

Dom Moraes:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Moraes, Dom, 1938-2004
Title:	Dom Moraes Collection
Dates:	ca. 1956-1965
Extent:	4 document boxes (1.68 linear feet), 1 galley folder
Abstract:	The Dom Moraes Collection contains handwritten and typed drafts of poetry, journal articles, screenplays, translations, and published and unpublished books. The materials are written in English and date from circa 1956 to 1965. Some items are fragile or torn: care should be taken when handling these papers.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-2908
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research. Some items are fragile or torn, and care should be taken when handling these papers. Part or all of this collection is housed off-site and may require up to three business days notice for access in the Ransom Center's Reading and Viewing Room. Please contact the Center before requesting this material: reference@hrc.utexas.edu

Administrative Information

Acquisition:	Purchases, 1964, 1966 (R1985, R1986, R2081, R2093, R2145, R2899)
Processed by:	Nicole Davis, Jaime Pereira, Katherine Risseuw, 2007, updated by Betsy Nitsch, 2012
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Dominic Francis Moraes was born July 19, 1938, in Bombay (now Mumbai), India, to Frank Moraes, an attorney and journalist, and Beryl Moraes, a doctor. The family moved often during Moraes' childhood, and he traveled extensively with his father, the editor of *The Times of India*, especially to Australia and Southeast Asia. Moraes began writing poetry at age twelve and attended a Jesuit high school. At age eighteen he entered Oxford University where he met the influential poets W. H. Auden and Stephen Spender, who encouraged his work. Moraes' first published poem appeared in Spender's literary magazine *Encounter*, and his first book of poetry, *A Beginning*, was published in 1957. This book received the Hawthornden Prize, making Moraes, at nineteen, the youngest and first non-English writer to win the award.

Subsequent books of poetry included *Poems* (1960), *John Nobody* (1965), and *Beldam Etcetera* (1966). Moraes also worked in prose, writing two autobiographies, *Gone Away* (1960), and *My Son's Father* (1968). In the early 1960s, he turned to journalism in order to make a living and wrote articles about London and British culture for *The Times of India* and *Illustrated Weekly of India*. He also worked as a war correspondent, covering conflicts in Algeria, Israel, and Vietnam. While in Israel, he reported on the trial of Adolf Eichmann and translated work by the Hebrew poet T. Carmi (pseudonym of Carmi Charny).

In addition to his journalism, Moraes worked as a scriptwriter for several television programs and films and continued to publish non-fiction work, such as a biography of Indira Gandhi, *Mrs. Gandhi* (1980), and a third autobiography, *Never at Home* (1992). In the late 1970s, he returned to live in India and began to focus again on poetry. In 1987, he published a collection of poems written from 1957 to 1987, and in 2001 published *Cinnamon Shade: New and Selected Poems*, which earned the Sahitya Akedemi Award, India's highest literary prize. During this period he also collaborated with his companion, Sarayu Srivatsa, who considered Moraes her mentor.

Moraes was diagnosed with cancer in the early 2000s but refused treatment. He died of a heart attack on June 2, 2004.

Sources:

"Dom(inic F.) Moraes," *Contemporary Authors Online*, <http://galenet.galegroup.com> (accessed 26 November 2007).

"Dominic Frank Moraes," *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, <http://galenet.galegroup.com> (accessed 26 November 2007).

Hoskote, Ranjit. "The Stranger Who Found Belonging At Last," *The Hindu Magazine* 13 June 2004, <http://www.hindu.com/mag/2004/06/13/> (accessed 26 November 2007).

"Obituary: Dom Moraes," *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/obituaries/> (accessed 26 November 2007).

Scope and Contents

The Dom Moraes Collection contains handwritten and typed drafts of poetry, journal articles, screenplays, translations, and published and unpublished books. The materials are written in English and date from circa 1956 to 1965.

The collection is arranged into two series: I. Works, and II. Correspondence. The Works series comprises almost the entirety of the collection and documents Moraes' early writing and career. Included are manuscripts for Moraes' poetry books *A Beginning* (1957) and *John Nobody* (1965), and numerous articles written for Indian newspapers. Also present are drafts of several unpublished works, translations, and television scripts. Numerous notebooks contain handwritten poems, some dating before Moraes' enrollment at Oxford. Materials are in alphabetical order either by published title or under one of the following three headings: Articles, Poetry, or Screenplays.

Series II. Correspondence consists of six letters concerning travel arrangements in 1957. Additional letters relating specifically to his journalism are located in the Articles folder in the Works series.

Related Material

Moraes materials are also located in the Center's Vertical Files and in the following Ransom Center collections: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.; Terence Armstrong; Edmund Blunden; Alec Craig; Thomas Cranfill; John Lehman; *Nimbus*; and Peter Owen.

Other Dom Moraes manuscript material is located in the Olin Library, Department of Special Collections, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

Separated Material

Several books received as part of the Moraes Collection were transferred to the Ransom Center's Book Collection, including *A Beginning*, a Swedish and a Norwegian translation of *Gone Away*, and books by Karl Shapiro and Gregory Corso inscribed to Moraes.

Index Terms

Subjects

India--Descriptions and travel.

Poetry--20th century.

Journalism--India--20th century.

Series I. Works, circa 1956-1965, undated

Articles, handwritten and typed drafts with correspondence, circa 1963-1964	Container 1.1-2
<i>A Beginning</i> (1957)	Container 1.3-4
Handwritten notebooks, typed drafts, proofs and dust jacket dummies, undated	Container 1.3, gf 1
Bound proofs and published editions with author's marks, circa 1957	Container 1.4
<i>Brass Serpent</i> by T. Carmi (1964), typed drafts and bound proof translation, 1964	Container 1.5
"Dusk of the Day" by S. Y. Agnon, typed draft translation, undated	Container 1.6
Horsemen Fell (unpublished), typescript with corrections and author's note, circa 1963	Container 1.7
Israel book (unpublished), typed draft fragments, 1961	Container 1.8
<i>John Nobody</i> (1965)	
Handwritten and typed drafts, circa 1961-1964	Container 2.1
Bound proof, 1965	Container 2.2
North Wind (unpublished), typescript draft, undated	Container 2.3-4
<i>Penguin Modern Poetry 2: Kingsley Amis, Dom Moraes, Peter Porter</i> (1962), galley proofs, circa 1962	Container gf 1
Poetry	
Handwritten and typed drafts and fragments, undated	Container 2.5
Notebooks	
Circa 1956-1960	Container 3.1
1960	Container 3.2
1961-1962	Container 3.3

1962

Container 3.4-5

1962-1963

Container 4.1

Undated

Container 4.2-3

Screenplays, handwritten and typed outlines, notes, and draft fragments, 1961-1962, **Container**
undated 4.4

Series II. Correspondence, 1956-1957

Incoming and outgoing, 1956-1957

Container 4.5

Bar Code List

- 1--059188000054990
- 2--059188000054989
- 3--059188000054978
- 4--059188000054967