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Remembering Robert Miller

We mourn the death of our emeritus colleague, Robert J. Miller. On the morning of April 13, 1994 his wife, Bea Miller, discovered that Bob had died peacefully in his sleep during the preceding night in their home on Camano Island in the state of Washington. Bob's ashes were scattered, as he had asked, on Puget Sound.

Bob received his B.A. from the University of Michigan and his Ph.D. from the University of Washington at Seattle. His regional area of focus at that time was Inner Mongolia. Bob and Bea conducted fieldwork in Darjeeling District in West Bengal, where they gathered information from Tibetan refugees and developed a life-long sympathy for Tibet. Bob taught for three years in the University of Washington at Seattle before joining the Anthropology Department in the University of Wisconsin in 1959. At that time, Wisconsin's Department of Indian Studies was still taking shape. A faculty committee interested in India had succeeded in gaining approval for the Department, but the scope of the fledgling Department was far from clear. During 1960-61 interested faculty, including Bob Miller, held a Weekend Retreat where they discussed basic curriculum, faculty to be recruited, and new courses to be introduced for the Department of Indian Studies. According to Bob's account:

We agreed upon a "new approach": positively, we were to emphasize the social sciences, history, religion, and languages and literatures. Negatively, we agreed, we *did not want to be an "Orientalist" department*, but wanted an *integration* of historical and social science approaches to any and all aspects of "Indian Studies"... We felt that graduate students should be exposed to a wide range of disciplinary tools and problems, and should (we hoped) become area specialists. . .

From the Weekend Retreat emerged the main parameters of the Department of South Asian Studies as it exists in Wisconsin today, as well as of Wisconsin's Center for South Asia, and of Wisconsin's Buddhist Studies Program.

Bob Miller's administrative talents were repeatedly called upon. On several occasions he chaired the Department of Anthropology; he chaired the Department of Indian (later South Asian) Studies; he directed Wisconsin's federally-funded Indian (later South Asian) Language and Area Center; and he was Resident Director (in Delhi) of the American Institute of Indian Studies. Bob also served as General Secretary of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (of which he was a founding member in 1976, and as Special Assistant to the University of Wisconsin's Dean of International Studies.

After his initial fieldwork in Darjeeling, Bob conducted further fieldwork in South Asia, studying Buddhist (including neo-Buddhist) organizational networks (1963-64), biological and cultural adaptation in India (1970-72), and doing a biocultural feasibility study (1978-79).

Bob's publications include numerous articles in encyclopedias and journals. His books and monographs include *A Regional Handbook on the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region*, edited by Helmut Wilhelm (New Haven, 1956), to which he contributed three chapters and co-authored four others; *Monasteries and Culture Change in Inner Mongolia* (Weisbaden, 1959, Gottinger Asiatische Forschungen, Band II), and *Religious Ferment in Asia* (Lawrence, 1974) that he edited and to which he contributed editorial comments. In the 1970s Bob's interests began to focus on the cultural anthropology of siliconage technological change. His articles appeared in new journals such as *Futurics* and *Anthro-Tech*, and in 1983 he edited and contributed to *Robotics: Future Factories, Future Workers* (*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 470).

Bob retired from the University of Wisconsin in 1988, and he and Bea moved to a large home overlooking a bay on Camano Island in the state of Washington. Both Bob and Bea remained active in the profession, continuing their research and writing and regularly attending national and international conferences, including Madison's Annual Conference on South Asia. While in Madison at the most recent (1993) Annual Conference on South Asia, Bob and Bea celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with their family.

Bob Miller played a key role in establishing and sustaining both South Asian Studies and Buddhist Studies on the Madison campus of the University of Wisconsin. He will be remembered fondly as a scholar, colleague, advisor, administrator, consultant, and friend. Bob Miller's family would like Bob memorialized through the prize fund that he founded honoring superior graduate student research. Those who want to remember Bob in this manner are asked to send their donations to his prize fund care of Alice Ann Rocca, Department of Anthropology, Rm 5240 Social Science Building, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 53706.

Himalayan Research Bulletin thanks Joe Elder for sharing this memorial piece with our readers; it appeared originally in the University of Wisconsin's South Asia Center newsletter.