

Now in your library!

Collections within the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland archive

The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (RAI), founded in 1871 with roots dating back to 1837, is the world's longest-established scholarly association, dedicated to the furtherance of anthropology in its broadest and most inclusive sense. The Institute's archive contains nearly one million pieces of unique content, including research data, papers, fieldwork, drawings and photographs, and a wealth of previously uncatalogued material. The archive includes a 150,000-image library of ethnographic photographs dating back to the 1860s. Those images were captured by anthropologists, ethnologists and ethnographic photographers, and include historic prints, lantern slides, drawings, and paintings, illustrating diverse world cultures.

The digitized collections within this archive contain materials and datasets which are especially valuable to researchers studying the history of anthropology, religion, race and culture, world history and politics, the history of empire and colonialism, and gender studies.

Learn more about the collections:

ABORIGINES' PROTECTION SOCIETY

The APS is the founding mission and cornerstone for the creation of the RAI and what would become the discipline of Anthropology. This collection spans 1838-1909 when the APS merged with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to form the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society (now Anti-Slavery International), and helps in understanding early human rights movements by giving insight into the relationship between indigenous Australians and colonial powers along with the paternalist perspective of colonialism and steps at remediation. The APS is known for *The Colonial Intelligencer*; or, *Aborigine's Friend*, the main publication of the society which is featured in the collection.

WILLIAM BULLER FAGG COLLECTION

William Buller Fagg (1914-1992) was the Keeper of the Department of Ethnography at the British Museum (1969-1974) and a groundbreaking historian when it came to Yoruban and Nigerian art. This vast collection relates to all aspects of anthropology and William Buller Fagg's influence in defining the shape of the discipline of Museum Anthropology and curation. Artifacts document the visual history of African art and artifacts, the movement of these across empire, and the "Golden Age" of African Anthropology (1930-1940) are available in this collection.

ASSORTED LANTERN SLIDES

Photographic lantern slides were introduced in 1849 and this beautiful collection of images from the late 19th and early 20th century captures the history of photographic image-making through a range of anthropology topics. The photographs bring written content to life and complement collections on the history of colonialism and formation of modern world and contemporary issues.

NOTES ON THE INDIAN TRIBES OF THE BOLIVIAN AND PARAGUAYAN CHACO

This collection covers the South American regions of Bolivia and Paraguay and contains observations and research by anthropologists on indigenous tribes in those areas in the 1920's. This collection of maps and manuscripts complement collections on history of colonialism and formation of modern world and contemporary issues.



LECTURES, DESCRIPTIONS OF SLIDES AND AMERICAN INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHS

This collection shows unique images of Native Americans in the late 1800's along with material showing examples of the racist foundations for indigenous studies. This collection will be of particular interest to researchers studying American and world history, the history of anthropology, native and indigenous studies, and the history of colonialism and racism.

BRITISH ETHNOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

This collection gives insight into inner workings and administrative history of ethnographic societies through manuscripts, correspondence, and committee records. The materials in this collection document the study of British folklore and everyday life during this time including folk traditions and the history of rural life, plus the history of parks, public spaces and museums.

ETHNOMUSICOLOGY COMMITTEE

This collection details the administration and organizational history (including correspondence) of the Ethnomusicology Committee, which defined the study of the cultural and social roles of music across humankind. Materials date back to 1953 when the first meeting of the Committee was held and will interest researchers learning more about the history of world music and ethnomusicology.

HUXLEY MEMORIAL LECTURES

Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) was a respected English anthropologist specializing in comparative anatomy and was known for advocating for Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. In 1896 it was decided to commemorate Prof. Huxley with an annual lecture in his name. This collection includes correspondence around these lectures from the middle years of the 20th century with some of the biggest names in the field such as Levi-Strauss and Evans-Pritchard.

RAI INDIA RESEARCH COMMITTEE AND RELATED PAPERS

In 1924, an India Research Committee was formed with the function "to afford a meeting-place for discussion among those in this country who are interested in the study of Indian ethnology, archaeology, folklore, and religions, to co-operate with workers resident in India". The collection encompasses an organizational and administrative history that provides a background perspective on colonial ethnographic efforts.

EXPEDITIONS

This collection details a range of anthropological expeditions around the world over a 40-year period. Materials include the administrative perspective behind expeditions, planning, coordination, and funding. Many of the expeditions highlighted came out of universities so the collection illustrates the relationship between academia, colonialism and discovery.



RELATED SUBJECTS

- African Art
- Geography
- Anthropology
- Historical
- Archaeology
- Anthropology
- Art History
- Historical Geography
- Colonial History
- Linguistics
- Cultural Studies
- Languages and Culture
- Ethnic Studies
- Photographic Chronicles
- Ethnography
- Race and Culture
- Evolutionary Anthropology
- Religion and Religious Studies
- Forensic Anthropology
- Visual Anthropology
- Gender Studies
- Visual Cultures

TYPES OF MATERIALS

- Administrative records
- Fieldwork
- Press clippings
- Manuscripts
- Invitations to annual BAAS meetings
- Photographs
- Correspondence
- Maps
- Illustrations
- Prototypes
- Gray Literature
- Pamphlets
- Data
- Personal Papers