



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Sherry B. Ortner photographs relating to Sherpa research

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Sherry B. Ortner photographs relating to Sherpa research
Date:	1966-1990
Identifier:	NAA.PhotoLot.2019-19
Creator:	Ortner, Sherry B., 1941-
Extent:	3 Linear feet 1,036 Slides (35mm) 88 Photographic prints (and associated negatives)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The photographs were donated by Sherry B. Ortner in 2018.

Processing Information

Sherry Ortner's organization of the photographs has been maintained.

The collection was processed and finding aid encoded by Gina Rappaport.

Preferred Citation

Sherry B. Ortner photographs relating to Sherpa research, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

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Restrictions

The Sherry B. Ortner photographs relating to Sherpa research collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical / Historical

Sherry B. Ortner (b. 1941) is a cultural anthropologist and Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at UCLA. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 1970 after carrying out extensive fieldwork among the Sherpas of Nepal from 1966-1968, looking at religion, politics, and Himalayan mountaineering. She continued research among the Sherpas in 1976, 1979, and 1990, publishing several important works

including *Life and Death on Mt. Everest: Sherpas and Himalayan Mountaineering* (1999) which won the J.I. Stanley prize for best anthropology book in 2004.

Ortner's later work includes research relating to meanings of "class," where she carried out fieldwork among her own high school graduating class, and the relationship between American culture and Hollywood films.

Scope and Contents

The Sherry B. Ortner photographs relating to Sherpa research comprise photographs made during Ortner's fieldwork among the Sherpa communities of Nepal. They include photos from her doctoral research in the 1960s, as well as later research in the 1970s and 1990. Images show people, places, and events among the Sherpa communities in the Mt. Everest region. Also included to a lesser degree are photographs in and around Kathmandu.

Arrangement

The collection is organized into four series:

- Series 1. Sherpa research, 1966-1968
 - Series 2. Sherpa research and film expedition, 1976
 - Series 3. Sherpa research, 1979
 - Series 4. Sherpa research, 1990
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Selected Bibliography

1978. *Sherpas and their Rituals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1989. *High Religion: A Cultural and Political History of Sherpa Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

1999. *Life and Death on Mt. Everest: Sherpas and Himalayan Mountaineering*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Sherpa (Nepalese people)

Places:

Nepal

Container Listing

Series 1: Sherpa research, 1966-1968

1 Linear foot

Scope and Contents: Series 1 comprise photographs from Ortner's doctoral research carried out primarily in the Sherpa village of Junbesi in the Solukhumbu region of Nepal. Included are images of people and events such as a wedding and a funeral, treks to various sites, temples and monasteries, and landscapes.

Arrangement: Photographs are organized by topic, event, or trip.

Box 1	In and around Kathmandu 37 Slides
Box 1	Trek from Kathmandu to Junbesi (Zhung) village 16 Slides
Box 1	In and around Junbesi (Zhung) village in the lower Sherpa valley of Solu (Shorieng) 30 Slides
Box 1	Village temple (Gompa) 11 Slides
Box 1	People, sites, and rituals related to the monastic complex in the Solu (Shorieng) valley 36 Slides
Box 1	People of Junbesi village 79 Slides
Box 1	People working 16 Slides
Box 1	School picnic in Zhung 30 Slides
Box 1	Wedding 18 Slides
Box 1	Funeral 14 Slides
Box 1	Pilgrimage to sacred Milk Lake (Omi Tso) 17 Slides
Box 1	Trek to Khumbu in the upper Sherpa Valley

	35 Slides
Box 1	In and around Khumbu 38 Slides
Box 1	Visit to Thami Gompa monastery on the west side of Khumbu 38 Slides
Box 1	Visit to Tengboche monastery for annual Mani Rimdu festival 38 Slides
Box 1	Show by Tibetan traveling drama troupe in Chialsa 29 Slides
Box 1	Anthropologists 9 Slides

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Series 2: Sherpa research and film expedition, 1976

1 Linear foot

Scope and Contents: Series 2 comprise photographs made in 1976 during Ortner's fieldwork as well as the filming for Grenada Television's *Disappearing World* series episode "Sherpas."

Subseries Part I includes photos from Ortner's visit to Junbesi and later trek to Khumbu. Ortner states "I went ahead of the crew to visit . . . Junbesi and then trekked to Khumbu to lay the groundwork for the shoot."

Subseries Part II includes photos from "the arrival of the [film] crew through shooting of film, mostly in the Thami area of Khumbu."

Arrangement: Photographs are organized by topic, event, or trip.

Part I

Box 2	Kathmandu 23 Slides
Box 2	Helicopter ride from Kathmandu to Junbesi 6 Slides
Box 2	Scenes from Solu region 17 Slides
Box 2	People of Junbesi 75 Slides
Box 2	Sehlo Gompa 14 Slides
Box 2	Tupden Choling (Tushi Rimpoche new monastery) 15 Slides
Box 2	Trek from Junbesi to Thami 22 Slides
Box 2	Khumbu upper valley 18 Slides
Box 2	Trek to Thami area in the west of Khumbu 13 Slides
Box 2	Thami people 29 Slides

Part II

Box 2 Kathmandu, Lukla, and trek to Thami

38 Slides

Box 2	Shooting in and around Thami 26 Slides
Box 2	Household ritual in Thami, "HLACHETUP" 13 Slides
Box 2	Wedding in Thami 15 Slides
Box 2	Shooting scenes with Mingma's parents in Thami-teng 20 Slides
Box 2	Thami Gompa monastery 20 Slides
Box 2	Major ritual at Thami Gompa monastery, "DORSEM" 28 Slides
Box 2	Back to Kathmandu, picnic with Mingma's family, visit to Kopan Gompa 13 Slides

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Series 3: Sherpa research, 1979

0.5 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: Series 3 comprise photographs relating to Ortner's monastery history project in Khumbu, which resulted in the publication *High Religion*.

Box 3	Monastery history project in Khumbu 194 Slides
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Series 4: Sherpa research, 1990

0.5 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: Series 4 comprise photographs of Sherpas that Ortner interviewed for her mountaineering history project, which resulted in the publication *Life and Death on Mt. Everest*.

Box 3

Mountaineering history project
88 Photographic prints (and associated 35mm negatives)

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