACTER” THE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

CASE TEXT

Writing a fiftieth anniversary statement on the University of Chicago Press in 1941, Gordon J. Laing, the General Editor of the Press and Professor of Classics, said, “Perhaps there is no better index of the real character of any university than the catalogue of its press.” This assertion is as germane for the South Asian subset of books published by a press as it is for the entire corpus.

The more than 170 titles produced since 1892 on India and its subcontinental neighbors by the University of Chicago Press have had a remarkable impact on understanding of the region. Spanning virtually all disciplines, the books remain frequently cited scholarly sources. The small sample displayed here illustrates that range — from erudite scholarly inquiry to exquisite modern fiction; from path-breaking reference publications to highly acclaimed translations of classical texts. Beyond books, journals from the Press such as *History of Religions* regularly feature articles or entire issues on South Asian topics.

This publishing achievement is the result of the leadership provided by the Director of the Press, currently and notably Morris Philipson, as well as the University faculty, whose pronounced influence on selection of books is clearly discernible. This leadership continues to bring accolades such as the 1982 Publisher Citation from PEN American Center which referred to the University of Chicago Press as “the best university press in the country.”

CASE 8 OBJECTS

1.

Karl Ellstaetter. *The Indian Silver Currency: An Historical and Economic Study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1895. University of Chicago Press Collection.

2.

Regula Burckhardt Qureshi. *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context, and meaning in Qawwali*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. University of Chicago Press Collection.

3.

S.J. Tambiah. *Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. University of Chicago Press Collection.

4.

Emma Tarlo. *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. University of Chicago Press Collection.

5.

R. K. Narayan. *The Bachelor of Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980. University of Chicago Press Collection.

6.

Louis Dumont. *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970. University of Chicago Press Collection.

7.

J. A. B. van Buitenen, trans. and ed. *The Mahabharata: I. The Book of the Beginning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973. University of Chicago Press Collection.

8.

Sara Suleri. *Meatless Days*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. University of Chicago Press Collection.

9.

Joseph E. Schwartzberg, ed. *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978. On loan from Bernard S. Cohn.

CASE 9

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF INDIA

CASE TEXT

Nearly 23,500 volumes of duplicate books and serials in the Official Publications of India are now on their way to Chicago on long-term deposit from the British Library. Included are the pre-1947 publications of the Government of India and of other governments within the territories now comprising the Republics of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar (Burma). Published by the British during the Raj, the books and serials in the Official Publications chronicle colonial rule of South Asia in minute detail. Among the topics covered by these publications are: land tenure, ethnographies, trade statistics, military expeditions, archaeological surveys, crises such as plagues and famines, artisans and their trades, listings of civil and military employees, regional gazetteers, law reports, and legislative accounts. These documents are essential for understanding nineteenth- and twentieth-century India.

The British Library's historical collections on India are world-renowned. In 1987, an administrative reorganization joined the former India Office Library and Records with the main British Library. This resulted in duplicate holdings of the Official Publications of India, books rarely found in the United States. Only about twenty percent of the titles to be deposited are available anywhere in the U.S. at present. With the move to the British Library's new London facility at St. Pancras already begun and the discovery that its space would be less than had been hoped, British Library administrators were anxious to reduce the duplication in their collections. That fact linked with the British Library's vision of service to an international community of scholars prompted this deposit arrangement.

Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty, of Chicago's Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, said, "These materials will confer incalculable benefits on teaching and research in South Asian studies and in British Imperial history, not only in this University but in the North American region as a whole." He went on to add, "Scholars and students of Indian history in India, Australia, and the UK have for some time now enjoyed the advantage of having these publications available in hard copies in libraries in their own countries. This deposit by the British Library will bring the same advantages to researchers in North America."

As a part of this collaboration with the British Library, the University will improve access to the Official Publications by preparing a site on the World Wide Web. Support for digitizing selected volumes and mounting them on the web site for world-wide access is being provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation via the Association of Research Libraries' Global Resources Program.

CASE 9 OBJECTS

1.

Bengal Wet Dock Committee. *Report of the Committee Appointed by Government in May 1844, to Inquire into the Practicability of Providing Calcutta with Wet Docks....*

Calcutta: W. Ridsdale, Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1846. On deposit from the British Library.

2.

J. A. G. Wales. *A Monograph on Wood Carving in the Bombay Presidency*. [Bombay?]: s.n., 1902. On deposit from the British Library.

3.

D. Bradbury to G. Munoff, June 30, 1997, countersigned by G. Munoff, July 11, 1997. Library Director's Office.

4.

Reproduction of the Royal "lion and unicorn" seal used in the Official Publications of India. Reproduced from *Report of the Revenue Commission, Bengal* (Calcutta: Government of Bengal, 1941). On deposit from the British Library.

5.

Bihar and Orissa. Department of Agriculture. *Crop Pest Handbook for Behar and Orissa Including also Western Bengal*. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1913. On deposit from the British Library.

6.

Report on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency for the Year 1916-17. Bombay: Government Press, 1917. On deposit from the British Library.

7.

Annual Statement of the Sea-Borne Trade and Navigation of the Bengal Presidency ... 1892-93. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1893. On deposit from the British Library.

8.

Sword Practice for Indian Cavalry, 1909. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1909. On deposit from the British Library.

9.

Physical Education: Drill Book with Instructions for Teachers and Group of Class Games. Calcutta: Department of Public Instruction, Bengal, 1916. On deposit from the British Library.

CASE 10

THE ROJA MUTHIAH TAMIL COLLECTION

CASE TEXT

In 1994 the University of Chicago Library purchased an important and unusually wide-ranging collection of Indian cultural materials from the family of Mr. Roja Muthiah, a collector and artist who lived and worked in the Chettinadu district of Tamilnadu, south India. At the suggestion of Professor A. K. Ramanujan the University decided that the collection should remain in India. Chicago has committed itself to preserving and making available to scholars this valuable body of research materials, microfilms of

which will be added to the University's collection, while the originals and a copy of each microfilm will remain in Madras. In this effort, the University is joined by MOZHI, a Madras public trust dedicated to developing resources in Tamil language and culture. The collection is now located in the newly created Roja Muthiah Research Library in Madras.

Mr. Muthiah (1926-1992) owned a sign-painting business in Madras, India, called Roja Arts. From this he adopted Roja, meaning "rose," as his personal name. In the early 1950's Mr. Muthiah began collecting books. As a young man he scoured the book stalls of the Moore Market in Madras. Later in life he returned to his native village of Kottaiyur. Here, he continued to build his collection, and compile abstracts and indexes, with the aid of his wife and two children. Every room of the Muthiah household house was filled with books. The collection was frequently consulted by Indian and foreign scholars. Duplicates from the collection were sold; the University of Chicago and the British Library were among Mr. Muthiah's customers. The University of Chicago's purchase of the Roja Muthiah collection in 1994 met Mr. Muthiah's concern that his collection should not be dispersed.

The University of Chicago has led an international effort to preserve this important cultural treasure. Besides the University and MOZHI trust, agencies that have committed resources to support the Roja Muthiah Research Library include: the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the U.S. Department of Education, the Ford Foundation, the University of Chicago Women's Board, and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi.

The Roja Muthiah Research Library's notable strengths are its holdings in classical and modern literature, literary criticism, medicine, cinema and the related culture of printed works (such as song books), folklore, material by and about women, religion and philosophy, and numerous publications of historical value. The types of materials included are: approximately 50,000 volumes of books, 1,600 journals and newspapers, oleolithographs from the workshop of Ravi Varma, more than 29,000 abstracts and index entries for Tamil journal articles, nearly a half-million clippings, cinema and play posters, and a small group of palm leaf manuscripts. Most of the publications date from the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth.

CASE 10 OBJECTS

1.

Image representing 'all of the gods within the cow', n.d. On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

Ravi Varma. The Maharaja of Mysore, n.d. On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

By combining multiple stylistic and cultural influences in portraying classical Indian themes, artist Ravi Varma (1848-1906) founded a new school of painting known as the Kilimanoor School of Academic Realism in Indian Art. Varma's portrayal of locations and subjects — ranging from Cape Comorin, at the southern tip of the subcontinent, to

the Himalayas in the north — has been praised by Indian nationalists as a contribution to national integration because of its vision of India as a natural unity.

2a.

Kuti Nul, 1940. On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

The cover of this Tamil periodical depicts a woman spinning.

2b.

The Tamil-Zenana and School Magazine (March, 1917). On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

While the cover is in English, the text of this magazine is in Tamil. The back cover quotes from admiring press reviews:

“By reason of the simplicity and purity of the style and subject matter, the magazine is bound to be an invaluable help to girls in schools. We wish the Editor every success in his noble endeavour in a field where there is so much to be done and so few to come forward.”

2c.

Amuta Curapi (Annual Issue, April 1950). On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

3.

Agreement between Lawrence J. Furnstahl for the University of Chicago and the Roja Muthiah family, Feb. 17, 1994. On loan from the Office of the Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer, the University of Chicago.

4.

Roja Muthiah. Painted design for the cover of the Tamil magazine *Katal* [Love]. On loan from the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

5.

Valliyammai natakam, edited by Vaitilinkatecikar. Markkapuram: Muttu Cettiayar, 1875. The first book microfilmed by the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

CASE 11

THE ILLUSTRATED BOOK: BRITISH ART FROM THE COLONIAL ERA

CASE TEXT

During the colonial era the British developed a strong visual tradition that, often comically, illustrated and characterized British life in India. Many of these visual self-representations offer caricatures of British habits of rule. Often they were created as a means of communicating information about colonial life in India to other Britishers about to embark on their first journey to the East. The authors and illustrators of such publications intended their work to be “useful as well as amusing,” as Captain Williamson said in the preface to *The Costume and Customs of Modern India from a Collection of Drawings by Charles Doyley, Esq.*. With the passage of time, it has become both that and more.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there were many professional and amateur British artists in India. The amateurs were extremely prolific. Pratapaditya Pal and Vidya Dehejia note in *From Merchants to Emperors*, “of the more than ten thousand items preserved in the India Office Library in London, less than one-tenth are by professional artists.” Among the better known amateur artists of the period were Sir Charles D’Oyly (1781-1845), Captain Robert Grindlay (1786-1877), G. F. Atkinson (1822-1859), and Emily Eden (1797-1869). “While most professionals were engaged in painting portraits of the nabobs and sahibs or composing history pictures of imperial interest, the amateur artists were able to cast their nets much wider. The works of professional artists had to satisfy their clients and sell in a fairly competitive market. The sketches and drawings of the amateurs, however, were meant primarily for the artists themselves, were executed more freely, and are more intimate observations of the Indian scene.”

The presence of both professional and amateur artists meant that Anglo-Indian life between 1757 and 1857 was recorded in extraordinary detail. “Whatever else may be said of British imperial rule in India, no other colonial power in history left such a vast amount of visual material recording the life and perceptions of the ruling class with such fidelity or in such graphic detail. There were many other colonial powers in Asia during the Victorian age, and the British themselves ruled territories other than India. But, nowhere else can one experience the domestic and official lives of the British as intimately as one can through their pictures, drawings, lithographs, and photographs of India,” Pal and Dehejia say.

The impressions sketched by amateur artists continued to circulate through the mid-nineteenth century in the form of illustrated books and portfolios using lithographic techniques. These include Hodge’s *Views on India* (1785), the Daniells’ *Oriental Scenery* (1795), Forbe’s *Oriental Memoirs* (1813), Williamson’s *Oriental Field Sports* (1819), D’Oyly’s *Costumes of India* (1830), and Emily Eden’s *Portraits of the Princes and Peoples of India* (1844), several of which are displayed here.

But this romantic image of India ended around the time of the mutiny in 1857, “which dramatically altered the British attitude toward India. India was no longer a mysterious and unfamiliar country; the British public’s curiosity had been well satisfied” and interest declined. Very few professional artists visited India after it was an official part of the empire. In addition, photography came to India early and displaced the documentary function of the painters, changing too the texture of visual representation. Photography was able to bring the real India rather too close for comfort. It is at this same moment that caricaturists began depicting mutual disdain in Anglo-Indian life, rather than an idyllic image of its bliss. Pal and Dehejia note, “While in many ways the early professional photographers pursued the same interests as the early painters, their medium could produce more candid, direct images.... While the picturesque and romantic India so evocatively and effusively evoked by the painters of the earlier period may have captivated the British imagination and satisfied their curiosity about the exotic, it was the

realistic images of photographers that awakened their audience to the reality of an India that was not always so palatable.”

CASE 11 OBJECTS

1.

Charles Doyley. *The Costume and Customs of Modern India ... with Descriptions by Captain Thomas Williamson*. London: Edward Orme, 1813. Rare Book Collection.

2.

Pratapaditya Pal and Vidya Dehejia. *From Merchants to Emperors: British Artists and India, 1757-1930*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986. Library General Collection.

3.

George Francklin Atkinson. *Curry & Rice on Forty Plates; or, the Ingredients of Social Life at Our Station in India*. London: John B. Day, [1859]. Rare Book Collection.

4.

Lala Deen Dayal & Sons. *A Souvenir from Nawab Sir Asman Jah, Hyderabad (Deccan), 1895*. Secundrabad: Lala Deen Dayal & Sons, 1895. Rare Book Collection. This photograph depicts one of the British masquerade balls that were ubiquitous during the period of the Raj. The British in late 19th century India wore disguises from all eras and all places, including India itself.

5.

Illustrations of Indian Field Sports.... Westminster: Archibald Constable and Company, 1892. Rare Book Collection.

Plates in this book were based on the original colored engravings published in 1807 after designs by Captain Thomas Williamson of the Bengal Army.

CASE 12

CONTEMPORARY POPULAR INDIAN ARTS

CASE TEXT

The University of Chicago Library holds materials on all aspects of South Asian arts, from classical to popular. These holdings involve multiple media and reflect the means through which the arts currently circulate in the subcontinent. They are variably textual, visual, videographic, and audio-visual.

Responsible scholarship on contemporary South Asia requires familiarity with the images in and through which South Asian self-representation currently occurs. Popular films are a central locus for the articulation and dissemination of contemporary images of South Asian cultural identity. Since the 1970s the Indian film industry has ranked as the largest in the world in terms of annual output. In addition, many offshoots of the film industry circulate widely throughout the subcontinent. These include music cassettes, video cassettes, cinema song books, cinema posters, and regional-language magazines addressing cinema culture. To study this popular film culture is not necessarily to celebrate it, but to acknowledge its pervasive influence throughout the region.

In his recent University of Chicago Press publication, *Cassette Culture*, ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel redefines and then re-deploys earlier anthropological notions of an Indian “Great Tradition.” His work captures the extent of the influence that mass-mediated popular culture now has on life in contemporary South Asia. Manuel writes that Milton Singer used the terms “Great Tradition” and “Little Tradition” to point out the distinction between mainstream, pan-regional, sanskritic Hindu culture, and the panoply of discrete, localized, regional cultural heritages that abound in South Asia. In its pan-regionality and mass dissemination associated with cultural elites, mainstream popular culture — and particularly film culture — has come to constitute a new “Great Tradition,” influencing the lives and worldview of several hundred million South Asians, in villages as well as towns and cities.

Mainstream Indian films are often referred to as “masala” films: spicy, with a little bit of everything to satisfy all tastes. They include sultry song and dance numbers, graphic fight scenes, dramatic dialogues, and classic comedy bits. Of course, the filmic images, as well as the epic stylistic framework in which they are embedded, play upon already established cultural images and stylistic canons. The Indian epic tradition has provided the most influential and enduring source of Indian imagery and cultural archetypes. The two great Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, each has a central story out of which myriad related stories grow. Indian literary, representational, and performing arts of all types have long built upon the foundations of these stories, elaborating upon their themes, and the characters of their major and minor personae, in multiple voices.

This case presents a range of materials from the Library collection which highlight both the filmic popular culture of contemporary South Asia, as well as its cultural antecedents in earlier representational and performing arts.

CASE 12 OBJECTS

1.
“Pilhanan: Katal Cittiram.” Film Poster. Madras. 1948. On loan from Roja Muthiah Research Library.
2.
Cine Blitz. Mumbai (Bombay). November, 1996. Library General Collection.
3.
Movie. Bombay. October, 1995. Library General Collection.
4.
Mahabharat, video cassette recording, produced and directed by B. R. Chopra and Ravi Chopra for B.R. TV, Bombay, n.d. Southern Asia Collection.
5.
Tippoo’s Tiger, video cassette recording, produced by the Arts Unit at Holmes Associates for the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, n.d. Southern Asia Collection.

6.

Karunamaya Gosvami. *Sangitakosha*. Dhaka: Bamla Ekademi, 1985. Library General Collection.

An example of traditional musical tablature.

7.

Ramanand Sagar's Ramayan. Bombay: Sagar Enterprises, 1989. (Chitakatha Sagar Comics, no. 3). Southern Asia Collection.

This "photo comic" is based on stills from the popular television serials of the Ramayana.

8.

Peter Manuel. *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. University of Chicago Press Collection.

This U of C press publication is part of a series called Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology, ed. by Philip Bohlman and Bruno Nettl.

CASE 13

THE A. K. RAMANUJAN PAPERS

CASE TEXT

Born in Mysore, India, A. K. Ramanujan (1930-1994) was the William H. Colvin professor in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, in the Department of Linguistics, and a member of the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. A brilliant poet, linguist, folklorist, translator, and short story writer, Ramanujan joined the faculty in 1962 and was the author of seventeen books, including seven volumes of his own poetry in English and in Kannada. He is especially renowned for his groundbreaking translations of early classical Tamil poetry (c. 100 B.C.- 250 A.D.), *The Interior Landscape* and *Poems of Love and War*. He was awarded the title Padma Sri by the Government of India in 1976, and a MacArthur Prize Fellowship in 1983. After his untimely death in Chicago in July 1993, the Department of Special Collections received A. K. Ramanujan's collected papers in June 1994. The papers contain materials ranging from handwritten lecture note cards to draft translations of poetry, and include several of Ramanujan's unpublished essays and interviews in manuscript form.

The A. K. Ramanujan Papers provide an opportunity to consider the profound aspects of the relationship between scholarship and place. Ramanujan's work speaks of journeys across cultures in biographical, linguistic, social and poetic terms. These journeys emphasize the essential role of a particular place in a scholar's life. Ramanujan speaks of having kept Indian aspects of himself alive when in Chicago through working with Indian languages, and doing precisely the reverse when in India. "Why do I write in English? Many reasons, none of them literary.... By a curious perversity, I read Tamil constantly in the Kannada area, Kannada in the Tamil area; studied and taught English in India; and India and Indian languages in the U.S. Such perversity, I suppose, serves to keep alive the immediately absent parts of me."

Ramanujan further articulated the psychic complexities of transcultural identities such as his own in a short story written in Kannada early in his career at Chicago, "Annaiah's

Anthropology.” The protagonist is an Indian student at Chicago who finds that “While in India he had dreamed of America, England and Europe. Here in America, he read more and more about India.” As the student pursues self-knowledge in and through dislocation, he experiences both joy and horror in academic life. The interaction of East and West, individual and society, science and self are present throughout Ramanujan’s work and transcultural experiences form the heart of Ramanujan’s creative scholarship.

An interviewer once asked Ramanujan to discuss the affinity between his poetic sensibility and the sensibilities of the classical Tamil poems he translated so beautifully. He answered:

Look at the classical Tamil poems, their attention to experience. These poems attracted me by their attitude to experience, to human passion and to the external world.... Their attention to the object is not to create the ‘object’ of the Imagist, but the object as enacting human experience: the scene always a part of the human scene, the poetry of objects always a part of the human perception of self and others. This seemed to me an extraordinary way of writing poetry. I came upon these first century poems in Chicago... When I started translating them, I found that there were any number of poems which I would have liked to have written myself. I do not translate out of love but out of envy, out of a kind of aggression towards these great poems. I think one translates out of a need to appropriate someone else’s creation, done better than one could ever do. The ability to engage entirely the world of things, animals, trees and people, attending to their particularity, making poetry out of it and making them speak for you — this seems to me extraordinary.

The range of Ramanujan’s own intellectual work and the insightful poetry that infused it is no less extraordinary.

CASE 13 OBJECTS

1.

Manushi (Tenth Anniversary Issue, 1989). A. K. Ramanujan Papers.

This special triple issue of *Manushi* focusing on women bhakta poets included A. K. Ramanujan’s article, “Talking to God in the Mother Tongue.”

2.

“What Her Foster Mother Said to Her Neighbors,” ancient poem, translation in manuscript and typescript by A. K. Ramanujan. A. K. Ramanujan Papers.

3.

E. Ke. Ramanujan Nenepina Samputa. edited by Ti. Pi. Asoka. Puttura, Karnataka: Karnataka Sangha, 1993. Library General Collection.

A commemorative volume on A. K. Ramanujan in Kannada.

4.

A. K. Ramanujan. "Annaiah's Anthropology," translated. from Kannada by Manu Shetty. *Indian Literature*, July-August, 1994. Library General Collection.

5.

Indian Review of Books, 1993

Shortly after Ramanujan's death, the Indian Review of Books published this issue with tributes to his legacy by several prominent Indian writers. Library General Collection.

6.

A. K. Ramanujan in the Joseph Regenstein Library stacks, 1979. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

7.

A. K. Ramanujan. Notes for a lecture on Indian literatures, September 8, 1989. A. K. Ramanujan Papers.

CASE 14 THE MILTON B. SINGER PAPERS

CASE TEXT

Milton B. Singer (1912-1994), cultural anthropologist and philosopher, had a long and illustrious career at the University of Chicago. Singer played a central role in the conception, development, and consolidation of South Asian studies in the United States. Reflecting upon his career shortly before his death, Singer divided his academic career into five periods during five decades, each defined by his involvement with a particular project and program of research and teaching. This personal progression bears witness to important changes in the culture of the American social sciences from the 1940s to the 1990s.

In 1940, Singer received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago's Department of Philosophy and began his teaching career as a lecturer in the University's Extension program. In 1941 he joined the faculty of the University in the Social Sciences division of the College. Between 1941-1952 he moved from Instructor to Professor, and in 1952 was named the Paul Klapper Professor of the Social Sciences. In 1954, he joined the Department of Anthropology, where he continued to work for the remaining forty years of his life, becoming Professor Emeritus in 1979. Shortly before his death in 1994, Professor Singer bequeathed his papers to the University.

One of the determining influences upon Singer's career was his involvement with Robert Redfield's Project on Comparative Civilizations (1951-1961). Singer wrote that "at the time Redfield asked me in 1951 to join him to find methods for characterizing and comparing civilizations, he had already started to move anthropological method away from synchronic-functional and causal models towards a more historical and humanistic approach. He had already begun to reformulate his folk-urban continuum into a folk-civilization continuum, as a historic structure in which 'great traditions' and 'little traditions,' 'great communities' and 'little communities,' 'modernity and tradition' interacted and changed the world views and value systems of particular communities and

special groups.” Perhaps Singer’s most famous contribution to the Redfield Project was his identification of “cultural performances” as occasions for studying the relationships between cultural innovations and traditions.

For this exhibition we have chosen to focus on one phase of Singer’s anthropological research in India, his study of the *bhajan*, a form of group devotional singing and prayers that Singer thought revealed “an intriguing relationship between the traditional movements and modern urban life.” His ethnographic study of *bhajans* is a core element of his influential book *When A Great Tradition Modernizes* (University of Chicago Press, 1972). In his “contextual analysis” of Radha-Krishna *bhajans*, Singer described this contemporary revitalized devotional practice as an “urban pastoral,” an effective organization for meeting the human need for social intimacy in an increasingly secular and impersonal urban center.

The organization and creation of urban networks to meet human needs was not merely an academic interest for Singer, but also characterized his contribution to the world in which he lived: Singer was a truly gifted networker and organizer. The Milton B. Singer Papers preserve an impressive collection of correspondence with scholars around the world with whom Singer engaged in projects throughout his life. His scholarly work demonstrates how key individuals help to form social organizations that eventually affect the lives of many. Singer’s papers reveal a striking parallel between his own organizational and committee work at the university and at national levels and his intellectual interest in how people organize their social networks. The Singer papers convey both the sense of the Redfield/Singer project on the comparison of civilizations and the meticulousness with which Singer approached this lifelong project, person by person and group by group.

CASE 14 OBJECTS

1.

Photograph of Milton Singer with Sivaji Ganesan. Chicago. circa 1950’s. Milton Singer Papers.

It is likely that Sivaji Ganesan is the “famous Madras film idol” with whom Singer discussed how this actor of numerous Tamil mythological and historical films embodies certain Tamil cultural archetypes for his audiences. “*Tirukkural*,” the name of a classical Tamil text, is written on the blackboard in Tamil.

2.

Photographs taken during fieldwork in India. Madras. 1954-1955. Milton Singer Papers.

These personal photos from the Singer Papers were taken on a 1954-55 trip to India. Among them are included: a *bhajana* group on the streets of Madras; a cow; two Brahmin elders sitting by a temple; Helen Singer touching a coconut palm; Balasaraswati, famous South Indian dancer; a Kali temple outside Calcutta, framed by a section of the Howrah bridge; Dr. V. Raghavan (one of Singer’s primary informants and interlocutors) and family, in a photo dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Singer and signed by the whole family.

3.

Gemini Studios, Madras. Film stills of *bhajan* singers. Madras. circa 1950's. Milton Singer Papers.

These two Gemini Studios stills are from a film entitled "Bhajan" and were given to Singer by V. Raghavan, who noted on the back of the photos "gives a correct picture of the style and atmosphere of Bhajan according to the Maharashtrian style."

4.

Milton Singer. Research Fieldnotes. Madras. 1961. Milton Singer Papers.

In researching why and how Radha-Krishna *bhajan* groups developed primarily among middle-class Saivite Brahmins in Madras, Singer conducted ethnographic fieldwork with multiple *bhajan* groups and their members. He typed his fieldnotes, which included thoughts on both performances and group members. He wrote of feeling that one feature in particular had not been sufficiently stressed in earlier studies of *bhajans*: "the mutual friendship and spirit of brotherhood which it creates. The *bhajan* groups are groups of friends whose ties of friendship are created and expressed in the *bhajans* themselves. In an urban environment, where intimate social intercourse is infrequent and difficult, this is a significant achievement".

5.

Milton Singer. *When a Great Tradition Modernizes: An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972. Library General Collection.

6.

Milton Singer. "Comparison of Cultures and Civilizations." Course Syllabus. Chicago. Autumn, 1961. Milton Singer Papers.

Draft syllabus for "Comparison of Cultures and Civilizations" Autumn 1962. SS 290/Anthro 442. Mimeographed, with handwritten revisions.

7.

Milton Singer. "Theoretical Synthesis of Research on Bhajanas," ca. 1961-1962. Milton Singer Papers.

8.

Milton Singer. Names of *bhajan* participants in Madras, for fieldwork contact. Madras. 1961. Milton Singer Papers.

9.

Milton Singer. "Comparative Studies of National Cultural Identity" Typed ms. Chicago, circa 1950's. Milton Singer Papers.

This note was meant to support appointment of "a specialist on folk traditions...to launch an interdisciplinary program of comparative research on national cultural identity."

CASE 15

THE ALBERT MAYER PAPERS ON INDIA

CASE TEXT

The Albert Mayer Papers on India are comprised of the personal papers, correspondence, reports, plans, and related materials that the architect and planner Albert Mayer (1897-1983) assembled while working on rural development and urban planning in India during the 1940s and 1950s. During the 1930s, Mayer had worked as a civil engineer in New York City where he helped to foster urban planning intended to ameliorate social conditions. He subsequently became involved with the New Deal administration of Franklin Roosevelt and helped to draft housing policies that formed the basis for the U.S. Housing Authority established in 1937. During World War II, Mayer's service as an army engineer overseeing the construction of airfields in Bengal stimulated an abiding interest in Indian life and culture. In 1946 Mayer's new interest combined with his previous experience as an advocate of innovative urban planning led him to propose a program for model villages to the Congress Party, the prospective government of an independent India. In March 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the Congress Party and future Prime Minister of India, invited Mayer to assist in planning for India's new future: "I hope that in this business of planning for a happier and more prosperous India we shall have the great advantage of your experience." From these beginnings Mayer was intimately involved in Indian village planning and development for more than a decade.

Together with his proposals for model villages, Mayer helped plan the cities of Cawnpore (now Kanpur), Bombay, Delhi, and Chandigarh as well as design buildings for institutions such as the Allahabad Agricultural Institute and the Standard Vacuum Oil Company in Bombay. Mayer also wrote several books and numerous articles on planning and community development. A recipient of numerous awards and citations, Mayer was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and, in recognition of his pioneering application of social research to planning and development, an honorary fellow of the Society of Applied Anthropology.

Because of Chicago's long-standing commitment to the study of South Asia, Mayer selected the University of Chicago Library as the depository for his Indian papers. Professor Richard L. Park of the University of Michigan, as secretary of the Association for Asian Studies, not only strongly supported Mayer's decision to deposit his papers in Chicago but also was instrumental in encouraging preservation of the papers of other men and women involved in the development of Indian-American relations after World War II. The Mayer papers formed the foundation for what has become a significant archive of the papers of Americans who have worked and studied in independent India.

CASE 15 OBJECTS

1.

Photograph of American training "village level workers." Etawah. [circa. 1950]. Albert Mayer Papers.

"At the Lakhna Training School for village-level extension workers, Dr. M. A. Donexia, veterinary surgeon who successfully brought anti-Rinderpest inoculation and artificial insemination training to Etawah, teaches students — who will be assigned to villages."

2.

“Plan of New Capital, Punjab: Chandigarh.” Simla: Director, Public Relations, Punjab. Undated. Albert Mayer Papers.

Mayer directed several projects of urban planning and architecture for Indian cities and colleges, the most well-known of which is the plan for the new capitol city of Punjab, Chandigarh. Lahore, the former capitol, became part of Pakistan at partition.

3.

Jawaharlal Nehru to Albert Mayer. Letter. Allahabad. May 1, 1946. Albert Mayer Papers.

Nehru invites Mayer to India to advise the United Provinces government on village planning.

4.

Photograph of Independence Day celebration at Lodi Colony. New Delhi. August 15, 1947. Albert Mayer Papers.

In the foreground (l. to r.) are Govind Ballabh Pant, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India.

5.

Albert Mayer to Jawaharlal Nehru. Telegram. RCA Radiogram. New York. May 18, 1946. Albert Mayer Papers.

Mayer’s response to Nehru’s May 1 letter.

6.

[Albert Mayer]. “Report on the Master Plan of the New Punjab Capital.” New York: Mayer and Wittlesey, May 12, 1950. Albert Mayer Papers.

In his Report on the Master Plan of the New Punjab Capital, Mayer wrote:

“Our city should be modern, should give living actually to all those creative elements in city planning and civic design which have been discovered and talked about and hoped about for the last generation. It should also avoid those excesses of hectic living and development which have accompanied modern work, but which are not integrally a part of it.

The basic cellular concept out of which the city is built up, is the unpierced neighbourhood, the beehive of local life. This is particularly valid for India, and the Punjab, where so many people are still villagers and intimate community people at heart

....

It has been sought and should be possible to give to the inhabitant and to the visitor, elements of serenity and of excitement, of homeliness and of splendor, of greatness but not of overwhelming greatness.”

7.

Jawaharlal Nehru to Albert Mayer. Letter. New Delhi. May 14, 1947. Albert Mayer Papers.

8.

Albert Mayer to Jawaharlal Nehru. Letter. [New York]. April 14, 1947. Albert Mayer Papers.

CASE 16 THE GITEL P. STEED PAPERS
CASE TEXT

Gitel (Gertrude) Poznanski Steed (1914-1977) was an American cultural anthropologist who directed Columbia University's Research in Contemporary India Field Project in Gujarat. The majority of the material in the Gitel P. Steed Papers consists of research data from the Field Project conducted from 1949 to 1951. The data were collected from three villages and include extensive life histories of informants, psychological tests, field notebooks, photographs, genealogies, histories, transcripts of interviews, and artwork by both researchers and villagers. The items displayed here represent only a small sample of the range of materials in the collection, which was given to the University of Chicago by her husband, Robert Steed, in 1978.

Steed conducted the India Field Project at a time when very few women anthropologists had undertaken extended research in India. She was a younger member of that generation of pioneering American women anthropologists that included Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Ruth Bunzel. While a graduate student at Columbia University Steed studied under Benedict, and her India Field Project bore the hallmarks of that influence in its attempt to understand the relationship between individual personality and its social context.

A member of an impressive culture of anthropological personalities herself, Steed wished to show the relationship of village structure and culture to "personal careers," and conversely how individual acts revealed community processes. Steed returned from India in 1951 with thousands of pages of notes and photographs. Now collected in the University of Chicago Library, these materials not only provide important historical documentation of Gujarat at a critical moment in the postcolonial political reorganization of the subcontinent, but offer equally important historical documentation of the goals and methods of American anthropology during the postwar transformation of American academia.

For the India Field Project Steed assembled a research team that included a psychiatrist, a psychologist, an economist, and several interpreters. She herself learned photography for the project. Most of the data on individual psychology derived from detailed life histories comprised of long, free-ranging interviews known as "personal narrations." In some cases, these interviews took place over the course of an entire year. Informants were asked to speak and reflect as freely as possible on the things that they believed affected their lives. In addition to the interview, the informants underwent a set of psycho-diagnostic tests including one or more of the following: Rorschach (which asks informants to identify shapes in ink blots); Thematic Apperception Test (informants are shown a series of illustrations and asked to talk about the situation, the people in it, and what they might be doing or thinking or feeling); Horn-Hellersberg (a drawing test); Draw-a-man (informants are asked to draw and comment on a man, woman and child); and Color Association Test (informants are given a set of words and asked to associate a

color with the idea conveyed by the words). In addition the researchers encouraged both adults and children to draw with pencils and paint with watercolors.

Complementary data on social institutions was collected through survey methods as well as participant observation. The researchers completed thorough surveys that collected important data on the economy, politics, religion, kinship, and caste organization. An example of the kind of synthetic view of village life that the research team attempted is a chart, represented in a single wheel, of all the castes and occupations in one village.

The sheer amount of data elicited through these methods was daunting and very few publications resulted from the India Field Project. Steed's one substantial publication was an essay entitled "Notes on an Approach to a Study of Personality Formation in a Hindu Village in Gujarat," presented in the University of Chicago publication *Village India* (1955). Some of her Indian photographs are in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, others were published in Edward Steichen's 1955 landmark book *The Family of Man*, and still more were exhibited in the original show from which that publication evolved.

CASE 16 OBJECTS

1.

Gitel Steed. Notebook of field research. Gitel Steed Papers.

Field notebook XXV, containing her longhand field notes from the personal narrative (life history) of Informant 1 (Roguersingh).

2.

Gitel Steed. Photograph of Roguersingh. "Kasandra" Village, Gujarat 1950. Gitel Steed Papers.

We assume this Steed photo is of Roguersingh, "Informant 1", although the photo is not explicitly marked, because of how well it matched the description in Steed's own hand of the 26 year old Vaghela Rajput who did more drawings and paintings for Steed than any other individual represented in her Papers.

In "Notes on an Approach to a study of Personality Formation in a Hindu Village in Gujarat" Steed wrote of her young primary informant:

Roguersingh was not like the other Rajput youths. He lacked the qualities of physical strength and stamina that were expected of Rajputs. Instead of going about armed, wearing an enormous turban and long mustaches, as was customary for young Rajputs, Roguersingh cultivated a quiet, sophisticated appearance. He smoked English cigarettes rather than the pipe (*calam*) or the cheroots of the countryside. In keeping with his princely Rajput connections, he affected a green shevani coat, worn over white jodhpurs or pyjamas, with black oxfords of urban cut. He went about turbanless, except on ceremonial occasions when he donned the white turban of an elder rather than the brilliant turban of a youth. He wore a barely perceptible mustache and carried no sword or spear. He never wore an aggressive Rajput manner and instead manifested wisdom and moral prestige, qualities described by others as his "temperament."

3.

Roghversingh. Watercolor painting of a man on a green chair. "Kasandra" Village, Gujarat, 1950. Gitel Steed Papers.

The artist is the 26 year old Vaghela Rajput landlord who did many drawings and paintings for Steed (he is known in the field data as Informant 1).

4.

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), Image 1. Gitel Steed Papers.

In the TAT, informants are shown a series of illustrations and asked to talk about the situation, the people in it, and what they might be doing or thinking or feeling. The other psychodiagnostic tests the team administered were the Rorschach (which asks informants to identify shapes in ink blots), the Horn-Hellersberg (a drawing test), Draw-a-man (in which informants are asked to draw and comment on a man, woman and child), and Color Association Test (where informants are given a set of words and asked to associate a color with the idea conveyed by the words).

5.

Two manuscripts of responses to the Thematic Apperception Test. "Kasandra" Village, Gujarat 1950. Gitel Steed Papers.

The first are the responses of a 42 year old woman, the second a 26 year old woman.

6.

Gitel Steed. Photograph of adult and child painting on a shared piece of paper.

"Kasandra" Village, Gujarat 1950. Gitel Steed Papers.

Steed and her team of researchers elicited drawings and paintings from both adults and children. This aspect of their assessment of individual psychology was less over-determined than the psychological tests, and seems to have allowed for a good deal of creative expression.

7.

Gitel Steed. Caste chart from study of a Rajput village. "Kasandra" Village, Gujarat 1950. Gitel Steed Papers.

In 1950 when Steed conducted her field study, Kasandra had a population of 850 people.

From Steed on Kasandra, the Rajput village in which she worked from 1949-51:

"Kasandra village stands on the westernmost frontier of historic Gujarat in the ...Ahmadabad District of Bombay State. Historically and culturally, Kasandra's affinities lie westward with the honeycomb of petty Rajput kingdoms and chieftainates across the frontier. ... Kasandra is one of thousands of villages which spread across the 34,000 square miles of Gujarat plain... Kasandra and other villages of western Gujarat in which Rajputs are numerous and powerful have come to be known as 'Rajput villages.'"

8.

Photograph of Woman with Daughter. India. 1950-1951. Photography by Gitel Steed. Gitel Steed Papers.

The artistry of Steed's stunning black and white photographs reflect not only Steed's research agenda, but also her gifts for visual composition and photographic

interpretation. Several of her India photographs appeared in Edward Steichen's exhibit on "The Family of Man" at the Museum of Modern Art in NY in 1955, and are reproduced in the book of the same title.

CASE 17 THE CORA DU BOIS PAPERS CASE TEXT

Cora Du Bois (1903 - 1989) was an American cultural anthropologist known for her studies in culture and personality, her understanding of change in complex societies, and her multi-disciplinary methodology. Du Bois was the Radcliffe Zemurray Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Social Relations at Harvard University from 1954 until her retirement in 1969. In 1968, she was elected to the presidency of the American Anthropological Association. Her landmark study *The People of Alor* (1944) was one of the first anthropological efforts at psycho-cultural synthesis. The book was based on fieldwork Du Bois conducted in Alor, Indonesia, from 1937 to 1939.

World War II interrupted Du Bois' academic career. She worked for twelve years in what is now considered as applied anthropology, first for the Office of Strategic Services (1942-45) and later for the U.S. State Department (1945-49), the World Health Organization (1950-51), and the Institute of International Education (1951-54). These experiences shifted her attention away from the psychologically based research undertaken in Alor — a line of research which she believed could not be pushed much further — towards a broader concern with social, political, and cultural change.

In 1961, Du Bois launched the Bhubaneswar Project in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, funded by a series of grants from the National Science Foundation. The study considered the transformation of Bhubaneswar from a traditional site of Hindu pilgrimage into the new administrative capital of the Indian state of Orissa. When Bhubaneswar was selected as the site of the new state capital in 1946, the land adjacent to the ancient Siva temple at Bhubaneswar was a government-owned jungle tract, and the total population of the area did not exceed 10,000. By 1951, the population had increased to 17,000, and by 1961 there were 40,000 inhabitants. The goal of the Bhubaneswar Project was to understand the socio-cultural changes resulting from such rapid growth and "the dramatic confrontation of modern and traditional Hindu life-ways" that the researchers assumed would follow.

Du Bois' Indian project was interdisciplinary and collaborative in nature, involving students from the fields of anthropology, sociology, religion, and urban planning. For eleven years Du Bois and a series of American and Indian graduate students investigated different aspects of change in Bhubaneswar. Du Bois developed the Values Questionnaires to assess personal practice and belief in situations requiring ethical action and opinion. The questionnaire form was developed by Joseph Elder, the former President of the American Institute of Indian Studies, during his own graduate research in Uttar Pradesh, India.

Responses to the questionnaires were scored by the research team, which assigned to every survey question a numerical value according to a "Master Code Plan." These

numerical values were then entered onto scoresheets that allow the reader to scan down a particular column and assess the range of given answers with which informants from a given occupational group responded.

Much of the structure of this questionnaire would be open to criticism in the 1990s, and perhaps its limitations were already felt by Du Bois in the 1960s. As with the Gitel P. Steed Papers, however, the Cora Du Bois Papers allow future researchers the opportunity to access a set of materials reflecting both an earlier moment in postcolonial Indian life and an earlier era in American anthropology in South Asia.

CASE 17 OBJECTS

1.

Cora Du Bois to Maureen Patterson, April 5, 1973. Southern Asia Bibliographer's Office.

2.

Orissa. *Planning and Co-ordination (Planning) Department. Third Five-Year Plan, Orissa*. Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1962. Cora Du Bois Papers.

3.

"Harish Das's questionnaire on Old Town vs. New Capital". Bhubaneswar, Orissa. January 10, 1963. Cora Du Bois Papers.

4a.

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, old town, looking west, February 1960. Photograph by Photo Emporium Cuttack..

4b.

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, new planned capital, looking west, January 1958. Photograph by Photo Emporium Cuttack. Cora Du Bois Papers.

5.

"House Types of Old Town Bhubaneswar," drawing, n.d. Cora Du Bois Papers.

6.

Cora Du Bois. "Bhubaneswar Values Questionnaire," September, 1964. Cora Du Bois Papers.

Completed interview forms for one female and one male college student. The female student's form is annotated "Interview checked by Cora Du Bois."

7.

Cora Du Bois. "Difficulties of Research in Bbs [Bhubaneswar]," November 12 1961. Cora Du Bois Papers.

8.

Cora Du Bois to Joseph Elder, October 4 1964. Cora Du Bois Papers.

In her interview questionnaires, Du Bois used thirty-four questions from Elder's earlier survey in Uttar Pradesh.

9.

Cora Du Bois. Values Questionnaire scoring sheets, 1965. Cora Du Bois Papers. Numbers were assigned to each respondent's answers to the Values Questionnaire and tallied on scoring sheets.

CASE 18 FIELD WORK IN VILLAGE INDIA

CASE TEXT

Field work holds a privileged position at Chicago. Virtually all who study South Asia at the University spend some time in the subcontinent. Those studying classical languages are as likely to work with texts and teachers at an appropriate place in the region as are anthropologists. And yet it is social scientists and more specifically anthropologists who have elevated the importance of study in the field to the level of an expectation among all South Asianists at Chicago.

The study of village India has been an enduring focus of study and theoretical reflection by Chicago's social scientists. However, the very notion of what constitutes "the field" has expanded over the past fifty years. Studies of immigrant South Asians in Chicago, the Caribbean, or England are as much within the purview of faculty and students following the subcontinent's diaspora as are studies of Bangladesh or north Indian villages. But the conceptual underpinnings for these expanded studies are most often those created by McKim Marriott, Bernard Cohn, Milton Singer, and others who have made Chicago the center of social scientific inquiry on South Asia.

CASE 18 OBJECTS

1.

Albert Mayer. Photograph of village potter and two boys. North India. circa 1950's. Albert Mayer Papers.

2.

E. Kathleen Gough. "Brahmin Marriage in Tanjore." Photograph from *Village India: Studies in the Little Community*, edited by McKim Marriott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955. Library General Collection.

The photo was taken in Tanjore, Tamil Nadu, 1951-1953.

3.

Photograph of McKim Marriott praying at a ritual. Kishan Garhi Village, Uttar Pradesh. 1951-1952. Archival Photofiles.

4.

Village India: Studies in the Little Community, edited by McKim Marriott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955. Library General Collection.

5.

Bernard S. Cohn. Photograph of village women. Senapur, Uttar Pradesh. 1953. On loan from Bernard S. Cohn.

6.

Albert Mayer. Photograph of village road with large tree. Etawah, Uttar Pradesh. circa 1950's. Albert Mayer Papers.

7a.

Milton Singer. "Some Notes for a Foreward to *Studies in Village India*." Carbon copy of memo to Robert Redfield. Chicago. July 14, 1954. Redfield/Ford Foundation Cultural Studies Papers.

7b.

McKim Marriott to Robert Redfield. Letter. October 25, 1954. Redfield/Ford Foundation Cultural Studies Papers.

CASE 19 LITERARY CULTURES IN HISTORY

CASE TEXT

Among the many significant current research projects in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, "Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia" is one of the most ambitious projects ever to examine India's tremendous wealth of literature, with its dozens of languages and varied regional scripts, with depth and continuity. This innovative project "aims to provide the first connected account of the histories and theories of the major regional and transregional literatures of South Asia. The research is directed toward a set of topics that includes the aesthetics and politics of literary-language development and competition; the dynamics of literary regionality and cosmopolitanism before and after the rise of the nation-state; and the development of notions of genres, aesthetic categories, and canons both individually and across languages, regions, and historical eras."

Directed by Sheldon Pollock, George V. Bobrinskoy Professor of Sanskrit and Indic Studies, the project will produce a two-volume history of India's literatures. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, twelve specialists in literary traditions are meeting in India and the United States for a series of six workshops between 1995 and 1998. Pollock foresees that the resulting book, "informed by collective discussion and the new research this will stimulate, will be less a set of individually authored essays than a multifaceted reconstruction of a network of literary cultures."

A forerunner to the present enterprise was the conference "New Literatures, New Power: Literary History, Region, and Nation in South Asia," which met in Hyderabad in 1993 with the support of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The outcome of that meeting was a volume of papers published from Delhi as a special edition of the journal *Social Scientist*. "Literary Cultures in History" furthers the SSRC project by moving from a collection or aggregation of essays to a truly collaborative multi-authored work,

and by rejoining traditions conventionally treated as distinct into the complex and dynamic nexus of practice from which they originally developed.

Pollock's approach brings together two streams of enquiry. Traditionally, focused pursuit of discrete literary traditions has aimed to make specialists' knowledge useful for research on South Asia in the various disciplines of area study. For example, English translations of the epic poems *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* on which J.A.B. van Buitenen, Wendy Doniger, Pollock, and others have labored over the years. To the standard humanistic approach has been added a concern for rigorous historicization, informed by recent developments in cultural theory, and intending to account for wide-sweeping—even global—movements in the premodern period. The ultimate goal is to “replace the question that has directed a century of Western scholarship on the East — Why did South Asia not develop like Europe — with a better one: How did South Asia develop, and what might that tell us about Europe?”

CASE 19 OBJECTS

1.

Special Issue on “Literary History, Region, and Nation in South Asia.” *Social Scientist*. October-December, 1995. On loan from Sheldon Pollock.

2.

Sitanshu Yashashchandra. Faxed letter to Sheldon Pollock. Vadodara, Gujarat. July 24, 1995. On loan from Sheldon Pollock.

3.

Sheldon Pollock. Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities. Chicago. 1994. On loan from The Department of South Asia Languages and Civilizations.

4.

Mahabharata and *Ramayana*. Persian translation in Nasta'liq script. 17th century? Ms 341. Gift of Anthony L. Michel.

India's two great epics are rendered into Persian and lavishly illustrated in this book from the court of the Moghul emperor Akbar.

5.

Mahabharata. Manuscript in Bengali script. 19th century. Gift of Edward C. Dimock. The long and narrow *pothi* format is derived from the use of palm-leaves as a manuscript medium.

6.

Collection of Buddhist texts and commentaries. Puskola pata (palm leaf manuscripts) in Pali and Sinhala, 19th Century. Ms 774.

7.

Kurmamahapurana. Bombay: Srivenkatesvara Press. 1905. Library General Collection.

8.

Bal yul mchod rten gsum gyi lo rgyus dan gnas bsad Gans can rna ba'i bdud rtsi: A Collection of the Guidebooks to the Three Great Stupas of the Kathmandu Valley and Other Places of Buddhist Pilgrimage. Gantok. Sikkim: Sherab Gyaltzen and Lama Dawa. 1983. Library General Collection.

Tibetan language account of pilgrimage sites in Nepal. Published from Sikkim and printed in India. Reproduction of woodblock original.

CASE 20

RAJASTHAN: THE STUDY OF A REGION

CASE TEXT

Increasingly the study of geographical and cultural regions and sub-regions of South Asia has become a focus of scholarly work. Collaborative inquiry by colleagues from several intellectual disciplines working in “study groups” is generating new knowledge. Rajasthan studies is one of the more striking examples of this movement.

Over a period of nearly thirty years Chicago faculty and students have explored Rajasthan, bringing to bear their training in such fields as linguistics, political science, performing arts, history, literature, and gender studies. These disciplinary orientations have been forged into the Rajasthan Studies Group, largely with leadership from Chicago. The group’s Chicago roots are evident through the preeminence of cross-disciplinary approaches and vigorous debate.

The Library is the fortunate recent recipient of Kali Charan Bahl’s collection, much of which relates to Rajasthan. Now an Associate Professor Emeritus of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Bahl’s wide-ranging collection will support future research in an array of subjects on Rajasthan and other north Indian regions.

CASE 20 OBJECTS

1.

Pata (painted scroll) from Rajasthan. No date. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

2.

Syamaladasa. *Viravinoda*. Udayapura: Rajayantralaya, 1890. Library General Collection.

3.

Swami Ramaprakasa Agravala. *Satyavadi Vira Tejapala*. Jodhapura: Uttama Asrama, 1978. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

4.

Lacchirama Kucamani. *Ravi Riramala*. Kisanagarha, Rajasthana: Jnanasagara Presa, n.d. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

5.

Satyena Josi. *Kamvala Puja*. Jodhapura: Lalita Prakasana, 1974. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

CASE 21 HISTORY OF RELIGIONS AT CHICAGO

CASE TEXT

Well before the history of religions was an established intellectual enterprise at the University of Chicago, the Divinity School had robust programs in mission studies and religious education that attracted students with South Asian interests. Since 1945 the History of Religions program, first known as the Department of Comparative Religion, has had a different focus. As Frank Reynolds said in his 1977 essay on "History of Religions," the program emphasizes "the manifestations of religious phenomena in the history of mankind."

This program has an international renown based on both the current faculty's work and on that of early pioneers in the field such as Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa. Because of the University's encouragement of cross-disciplinary involvement, faculty in the Departments of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Anthropology, Political Science, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and Geography have also engaged in research on history of religions and guided students. In fact, more than seventeen percent of all doctoral theses related to South Asian studies have been completed in the Divinity School.

Library resources supporting research on the religious traditions of South Asia are unrivaled in this country. Beyond the major forces of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, the Sikh and Jain traditions, to name but two, are richly represented in the Library's holdings.

CASE 21 OBJECTS

1.

Buddha Images from Sri Lanka. 1990s. On loan from Bronwen Bledsoe.

2.

Indra A. Sharma. "Golden Temple." Poster. Delhi. Undated. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

The Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab is the central shrine of the Sikh faith.

3.

"Bala Krishna." (Krishna as a Child.) Poster. Delhi. Undated. Gift of Kali Charan Bahl.

4.

Frits Staal. *Agni: the Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983. Library General Collection.

5.
Tevanupattum Turacara Viruttantam = Evil Practices, or, Sins Among the Gods.
Madras: American Mission Press, 1848. Southern Asia Collection.

6.
The Arya Samaj from the Outsider's Point of View. Lahore: Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1902. Southern Asia Collection.
This Christian missionary tract in Tamil attacks Hindu myths for portraying the gods committing immoral acts. The English tract by the reformist Hindu Arya Samaj justifies the sect's doctrines for "outsiders" - notably the British.

7.
Sendal Barnes Munger. *The Conquest of India by the Church.* Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, 1845. Library General Collection.

8.
Sunder Joshi. *Social Evolution of Early Dharma.* Chicago: Privately published, 1940. Library General Collection.
Early Ph.D. dissertations at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

9.
University of Chicago. *Announcements: The Divinity School Number, for the Sessions of 1931-32.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930. Library General Collection.

10.
History of Religions: an International Journal for Comparative Historical Studies.
University of Chicago Press, 1980. Library General Collection.

CASE 22 PUBLIC CULTURE
CASE TEXT

Public culture is a sphere of intellectual inquiry and also the title of a journal with its editorial home at the University. Chicago South Asianists are prominent as leaders of the scholarly field as well as editors of the journal. Carol Breckenridge has primary editorial responsibility for *Public Culture*. Arjun Appadurai, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Homi Bhabha are among the additional Chicago South Asia faculty involved in editing the journal.

Produced in conjunction with the Society for Transnational Cultural Studies, the journal is described on its World Wide Web site. In the ten years of its existence, *Public Culture* has established itself as a field-defining cultural studies journal. *Public Culture* seeks a critical understanding of the global cultural flows and the cultural forms of the public sphere which define the late twentieth century. As such, the journal provides a forum for the discussion of the places and occasions where cultural, social, and political differences emerge as public phenomena, manifested in everything from highly particular and localized events in popular or folk culture to global advertising, consumption, and information networks.

The range of issues taken up in journal articles is remarkable. Information on the Web site continues, “Such cosmopolitan cultural forms as cinema, sport, television and video, restaurants, domestic tourism, advertising, fiction, architecture, and museums,” as well as the Web site notes, are all within its purview. The journal seeks to “explore the cultural implications of such processes as migration, the internationalization of fiction, and the construction of alternative modernities.”

CASE 22 OBJECTS

1.

Public Culture (Fall 1988, Fall 1992, Winter 1993, Spring 1993, Fall 1993, Fall 1995).

On loan from the Public Culture Office.

The Fall 1988 issue was the first published. The Fall 1993 issue was devoted entirely to India.

2.

“Reconceptualizing South Asia: Old Territories, New Places.” Poster from Regional Worlds Conference of the University of Chicago Globalization Project. Chicago.

December, 1996. On loan from *Public Culture Office*.

3.

“Maharaja” image used by Air India. Anonymous loan.

4.

Council of Editors of Learned Journal. “Best New Journal, 1992” Award to *Public Culture*. On loan from Public Culture.

5.

Professional/Scholarly Publishing Division, Association of American Publishers.

“Best Single Issue of a Journal, 1996.” Award to the University of Chicago Press for *Public Culture*. On loan from the University of Chicago Press.

6.

“Ravi Shankar: Sitar.” Poster. Philadelphia. November, 1991. On loan from Carol Breckenridge.

CASE 23

WRITING INDIAN HISTORY

CASE TEXT

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Indologists often wrote of India as “a land without history.” It was without history in that it seemed timeless, an archaic survival of an earlier phase of civilization, one that Europeans had left behind. Further, India lacked a comprehensive narrative connecting the distant past with the present. Documents for constructing such a history were not lacking; the same three-fold periodization of ancient, medieval and modern that had served for European history could be discerned in India’s written sources. There was an abundance of texts in classical languages: Sanskrit for the ancient period, Persian chronicles for the medieval, and English records for the modern.

One outstanding problem, however, was that the Sanskrit texts in particular were hard to turn to historical purposes. Much effort was expended on attempting to supply India with a history by arranging the events of the antique Vedic corpus, the great epics, and the mythico-historical *puranas* into a universal timeline. By contrast, task of turning South Asia's wealth of inscriptions into positive dynastic chronology proceeded more smoothly.

New styles of historiography have since emerged in Chicago, in tandem with the civilizational approach to Indian studies developed for undergraduate teaching and the expertise in modern regional languages which distinguished South Asian studies in the new area centers from those of classical Indology. Bernard Cohn commented in his 1977 article on "Historical Studies" at Chicago:

Systematic efforts have been made to break with ... earlier traditions of study of the Indian past. This effort has focused on shifting the point of view from the outside to the inside of the civilizational traditions. The attempt has been made to reconstruct the Indian past in its own terms The distinctive features of this new approach are utilization of indigenous and local sources; the microanalysis of the sociological conditions for cultural and intellectual changes; the conscious use of varying social science models, particularly drawn from anthropology; and the effort to understand the underlying meaning of events and structures in Indian terms.

Most recently, critics have charged that even these consciously sensitized efforts are not adequate to the task of writing South Asian history in a way which accounts for the experience of Indians of every class. *Subaltern Studies* publishes the work of historians dedicated to recovering the voices of those who have been silenced by political and intellectual regimes of the past. Angles of approach to India's past have been multiplied by the Subalterns, and their critique and methods have been influential in domains beyond South Asian studies.

CASE 32 OBJECTS

1.

Pesave Daptarantuna Nivadalele Kagada. Bombay: Government Central Press, 1933. Library General Collection.

This set, called *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar* in English, is based on the archives of the Peshwas, hereditary prime ministers and *de facto* rulers of the Maratha Empire. The Marathas were major rivals of the British for domination of the subcontinent.

2.

Amar Singh. *The Diary of Amar Singh*. Edited by Lloyd I. Rudolph, Mohan Singh, and Susanne Hoerber Rudolph. Unpublished typescript of manuscript. Library General Collection.

The diary was written in Jaipur and elsewhere from 1898 to 1942 by the brother of the Maharaja of Jaipur and Commander of the State Forces of this princely state.

3.
Humayun, Emperor of Hindustan, 1508-1556. *The Tezkeret al-Vakiat, or Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun*. London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1832. Library General Collection.

4.
Henry Colebrooke. *Asiatick Researches*. London, 1807. Vol.7 Library General Collection.

This “Specimen of the Inscription on the Pillar at Allahabad” includes writings made at different times in various historic Indic scripts, from Brahmi to Persian.

5.
Subaltern Studies IX. Edited by Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996. Library General Collection.

6.
Hemaraj Shakya. “Table of the Evolution of Scripts.” Kathmandu: National Historical Research Division, undated. On loan from Bronwen Bledsoe.

Photograph of Amar Singh reproduced from Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, *The History of Rajputana, Volume V, Part II: History of the Bikaner State, Part II* (Ajmer: Vedic Yantralaya, 1940). Library General Collection.

CASE 24 SPACE IN SOUTH ASIA

CASE TEXT

On May 17, 1997, an interdisciplinary conference of advanced graduate students conducting research on South Asian topics met to consider issues of spatiality in South Asia. Meeting under the leadership of Arjun Appadurai, the Samuel N. Harper Professor in Anthropology and South Asian Languages and Civilizations, the conference provided a forum for advanced graduate students to present scholarly papers on cultural and social considerations affecting the organization, use, and understanding of external environments, from the format of national maps to the organization of theatrical space for dramatic performances. Among the issues considered were: How is the spatial organization of everyday life affected by particular historical developments in society? How do representations of space both reflect and affect situations when the control of a place or region is a matter of conflict? What have been the effects of globalization upon conceptions of national identity in South Asia?

Professor Bernard S. Cohn, whose own work on the configuration of spatial practices in South Asia continues to inspire younger scholars, was invited to be the general moderator of the conference. In all, twelve students from the departments of Anthropology, History, Political Science, and South Asian Languages and Civilizations presented papers on their current work: Malathi De Alwis, Brian Keith Axel, Ian Barrow, John Bernard Bate, Gautam Ghosh, Manu Goswami, Pradeep Jeganathan, Ritty Lukose, Caitrin Lynch, Omar Qureshi, Vyjayanthi Rao, and Susan Seizer. The papers delivered at the conference are currently being prepared for a published volume to be edited by Appadurai.

The items on display illustrate some of the subjects and projects discussed in the conference

CASE 24 OBJECTS

1.

Shaheb pat, Saheba pata, and photos of pat maker and singer. On loan from Gautam Ghosh.

The making of jorano pats, or scroll-paintings, has long been part of the “folk” culture of Bengal, especially in Midnapore District. The patua, or scroll-maker, uses the scroll to illustrate a song: as the narrative of the song progresses s/he unfurls the scroll panel by panel. Pats, which are sometimes collaboratively produced, typically describe mythological and/or historical events, such as scenes from the Ramayana, the “Sepoy Rebellion” and even the dropping of the atom bomb. In earlier times, they often caricatured the urban elite. As the latter, however became the primary patron of the patua this sort of social satire waned. Recently, government officials have asked patuas — who are predominantly male, and often engage in both Hindu and Muslim practices — to disseminate messages regarding gender equality, communal harmony and other social issues. Thus the form and content of the pat has changed considerably in recent decades. This pat, or scroll, narrates the martyrdom of two Indian nationalist freedom fighters. This opening panel from the well-known “Shaheb Pat” scroll depicts a group of British Shahebs (“Sahibs”) riding an elephant and trampling Indians.

2.

Photograph of political poster from Tamilnadu.

Photograph of ceremonial gateways for political meeting.

Photograph by John Bernard Bate. Tamilnadu. On loan from John Bernard Bate.

John Bernard Bate’s dissertation research concerns public speaking in politics in contemporary Tamilnadu. He asks: Why do politicians speak in the literary form of Tamil? In investigating this problem Bate explored the sites where public speech is used and the ways these spaces employ posters, lights, stages, and temporary architectures. Many of the themes of the political speeches were visually and spatially reproduced through saturation of the city-scape with images during these events. The two images here come from the Dravidian Progress Party (DMK) Regional Conference, held in Madurai, TN, 30 July through 2 August, 1994. “Paris Tower” (Designed by Hameeth Sound and Light Company), DMK Regional Conference, Madurai, 1994. The Paris Tower was one of several dozen “electric towers” erected for the DMK party political conference. Structures erected for the event represented ancient fortresses, palaces, or temples or, like the Paris Tower, the architectural achievements of foreign lands. All of these temporary architectures were sponsored by individual party members or organizations in an attempt to saturate Madurai’s cityscape with signs of their political ascendancy. Kalainger Poster (photo) text: “Welcome! Welcome! To our leader Kalainger who has raised his thundering voice for the rights of all the world’s Tamilians!” This elaborate and unusual poster, sponsored by a former Member of the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly, was placed on the inside walls of the conference meeting space. It depicts several reduplicated images of Karunanidhi speaking to the assembled crowds. The crowd, too, is a composite of a number of photographs

reduplicated to the horizon. The public meeting apparatuses of tube lights lining a street dominated by a large 'electric tower' image of Kalainger looms in the far background. The reduplication of both leader, crowd, and meeting paraphernalia are canonical motifs in the creation of idealized images of the sites of political campaigning and the production of political prestige. -John Bernard Bate

3.

Photographs inside of Sri Lankan garment factories. Photographs by Seamus Walsh. On loan from Caitrin Lynch.

These photographs, taken in Sri Lankan garment factories, illustrate aspects of an urban-rural divide that exists in the social practices of workers. I analyze this divide in my essay entitled "Dirt Dripping from their Clothes: The Production of an Urban-Rural Divide in Sri Lankan Village Garment Factories." In general, the rural styles of village workers are being replaced by urban styles; nevertheless the women wear sandals or shoes to the factory but quickly remove them while at work. — Caitrin Lynch

4.

Reproduction of "Index Showing Areas of India in Which Certain Categories of Maps are Restricted" India. Survey of India. Instructions for Publication of Maps by Central/State Government Departments/Offices and Private Publishers. New Delhi: Survey of India, 1987. On loan from Brian K. Axel.

The Survey of India has been involved not only with the production of India's frontiers and boundaries, but also with the constitution and visualization of the internal differentiation of India in the most minute fashion. My interest in the "Restricted Zone" concerns the Indian nation-state's productions of space. I argue that these productions are only in a very limited sense about the inscription of "geographical" or "physical" distinctions upon the nation's landscape. I am interested in how these productions, while facilitating the designation and enforcement of certain territorial categories (i.e., boundaries, frontiers, interiority, exteriority), rely upon, and are imbricated with, the constitution of a sovereign subject (the people of India) and various forms of difference. The position of this inquiry within my dissertation on transnational productions of Sikh identity can be summed up in one question: How has cartography succeeded in producing a specific subject (both desiring and consuming) in an ambivalent relation to locality? — Brian K. Axel

5.

Photographs of backstage spaces of Special Drama, Tamilnadu. 1993. Photographs by Susan Seizer. On loan from Susan Seizer.

The essay I presented at the conference is entitled "Roadwork: Offstage scripts for acting the ideal Tamil woman." In it I speak of the stigmatized social position of stage actresses in Tamilnadu, south India, and of my research into the genre of popular Tamil theater known as "Special Drama." I focus in this essay on how Special Drama actresses manage to create domestic, private spaces within their very public work. One such space is the backstage, as these photographs illustrate. -Susan Seizer

6.

Photograph of participants in “Space/South Asia/Globalization Conference.” Chicago: June, 1997. On loan from Brian Axel.

Twelve students presented work at the May conference.

Pictured: Seated: Ritty Lukose, Gautam Ghosh

Standing, R to L: Bernard S. Cohn, Pradeep Jeganathan, Susan Seizer, Brian K. Axel, Omar Qureshi, Malathi DeAlwis, Arjun Appadurai

Not pictured: John Bernard Bate, Caitrin Lynch, Ian Barrow, Manu Goswami, Vyjayanti Rao

Arjun Appadurai and Ms Manu Goswami, ed. Call for papers for the “Space/South Asia/Globalization Conference, May 17 1997, University of Chicago.” On loan from Brian Axel.

Recurrent Themes in the Representation of South Asia

Early European travelers found India to be a strange and confusing land filled not only with unusual flora and fauna but inhabited by peoples with seemingly different orientations towards life. Many of these travelers during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries prepared images to accompany the narrations of their journeys. These visual representations allow us to see India through the eyes and cultural preconceptions of these early voyagers. Four representational themes are traced in these cases: asceticism, *sati*, Hindu divinity, and cartography.

Asceticism was among the several Indian practices that particularly fascinated and perplexed early European travelers. Dutch and French voyagers often described the Indian religious devotees who practiced various forms of physical penance in an attempt to transcend their bodily and earthly desires. Early European images typically portrayed these ascetics, known as *fakirs* or *sadhus*, as fanatical extremists who, for the Europeans, were “more like devils than living men.” India was alternately seen as either a land of “gentle gymnosophists, ascetics and philosophers” or a realm of “threatening and bizarre marvels.” Both these opposing qualities infuse the European representations of the precolonial period. During the colonial and postcolonial eras, indigenous Indian artists also harnessed the image of the ascetic for their own particular purposes as symbols of personal or political power. This reached its pinnacle in the figure of the political and spiritual leader M.K. Gandhi, portrayed as an ascetic in ways that captured the imagination of Indians and Westerners alike.

A rite frequently described by European travelers in both word and image was *sati* (“suttee”), in which a Hindu widow burns herself alive on her husband’s funeral pyre. The abolition of *sati* was a central concern of colonial reform movements in the nineteenth century, and met with resistance from those who considered *sati* a sacred “tradition” of Hindu women. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the issue was introduced to European consciousness through graphic images. These depictions

appeared so often that it “became the totalizing image of India as the land of the bizarre.” *Sati* remains a source of contention in India today, particularly in the wake of a highly publicized *sati* in 1987 by a young Rajput widow named Roop Kanwar. While *sati* seems to have been a relatively rare occurrence, the rite has long engendered debates about the conditions of Indian women. The image of *sati*, once emblematic of barbarous oriental otherness for Europeans, is now again at the center of Indian debates about modernity and tradition, secularism and civil rights.

Hindu divinity is an enduring theme in the history of images from India. The earliest European travelers’ accounts from the sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth century represented the Hindu pantheon as little more than devils. Prejudiced by Christian expectations of demons in heathen lands, these narrators found what they already expected. But in the seventeenth century, in the context of a growing scientific humanism, differences in cosmology and religious practice were recognized. A new interest in information about Indian mythology created a demand for “authentic” pictures of Indian gods. Indian art historian Partha Mitter writes that a “new class of sources dating from the middle of the seventeenth century marks the beginnings of changing attitudes in the West towards alien societies and provides the essential key to the understanding of Indian iconography.” The majority of drawings and engravings displayed here date from this seventeenth century period of reinvigorated European interest in Hindu iconography.

Cartography and the history of the mapping of the Indian subcontinent is the final theme explored here. Any given cartographic depiction recognizes the aspects of the subject in question that are most salient to the cartographer’s needs. Under different ruling authorities, “India” has appeared in many forms and aspects. The cartographic project of mapping and re-mapping the nation continues to this day.

Bernard S. Cohn, emeritus professor in the departments of History and Anthropology at the University of Chicago, provided inspiration for this section of the exhibition. Excerpts from his essay “The Past in the Present: India as a Museum of Mankind,” introduce many of the themes and rare books on display. More recent publications from the general collections provide links to current contexts in which these themes and images reappear.

CASE 25 A LAND OF ASCETICS

CASE TEXT

European images of Indian fakirs circulated throughout the seventeenth century via frequent reprintings of a limited set of illustrations. As Bernard Cohn noted in “The Past in the Present,” they had their particular historical location in the city of Surat:

One of the great congregating places of the fakirs was outside of Surat, the most important trading center for Europeans on the [west] coast of India in the seventeenth century. Here under the encompassing branches of what the Europeans referred to as a “banyan” tree (*Ficus Indica*), whose branches stretched over 500 feet, were a number of shrines and temples, to which a large number of

the “Gentoos” [Hindus] came to worship the “devilish stone images” and their living counterparts, the fakirs.

The banyan tree just outside Surat and the confusing ritual mortifications performed by Hindu ascetics beneath the tree became for Europeans a central symbol of India’s otherness. Centuries later, asceticism, still symbolically redolent of Indian otherness, was effectively and powerfully re-deployed by M.K. Gandhi in the independence struggle.

CASE 25 OBJECTS

1.

Jean Baptiste Tavernier. *Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier*. Paris: Gervais Clouzier et Claude Barbin, 1676. Rare Book Collection.

Jean Baptiste Tavernier, a jeweler to the French royal court, made six voyages to the Levant, Persia, and South Asia between 1636 and 1667. Well-acquainted with court and commercial life of 17th-century India, Tavernier provided considerable information on religious practices of “the Idolators of India.” Like other Europeans, he was fascinated with the fakirs who sat under the great banyan tree outside of Surat. In addition to a general description of religious shrines, Tavernier illustrated the austerities of the yogis and provided brief explanations for sets of numbered drawings. He explained to his readers “that modesty ... compelled him to conceal the parts they have no shame in exposing to view.” Between 1675 and 1775, Tavernier’s *Six Voyages* was published twenty-three times in French and eight times in English.

2.

Bernard Picart. *The Ceremonies and Religious Customs of the Various Nations of the Known World*. London: Claude Du Bosc, 1739. Rare Book Collection.

Bernard Cohn has written of this illustration:

Bernard Picart ... transformed and elaborated Tavernier’s rather sparse rendering of life under the banyan tree. At the center of the scene is a temple which has the large head of “Mammanvia,” with a Brahmin in front painting the forehead of a supplicant woman. In the foreground is a Jain, masked and sweeping the ground in front of him to prevent his killing of any insects. Picart has also added many more fakiers and inserted a tomb-like structure into which peers a turbaned figure, checking to see if a fakir who has vowed to be buried without food or water for a month is still alive. In the right foreground two Hindu women are worshipping a group of yogis. This plate brings into a single synchronous frame a veritable encyclopedia of Indian religious practices as they were framed by the Europeans.

3.

Johannes Nieuhof. *Voyages and Travels into Brasil and the East-Indies*. A Collection of Voyages and Travels, edited by Awnsham Churchill. London: Printed by Assignment from Messrs. Churchill, 1744-1747. Rare Book Collection.

This remarkable collection in eight volumes brings together the accounts of numerous 17th- and 18th-century European voyagers. The second volume contains the narrative of John Nieuhoff, a Dutchman employed by the Nederlandsche Oost-Indische Compagnie.

Niehoff's travels in India began in 1653; in 1672 he was killed by natives in Madagascar. This plate pictures a "Benjan Saint" with long nails and a long braid. Directly beside him worldly folk engage in animated discussion while Europeans look on, and in the background a naked man falls head first out of a tree.

4.

Frans Balthasar Solvyns. *Les Hindous, ou Description de leurs Moeurs, Coutumes et Ceremonies*. Paris, 1808. Rare Book Collection.

The Flemish artist Franz Baltazar Solvyns spent fifteen years in India during the late 18th century. This French edition of his engravings on the subject of the customs, costumes, and rites of the Hindus contains the most complete record of his work. The plate displayed here is only the first among numerous plates representing ascetics, whom Solvyns' characterizes as "a particular class of men among the Hindoos, whose superstitious fanaticism and singularity of rites deserve particular notice." Solvyns notes in accompanying text:

"In this and the following prints of this number, my intention is to describe a class of men very singular, and frequently met with in the countries inhabited by the Hindoos. It is that of the Faquirs, a set of fanatics who exist without either property or attachment of any sort in the world: totally given up to devotion, living every where at other people's expence, and in general with a degree of respect bordering upon the most submissive veneration."

5a.

Mahatma Gandhi: His Life in Pictures. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1954. Library General Collection.

A reproduction of the widely-circulated 1930 Nandalal Bose block print of Mahatma Gandhi.

5b.

Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. Photograph by Sumati Morarjee. D. G. Tendulkar.

Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Bombay: Vithalbhai K. Jhaveri and D. G. Tendulkar, 1938-1940. Library General Collection.

The ascetic as an iconic image of India has been central not only to European representations of India, but also played a large role in the recent history of Indian self-representation. In the context of the Indian independence movement, the iconic image of Mahatma Gandhi, wearing only a loin cloth and walking alone with a staff, symbolized the serene and dedicated ascetic devotion to the cause of a free nation that inspired members of the independence struggle. This emblematic image was initially created in 1930 by Nandalal Bose as a block print entitled "Dandi March (Bapuji)."

This strikingly simplified image in black and white of Bose's block print was designed for easy and wide replication and became the central originary image in the ensuing iconography of the Mahatma. It was reproduced in different genres, distributed among followers, and eventually became the model for the stamps and sculptures of independent India. Here the line between life, art, and politics is sublimely thin: the equally famous 1939 photograph of Gandhi at Wardha is a "real-life" documentary image

that satisfyingly replicates the already popularized image of Gandhi in the same pose. These two images of Gandhi continue to serve the contemporary self-image of the nation.

CASE 26 SATI

CASE TEXT

The self-immolation of widows or *sati*, has played a vivid role in European visions of India. First visually depicted by Jan Huygen van Linschoten in his 1595 *Itinerary*, the iconic pattern established with his drawings endured into the eighteenth century. Linschoten was a Dutch merchant who sailed to India in 1593. His book — a mixture of his observations and accounts of other Europeans in India, accompanied by his drawings — was quickly translated into Latin, French, German, and English, and was widely known through Theodor De Bry's *India Orientalis*.

Bernard Cohn writes in “The Past in the Present”:

Linschoten's drawing of a woman performing *sati* was to appear repeatedly and became the totalizing image of India as the land of the bizarre. Most of the seventeenth century travel accounts featured a description of a *sati*, and even though the textual details varied, the basic form and content of the scene was fixed.

Beginning with the De Bry reproduction of Linschoten's drawing, the images displayed here suggest how the iconography of *sati* developed by and circulated among Europeans has informed contemporary Indian debates about modernity, tradition, and the condition of women in particular.

CASE 26 OBJECTS

1.

Theodor De Bry. *India Orientalis*. Frankfurt: Wolfgang Richter, 1599. Rare Book Collection.

2.

Frans Balthasar Solvyns. *A Collection of Coloured Etchings Descriptive of the Manners, Customs, and Dresses of the Hindoos*. [Calcutta: s.n., between 1796 and 1799]. Rare Book Collection.

3.

William Hodges. *Travels in India*. London: J. Edwards, 1793. Rare Book Collection. This remarkably restrained visual image has the qualities of a Grecian tableau. It is accompanied by a text that situates all emotion in the author's response, rather than within the actors in the scene itself:

“I had often read and repeatedly heard of that most horrid custom amongst, perhaps, the most mild and gentle of the human race, the Hindoos; the sacrifice of the wife on the death of the husband, and that by a means from which nature seems to shrink with the utmost abhorrence, by burning. Many instances of this practice have been given by travellers.... About ten in the morning, only a few people were assembled, who

appeared destitute of feeling at the catastrophe that was to take place; I may even say that they displayed the most perfect apathy and indifference. ... The procession was slow and solemn; the victim moved with a steady and firm step; and, apparently with a perfect composure of countenance, approached close to the body of her husband.... For my part I felt myself actuated by very different sentiments: the event that I had been witness to was such, that the minutest circumstance attending it could not be erased from my memory; and when the melancholy which had overwhelmed me was somewhat abated, I made a drawing of the subject, and from a picture since painted the annexed plate was engraved.”

4.

S. Settar and Gunther D. Sontheimer, eds. *Memorial Stones: a Study of their Origin, Significance and Variety*. Dharwad: Institute of Indian Art History, Karnatak University, 1982. Library General Collection.

In contrast to the style in which the other images in this display depict *sati*, here are photographs of what have been termed *Sati* memorial stones. These stones, which date from the 13th to the 17th centuries, are stone carvings commemorating a woman's suicide on her husband's funeral pyre. Women who commit *sati* are often revered after death as saints. These carvings employ the symbol of a female hand and arm with bangles, the arm bent at a right angle, the open hand signifying the *sati* giving her blessing.

5.

Madhu Kishwar and Ruth Vanita. “The Burning of Roop Kanwar.” *Manushi*, No. 42-43, September-December, 1987. Library General Collection.

On September 4, 1987, an eighteen-year-old widow named Roop Kanwar was burned to death on her husband's pyre in a Rajasthan village named Deorala (one of the villages anthropologist Gitel Steed and her team had studied in the 1950s). The event was highly publicized and witnessed by thousands. For twelve days, the site was maintained as a shrine to the *sati*, and beatific photo collages of her at the moment of death were sold as souvenirs. Debate raged throughout the fall of 1987: religious revivalists celebrated the modern renewal of this practice as divine sacrifice, while women's rights activists denounced it as murder and yet another culturally sanctioned crime against women.

6.

Front Pages from the Times of India 1838-1988. *The Times of India*, Sept 16, 1987 (Jaipur edition). Bombay: Times of India, 1988. Library General Collection.

Intense press coverage provoked a broad public response to Roop Kanwar's *sati*. The caption displayed here presents the editor's opinions on the issue: “The sati episode at Deorala in Rajasthan shocked the conscience of the nation as the Jaipur edition of *The Times of India* detailed the sanctity given to a barbarous act.”

CASE 27

THE REPRESENTATION OF HINDU DIVINITY

CASE TEXT

European visitors to India have long had difficulty “coming to terms with Hindu art,” notes Indian art historian Partha Mitter in *Much Maligned Monsters*, his influential study

of European reactions to Indian art. At the core of the historic European inability to assimilate Hindu art lay a problem of perception: “Early travelers preferred to trust what they had been taught to expect instead of trusting their own eyes.” Instead of seeing images of gods, these voyagers saw medieval monsters, more devils than deities.

In Europe, says Mitter, the “sixteenth century saw a substantial widening of interest in non-European societies, for humanists engaged in collecting information as assiduously as they amassed natural and artificial objects in their cabinets of curiosities.” With this growing interest in other cultures came increasing recognition of differences in cosmology and religious practice. By the seventeenth century, the demand for information about Indian mythology in turn created a demand for authentic pictures of Indian deities. “A new class of sources dating from the middle of the seventeenth century marks the beginnings of changing attitudes in the West towards alien societies and provides the essential key to the understanding of Indian iconography.” The majority of drawings and engravings displayed here date from this period of informed European interest in Hindu iconography, during which time “Indian gods began rapidly to shed their previous monstrous guises, as their own character and attributes were increasingly restored to them.”

In the twentieth century, representations of the Hindu pantheon were again reshaped by the cross-cultural interactions of East and West. This time Indian artists adapted European painting styles for their modern interpretations of deities and myths. The Ravi Varma oleolithograph on display here is an example of this transformation in the representation of Hindu divinity.

CASE 27 OBJECTS

1.

Philippus Baldaeus. *Beschrijving der Oost-Indische Kusten Malabar en Choromandel*. Amsterdam: Johanes Janssonius van Waesberge en Johanes van Someren, 1672. Rare Book Collection.

2.

Philippus Baldaeus. *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, edited by Awnsham Churchill. London: Printed by Assignment from Messrs. Churchill, 1744-1747. Rare Book Collection.

3.

Olfert Dapper. *Umbstaendliche und eigentliche Beschreibung von Asia*. Nuernberg: Johannes Hoffman, 1681. Rare Book Collection.

4.

Bernard Picart. *The Ceremonies and Religious Customs of the Various Nations of the Known World*. London: Claude Du Bosc, 1739. Rare Book Collection.

CASE 28
CASE TEXT

CARTOGRAPHY AND THE CREATION OF INDIA

Cartography has long been central to Western knowledge of India, and it played a conspicuous role in the colonial dominion of India. The history of Western maps of India begins with sixteenth-century voyagers who were intent on charting all they saw. Such documentation is not however a neutral enterprise; acts of visualization are a way of making what they see their own, of claiming dominion.

As Bernard Cohn observed in “The Past in the Present”:

The population of the British in India grew from a few hundred in 1700 to thirty or forty thousand by the end of the century. Integral to the emergence of the colonial state and a distinctive overseas British society in India was an ever-expanding documentation project. India by 1800 was an observational site, its physical features to be measured and mapped and transformed into a topography; its flora and fauna given a natural history; its peoples and their forms of thought, institutions, and social practices described and classified. Engaged in the naturalization, domestication, and documentation project was an army of professional and amateur delineators, surveyors, topographers, natural historians, map makers, scholars, linguists, historians, antiquarians, archaeologists, engravers, artists, architects, and photographers. New descriptive and interpretive strategies had to be constructed and deployed if India was to be effectively domesticated. The devils of the 17th century travelers, with their satanic rites and satirical priests, the wildness, the bizarre, and the weird had to be submerged if India was to be effectively and profitably ruled.

The British colonial project of mapping bequeathed a legacy that lives in the postcolonial era. Modern examples of cartography in service of independent India illustrate the continuities.

CASE 28 OBJECTS

1.

Jean de Thevenot. *The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant*. London: Printed by H. Clark, for H. Fairthorne, J. Adamson, C. Skegnes, and T. Newborough, 1687. Rare Book Collection.

The author is pictured standing beside a globe and pointing to a map of the lands he describes. Such frontispiece images were very common in the 16th and 17th centuries. In *Forms of Nationhood* (1992), R. Helgerson has written specifically of the new relations of authority that such images bespoke in Elizabethan England:

As our look at the maps and frontispieces has suggested, the self gives the dumb and inanimate land voice and life, in exchange for which the land grants the self an impersonal and historically transcendent authority. In this mysterious and thoroughly mystified relationship — after all, dirt and water cannot really speak and authority can never escape history — authors are enabled by the authority they confer on the land they describe.

2a.

Edward Terry. *A Voyage to East India*. London: Printed by T. W. for J. Martin, 1655. Rare Book Collection.

2b.

John Fryer. *A New Account of East-India and Persia*. London: Printed by R. R. for R. Chiswell, 1698. Rare Book Collection.

This sea voyager's map is notable for its focus on the harbors and the approach to the subcontinent and a paucity of detail on the interior.

2c.

James Rennell. *Description Historique et Geographique de l'Inde*. Edited by Jean Bernoulli. Berlin: Pierre Bourdeauz, 1788. Rare Book Collection.

3.

Student consulting the cartography collection, ca. 1979. Photograph by Nancy Hays. Southern Asia Department Photograph Collection.

4.

Two 20th-century maps. On loan from Brian K. Axel.

After Indian independence, the Patel Scheme of National Integration shaped and merged the 552 Indian states that existed in 1947 to 14 states in less than a decade. This reorganization was considered the culmination of National Integration, and India was established as one integral, uniform, and "federal" entity. The transformation occurred in multiple stages. These maps represent two different moments in the Indian government's vision of the new nation. The first shows India prior to independence as a land checkered by divisions into princely provinces and colonial states. The second shows an early stage in the political reorganization of states in May 1948, with states being integrated into unions and centrally administered units.