

Hindu Archive Projects

The British Hindu Oral History Project

For the first time, the experiences of Hindus who have settled in Britain are being recorded in a systematic way. This is a valuable opportunity to record and preserve this unique aspect of Hindu culture and British history.

The project involves conducting and recording interviews with Hindus who migrated to Britain from other countries around the world. The project received Heritage Lottery funding and the results of this ground-breaking work will be made accessible to scholars and researchers for future studies and publications.

The Digital Shikshapatri Project

The OCHS is working with Oxford's Bodleian Library and the Refugees Studies Centre to digitise the Shikshapatri, the most revered scripture of the Swaminarayan community. This document is held in the Indian Institute Library in Oxford and hundreds of visitors come to view the manuscript each year. The project will develop a computerised learning resource that will be accessible on the Internet.

The Matsya Project

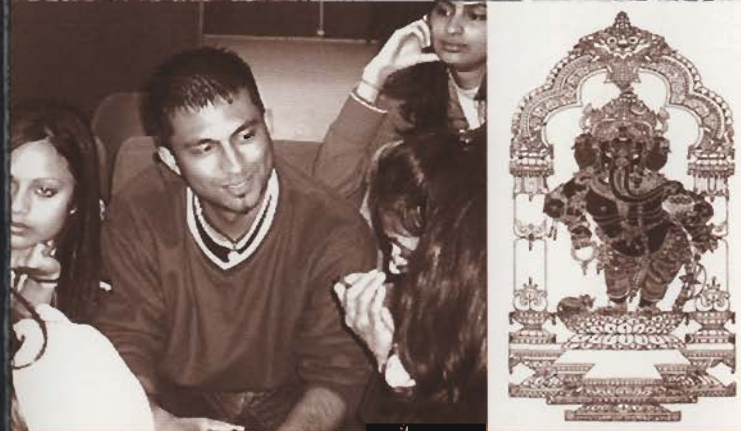
The first phase of this project, carried-out in India discovered and preserved on microfilm, historic Indian manuscripts and rare books before they were lost forever. Over one million frames have been recorded so far. The material was originally funded by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. and copies are now held by the OCHS Hindu Archive.

The OCHS has initiated a second phase to this project which will use digital technology to scan and preserve ancient manuscripts and libraries in India. This is an important and timely project which will conserve Indian and Hindu heritage for the future.

The Hindu Youth Research Project

The Hindu Youth Survey, developed with the Hindu Youth Festival 2001, is the first survey of its kind. Five hundred Hindu youths answered the survey questionnaires and fifteen hours of group interviews were carried out.

This material is being analysed so that it is useful to the Hindu community, scholars and British institutions. The results of the analysis are being used to help formulate plans that are appropriate to the needs, interests and concerns of the present generation of Hindu youth.



Helping to preserve the heritage of
Hinduism in Britain

The Hindu Archive

An Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies Archive Project

For further information about Oxford Centre for
Hindu Studies Archive projects, please contact:

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In order to best help our users, visits to the archive are by
appointment only. To arrange a visit, please contact the Archivist.

What is the Hindu Archive?
Why have an Hindu Archive?
Who can use the Hindu Archive?
**How can I take part in the
preservation of Hindu culture?**

OXFORD CENTRE FOR HINDU STUDIES

What is the Hindu Archive?

The Hindu Archive is part of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS). The Centre is committed to preserving all aspects of Hindu culture and will establish a number of specialised archives to achieve this goal.

The Hindu Archive is a collection of official documents, letters, diaries, memorabilia, newspapers, newsletters, photographs, audio and videotapes, films, CD's and DVD's, that capture the history of Hindus in Britain and beyond. These materials have been generously donated by individuals who wanted to see their collections become part of an archive that documents the history of their culture and their community.

Why have an Hindu Archive?

The Hindu Archive has been established to preserve the unique history of Hinduism. This material can then be used by scholars and researchers, and it is envisaged that the preservation of this history will help develop the sense of community amongst the Hindu community itself.

Who can use the Archives?

The archives will be accessible to everyone, including scholars, researchers, the media, government agencies, community members and the public in general. However, some items will have restricted access, and donors can request this condition on items of a confidential nature.

How can I take part in the preservation of Hindu culture?

You can play a part in the preservation of the rich culture of Hinduism in the following ways:

Donate materials to the archive

Do you have some personal materials relating to Hinduism that you no longer wish to keep? Or perhaps you do not have enough space to store your collected materials, or cannot store them safely. If so, you may want to consider donating them to the archive.

Any materials relating to Hindus and Hinduism may be donated, including letters, photographs, newspapers, newsletters, newspaper cuttings, posters, invitations, books, leaflets, diaries, documents and other papers, slides, films, videos, audiocassettes, minidiscs, CD's and DVD's.

We have established archival standards in order to ensure that materials are well preserved for the future. The materials donated by an individual can be kept as a collection in the archive, and named after the donor.

Keep your own archive

If you have a collection of materials relating to Hinduism, and have enough storage space, you may like to consider keeping your materials as part of a network of archives. We would be able to provide advice and assistance to help you to do this.

Bequeath material to the archive

You may like to consider the option of bequeathing your collected materials to the archive. This means that you name in your will, the OCHS Hindu Archive as the beneficiary of your materials after your passing away. Please contact us if you would like assistance in doing this.

Tell us about possible materials for the archive

Do you know of any materials relating to Hinduism that are not being used or are at risk of being damaged or disposed of? Such materials may be donated to the archive and we would be happy to hear from you about them.

Help develop an archive in your local community

The OCHS archive projects aim at actively involving members of communities in preserving their own history. For this reason, the OCHS is encouraging individuals to become involved in setting up community archives. Community groups who have developed their own archives have found that they promote understanding, tolerance and respect amongst their community members as well as the wider society.

Commanet is a not for profit organisation that promotes, supports and develops community archives. They have developed software that supports fully searchable databases of still and video images, text and oral narratives. This serves as a permanent record of a community's cultural heritage. There is a high success rate for groups applying for funding to cover the costs of setting up a community archive, including Commanet software. The OCHS would be able to provide assistance to groups in applying for grants and setting up a community archive.

Please contact the OCHS if you would like to be involved in any of these ways, or have ideas of your own on how you could take part in the preservation of Hindu culture

