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Appalachia Abroad: The University of Tennessee and Cold War Rural Development Programs in India, 1954-1972

Kaitlin Amanda Simpson
University of Tennessee, ksimps19@vols.utk.edu

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Kaitlin Amanda Simpson entitled "Appalachia Abroad: The University of Tennessee and Cold War Rural Development Programs in India, 1954-1972." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.

Tore C. Olsson, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Shellen X. Wu, Brandon K. Winford

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

Appalachia Abroad:
The University of Tennessee and Cold War Rural Development Programs in India
1954-1972

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Arts
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see the world as a global family and to treat everybody within it with love, dignity, and respect –
to you, I am eternally grateful.

Abstract

This thesis outlines the work of the University of Tennessee's Colleges of Home Economics and Agriculture in India as part of Cold War global development programs funded by the Technical Cooperation Mission to India and, later, the United States Agency for International Development. Through this program, the instructors from the University of Tennessee worked with Indian educators at agricultural and home science colleges and universities throughout India to "improve" home economic and agricultural education and foster pro-American sentiment in the region. By exploring the themes of gender, race, nationalism, rural life, and development, this thesis argues that while the home economics department emphasized cross-cultural connections and the adaptation of westernized domestic practices to fit the cultural and religious practices of India better, the College of Agriculture worked to transplant Appalachian agricultural models directly onto India. When taken together, these two programs demonstrate the global connections that link two largely rural populations and, by doing so, blurs the divide between the "developed" and the "developing" world.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Humans possess a strong propensity for dividing the world. Scholars and politicians alike use designations such as the East and the West, the New World and the Old World, the First World and the Third World, the Global North and the Global South, to categorize societies into orderly and manageable categories. One such division between the “developed” and the “developing” worlds drove America’s international rural development programs in the years following World War II. The United States and other countries typically considered “developed” used this perceived divide between the developed and the developing world to justify sending money, technology, and personnel to countries they deemed less advanced in the name of ending poverty and gaining political influence.¹ When viewed historically, however, the divide between the developed and the developing world is rarely so clear.

Within the United States – a country typically labeled as “developed” by political scientists and historians – southern Appalachia often represents a particularly “underdeveloped” region, plagued with poverty, dependency, and isolated by both distance and culture.² This stereotypical depiction, however, fails to acknowledge the significant role the mountain South

¹David Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 6-9; Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America’s Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 3, 7-8. David Ekbhadh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of An American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 2-3, 182-189.

²This thesis discusses the region of Appalachia and its connections to Cold War era global politics. Appalachia is both a geographic and cultural region of the eastern United States that spans the length of the Appalachian Mountain range, incorporating parts of twelve states – Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Appalachia is a predominantly rural and mountainous region economically reliant, in large part, on mining, small scale farming, and forestry. The often-exploitive nature of these extractive industries fueled the widespread poverty and lack of access to public services in the region. This thesis will focus primarily on a portion of southern Appalachia in closest proximity to the University of Tennessee, where the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics were most active. Specifically, this thesis focuses on the regions of eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, West Virginia, northern Alabama, and northeastern Georgia.

played in the creation and implementation of rural development projects internationally. Furthermore, when studies of development do discuss Appalachia, they typically focus on the global efforts of the Tennessee Valley Authority to take their hydroelectric projects abroad. Such focus on the TVA, an organization primarily designed and run by politicians and engineers outside of Appalachia, fails to recognize the myriad other ways in which Appalachia served to influence global development abroad. For at the same time the U.S. government worked to promote economic prosperity in Appalachia during the 1960s and 70s, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) sent both home economics and agriculture faculty to aid in America's Cold War development efforts in India.³

This relationship between the University of Tennessee and the government of India first began through UTK's College of Home Economics. Home economics had long served as an important method of development within Appalachia itself. Progressive era reformers working since the 1920s and '30s sought to use home economic education as a means of promoting what they viewed to be improved standards of living within rural homes. The University of Tennessee College of Home Economics, first established in the late nineteenth-century, played a vital role within these early domestic reforms by teaching courses and promoting domestic science extension programs throughout Appalachia. Because of this experience, home economists and educators throughout America increasingly recognized UTK's College of Home Economics as one of the foremost in the nation. As such, when the government of India approached the United States asking for their help to grow and strengthen Indian home science colleges and universities,

³. For discussion on the TVA's role within global development programs see Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*; Daniel Klingensmith, *'One Valley and a Thousand: Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007); Sara Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019) 16; Tore C. Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings: Reformers and the Remaking of the US and Mexican Countryside* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017) 174-82.

the U.S. government selected the University of Tennessee alone, with their local experience with rural development, to administer this aid. Through this program, discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, instructors from Tennessee traveled halfway across the world to work closely with Indian educators and promote home science education in women's colleges throughout India.

Tennessean participants in this home economics program, a venture run by women, for women, firmly believed that home economics education in India would help to promote strong, stable, and more democratic Indian homes that would, in turn, serve as the foundation for a democratic India sympathetic to the United States and its western, capitalist allies. But, for these women, education alone was not enough to build a strong relationship between India and the United States. Both the Indian and American instructors believed that they could only cultivate a genuine and long-lasting partnership between their two countries if they understood, learned about, and respected each other's culture and way of life. As such, those participating in the so-called "UT-India" program actively sought opportunities to learn from and experience the culture of their colleagues through visiting each other's homes, participating in local festivals, or sharing their knowledge about local home economics practices through local clubs and classes.

This combination of education and cross-cultural exchange resulted in the implementation of home science education in India based on Americanized home economics but uniquely adapted to the cultural peculiarities of India. This hybridization of American and Indian home economics education meant, for example, that while American and Indian instructors pushed for Indian women to adopt scientific home science techniques developed in the United States in fields such as nutrition, child care, home management, textile production, food preparation, and familial relationships, they did so with adaptations specifically designed to make these programs more applicable and beneficial to local women. The women of the UT-

India program hoped that these hybridized home science initiatives, sensitive to Indian cultural practices, would prove more effective in building a democratic Indian home and society, and by doing so, build a stronger relationship between the United States and India, a political alliance vital to the perpetuation of American international political power during the Cold War.

In 1955, one year after the College of Home Economics began their program, UTK's College of Agriculture, also entered into a contract with the U.S. and Indian governments to work with schools of agriculture in southern India. Unlike the College of Home Economics, which worked without assistance from other American schools, the College of Agriculture worked in partnership with four other American universities to form the Council of United States Universities for Rural Development in India (CUSURDI). Each CUSURDI university worked with local Indian agricultural instructors in one of five different regions throughout India to promote agricultural education and "modernize" agricultural practices through extension programs. Furthermore, each CUSURDI university, of which Tennessee was the only southern school, focused their efforts on a particular aspect of agricultural education, such as seed development or control of crop diseases.

On the surface, the agricultural practices of East Tennessee have little resemblance to those used in the arid, south Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. That said, CUSURDI tasked the University of Tennessee's College of Agriculture with concentrating on the "economic issues of agricultural development," citing recent development programs implemented by the United States government in Appalachia as a potential model for similar programs in India.⁴ In other words, Appalachia's struggles with poverty and need for

⁴"Supporting Document to the Proposed Basic Grant Document for an International Professorship, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee," unknown author, 29 April, 1968, Agency for International Development and College of Agriculture Records

rural development programs did not preclude the University of Tennessee from participating in international development programs. Rather, the UTK staff and the U.S. government funding them believed their experience with these recent development programs in Tennessee would help the University of Tennessee's agriculture faculty provide better assistance to Indian educators and farmers. As such, UTK, and Appalachia more broadly, served as both an exporter and a prototype for rural development projects in southern India.

But what exactly was Appalachian about the work of UTK abroad? UTK's Colleges of Home Economics and Agriculture may have adopted different approaches to aiding India, with home economics instructors promoting programs adaptive to Indian cultural practices while the College of Agriculture worked to model Indian agriculture on East Tennessee. That said, they both built upon the unique qualities of Appalachia, including the importance of home economics education in the region and Appalachia's own previous experience with rural development programs. Furthermore, even though many instructors working through UTK in India were not from Appalachia originally, most had extensive research experience in the region's social and economic problems or had personally participated in reform efforts in the past. It was ultimately this previous experience in Appalachian development and reform that UTK could export abroad to better serve American political interests in India.

The work of UTK's Colleges of Home Economics and Agriculture in India helps to demonstrate the crucial role East Tennessee and Appalachia played within the complicated game of Cold War global politics. In taking Appalachia abroad in this manner, UTK instructors hoped that their programs would cultivate sympathetic feelings towards the United States among the Indian instructors, students, and locals with whom they worked – a primary goal of U.S. foreign

(Hereafter referred to as AIDCAR), AR.0387, box 17, folder 13, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Special Collections, Knoxville, Tennessee.

policy throughout the Cold War. By analyzing these transnational connections that linked East Tennessee with India, two regions typically considered “developing,” and the international political implications of this mission, this thesis helps to blur the divide between the developed and the developing world and challenges the legitimacy of dividing society into two such groups.

The U.S. South and the World

This examination of UTK’s work in India adds to a lively field of historical study examining the myriad connections linking the U.S. South to the world. Writing as early as the 1950s, historian C. Vann Woodward, in his article “The Irony of Southern History,” worked to popularize and legitimize southern history during an era of nationalistic fervor following World War II. Within this discussion, Woodward justified the importance of the U.S. South to American national historiography by drawing on the similarities between the U.S. South and the rest of the world. To Woodward, the South’s struggle to rebuild after defeat in the Civil War, the economic domination of black and poor southerners at the hands of landowners and industrialists, and the widespread racial inequality in the region all made the South and its history more akin to what we today call the Global South than the rest of the United States. As he argues, “the South had undergone an experience that it could share with no other part of America – though it is shared by nearly all the peoples of Europe and Asia.”⁵ These very connections and comparisons, according to Woodward, give the South, and the United States more broadly, its history.

While an in-depth examination of these parallels was not Woodward’s primary focus, as he was firmly a scholar of the domestic U.S. South, recent historians have worked on parsing out these comparative and transnational links that tether U.S. southern history to world history. For

⁵C. Vann Woodward, "The Irony of Southern History," *Journal of Southern History* 19, no. 1 (1953): 5.

example, many historical works on the U.S. South in a global context discuss the critical role southern agriculture and industry played within an increasingly interconnected global economy. From the antebellum South to the mid-twentieth century, the proliferation of southern cotton production and its centrality to English and other European textile mills tied the southern agricultural economy to global markets and amplified the international political influence of southern planters.⁶ Likewise, while cotton may have been the most prominent of southern crops, others, including sugar, tobacco, and other produce, have all found international markets.⁷

Historians have also analyzed the globalization of southern industry during the twentieth century. As transnational research suggests, the South not only participated within the industrializing economy of the United States but rapidly expanded into and benefitted from international markets. For example, companies like Coca-Cola and British-American Tobacco used lower-cost, foreign natural resources and labor to maximize profits.⁸ The South also led the way in opening up new markets and creating innovative business models to find success domestically and internationally. Nan Enstad, in *Cigarettes Inc.*, discusses the how the British-American Tobacco Company, a joint venture between the Imperial and American Tobacco Companies tied closely to cigarette and tobacco production in the U.S South, created unique and

⁶For discussions on the international importance of U.S. cotton in both the antebellum and postbellum eras see Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), 99-135, 242-311; Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 303-420; Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016); Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, The German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

⁷Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba After Slavery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006); Gerald Horne, *Race to Revolution: The U.S. and Cuba During Slavery and Jim Crow* (New York: New York University Press, 2014); Nan Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.: An Intimate History of Corporate Imperialism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018); Tore C. Olsson, "Peeling Back the Layers: Vidalia Onions and the Making of a Global Agribusiness," *Enterprise & Society* 13, no. 4 (2012).

⁸Enstad, *Cigarettes Inc.*, 120-153; Bartow J. Elmore, *Citizen Coke: The Making of Coca-Cola Capitalism* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2015): 53-75, 78-90.

effective advertising campaigns in the United States and China, including the use of jazz music and trading cards, to market cigarettes containing bright-leaf tobacco.⁹ The Coca-Cola Company also proved innovative in its pursuit of global capitalism. As Bartow J. Elmore, in *Citizen Coke*, discusses, Coca-Cola worked to create an entirely new business model in which Coke contracted out most of the actual manufacturing and bottling process to avoid risky investments and maximize profits.¹⁰

Just as agriculture and industry brought southern products to the world, this connection to global markets brought the world to the South. Historians of immigration, including Moon-Ho Jung and Julie Weise, in their works *Coolies and Cane* and *Corazón de Dixie* respectively, analyze the importance of Chinese and Mexican immigrants and their labor to the production of southern agriculture. Beyond detailing immigrants' work in the field, works such as these complicate ideas of race relations within the South. Throughout their discussions, Weise and Jung both examine how immigrants attempted to fight white supremacy by asserting their rights as foreign nationals and how white sentiment towards immigrants often changed based on political or economic circumstances, including the demand for workers or political alliances during World War II. In doing so, these works highlight the often fluid and complex nature of southern race relations and how the issue of race in the South was not always a matter of black and white.¹¹

⁹Enstad, *Cigarettes Inc.*, 154-220.

¹⁰Elmore, *Citizen Coke*, 7-11.

¹¹Jung, *Coolies and Cane*; Julie P. Weise, *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South Since 1910* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015) 4-5, 14-50, 179-216; for further discussion on immigrants in the South see Stephanie Hinnert, *A Different Shade of Justice: Asian American Civil Rights in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017) see page 68 for discussion of Chinese laborers during World War II; see also Cindy Hahamovitch, *Fruits of Their Labor: Atlantic Coast Farmworkers and the Making of Migrant Poverty, 1870-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

Indeed, issues of race pervade many works discussing the U.S. South in a global context. Andrew Zimmerman's *Alabama in Africa*, for example, discusses how German social scientists, political intellectuals, and colonial organizers looked to emulate the southern racial hierarchy and sharecropping system within their African colonies. While Zimmerman traces the transatlantic relationship between the southern agricultural system and German colonial policy through several veins, including the development of German sociology and visits by German colonial officials to the New South, his argument centers around the Tuskegee Institute's mission to Togo in West Africa to "improve" Togolese farming practices by implementing Americanized cotton production and promote smallholder farming centered around a patriarchal family structure. The perceived success of this mission by German and other colonial powers, Zimmerman argues, led to the implementation of the southern agricultural model and racial stereotypes internationally.¹² This Tuskegee program, in many ways, mirrors later Cold War development programs designed to "modernize" agricultural, medical, and cultural practices throughout the Global South. As with later programs as well, the goals of reformers, such as the Tuskegee men, to export southern agriculture abroad for the "betterment" of local populations, often led to unexpected, or even damaging consequences.

As historians likewise note, the struggle for racial equality continued to connect the South to the world into the post-World War II era. Nico Slate, in his work *Colored Cosmopolitanism*, discusses how early civil rights leaders, including W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey, worked to popularize the notion of unity between all people of color despite their many cultural and linguistic differences. Championed by political leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru of India, this idea of racial unity, or colored cosmopolitanism, would provide the rhetoric and political support by

¹²Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa*, 66-172.

which countries could challenge European colonial rule and the subjugation of people of color internationally.¹³

Similarly, Nico Slate and other historians of the global Civil Rights movement, including Mary Dudziak, in her work *Cold War Civil Rights*, discuss how Civil Rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. understood the political power and influence that would result from cultivating relationships with other people of color throughout the world.¹⁴ International attention on the South during the Civil Rights Movement provided African American leaders critical allies on the international stage who were willing to push the U.S. federal government towards a more proactive civil rights platform or risk angering potential Cold War allies in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.¹⁵ Slate and Dudziak do, however, discuss the limitations of this international attention on the civil rights movement. Fear of censorship or prosecution by the U.S. federal government during the politically tense years of the Cold War forced civil rights activists in the South and internationally to limit their more radical social and political goals so as to not appear sympathetic to communism.¹⁶

Within scholarship on the U.S. South and the world, Appalachia is largely absent. Instead, historical scholarship on the mountain South during the twentieth century typically depicts Appalachia as a relatively insular region, focusing instead on the area's long struggle with poverty and local or governmental efforts to fight it, largescale outmigration from the

¹³Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 66-85.

¹⁴Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism*, 202-42.

¹⁵Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 33-39.

¹⁶Dudziak, 11, 61-77; Slate, 170-201.

region, or capitalist exploitation of Appalachia's natural resources.¹⁷ In popular culture, Appalachia fares even worse. Stereotypes of Appalachian people and culture range from the backward, none-too-bright, but lovable Clampett and Walton families, as depicted in the popular television shows *The Beverly Hillbillies* and *The Waltons* respectively, to the poor and abusive drug addicts of J. D. Vance's bestselling memoir, *Hillbilly Elegy*.¹⁸ While historical works on the region, including Jessica Wilkerson's *To Live Here You Have to Fight* and Steven Stoll's *Ramp Hollow*, are increasingly discussing Appalachia and its place within a national and even international context, historians still have much work to do if they wish to alter popular understandings of Appalachia as an isolated region, disconnected from the rest of the world.¹⁹

The historical works that do discuss Appalachia in a global context typically focus on immigration into the region. *Transnational West Virginia*, a collection of essays edited by Ken Fones-Wolf and Ronald L. Lewis, for instance, articulates the myriad ways Italian, German, Swiss, Belgian, and Eastern European Jewish labor migrants were "critical to the economic transformation of the state and the region," during an era in which Appalachian coal mining grew

¹⁷See Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Scribner, [1962] 2012); Michael Bradshaw, *The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty-Five Years of Government Policy* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1992); John Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 309-98; Steven Stoll, *Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2017); Jessica Wilkerson, *To Live Here You Have to Fight: How Women Led Appalachian Movements for Social Justice* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019).

¹⁸J. D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2016); for critiques to Vance's depiction of the Appalachian region and culture see Elizabeth Catte, *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia* (Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, 2018) and Anthony Harkins and Meredith McCarroll, eds., *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy* (Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2019).

¹⁹Wilkerson, *To Live Here We Have to Fight*, 14-16, 194-201, Wilkerson, in her work, seeks to highlight the importance Appalachian women as caregivers and activists in the 1960s and 70s as symbolic, indicative, and connected to the larger second-wave feminist movement of the era. In doing so, she hopes to re-center Appalachia, and Appalachian women more specifically within the larger narrative of American women's and gender history; Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 244-88. Stoll spends his last chapter discussing regional development programs in Appalachia in comparison to programs all over the world. I will discuss this more later in the introduction.

increasingly connected to “transnational industrial capitalist economies.”²⁰ Likewise, historian Deborah R. Weiner, in her work *Coalfield Jews*, investigates the process by which Jewish immigrants integrated themselves into the merchant middle-classes of mining towns in the Appalachian region while maintaining much of their culture despite the discrimination they often faced from their Appalachian neighbors.²¹

Although these works add much to our understanding of the diversity within Appalachian society, they do not thoroughly explore the reciprocal nature of these transnational and global connections – namely the flow of Appalachian culture and people outward as well. In other words, histories of Appalachia often discuss how outside populations, companies, and economic factors act upon the region but spend little time discussing how Appalachia acts upon the outside world. While these works are undoubtedly important, a closer examination of Appalachia and East Tennessee’s role in these Cold War development programs will likewise demonstrate the impact East Tennessee had on Cold War global politics and help to re-center and expand upon the role of Appalachia within discussions of the U.S. South and the world. In doing so, this thesis helps to alter the image of Appalachia as an isolated and distant place, as popular culture so often depicts, and instead discuss an Appalachian region at the very center of Cold War global politics.

Cold War Development

Like studies on the U.S. South and the world, the body of historical scholarship on international Cold War development programs is also extensive. These studies range from intellectual histories discussing the concepts of “modernization” and “development,” to political

²⁰Ken Fones-Wolf and Ronald L. Lewis, *Transnational West Virginia: Ethnic Communities and Economic Change, 1840-1940* (Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2002), xi-xii.

²¹Deborah R. Weiner, *Coalfield Jews: An Appalachian History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); for other discussion on immigrants into Appalachia and a discussion of their cultural influence and representation in popular culture see Charles A. Zappia, “Labor, Race, and Ethnicity in West Virginia Mines: *Matewan*,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2011), 44-50.

histories analyzing government debates over these programs and social histories analyzing the on-the-ground implementation of agricultural, medical, or structural development programs in regions across the globe. Within these works, it is important to remember that the very concepts of “development” and “developing societies” are themselves social constructs, as anthropologist Arturo Escobar outlines in his work *Encountering Development*. As he argues, notions of what constitutes a “developed society” are based in large part on racist beliefs in the West’s cultural, industrial, and political “superiority” and the very colonial ideology that American developers hoped to supplant.²² As such, these Cold War development programs, designed under the auspices of unity and goodwill, often perpetuated global inequalities and reified the divides between East and West, rich and poor, and the Global North and Global South.

The more theoretical discussions on development often focus on the concept of “modernization” and how American politicians and boosters for development used modernization theory to justify their actions overseas. This theory dictated that the only path towards “modernity” and a “modern,” industrialized society came through systematic, top-down scientific and technological advancement often planned and designed by government agencies.²³ During the Cold War era, both the United States and the Soviet Union worked to implement programs based on modernization theory in attempts to engender sympathy and political alliances between themselves and the country receiving aid.²⁴

²²Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 6, 8.

²³Modernization theory is closely linked to the concept of “high modernism” outlined by political theorist James C. Scott, in his work *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 4-8; Cold War developers drew much of their development ideology from Walt Whitman Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

²⁴David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michale E. Latham, eds. *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 35-41; David C. Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of American World*

Although they both sought to use development to gain political influence, their methods were not identical. In India, the Soviet Union focused on implementing and building support among the Indian populations for public-sector – or state-owned – industries. The Soviet Union, for instance, provided funding to build industrial facilities such as steel mills, oil refineries, and power stations owned and operated by the Indian government. The United States, in contrast, often worked to institute development programs focused on “modernizing” rural regions through agricultural or environmental reforms. In one such program, the Tennessee Valley Authority, first founded during the New Deal era to build hydroelectric dams and provide electricity, irrigation, and fertilizer to local farmers along the Tennessee Valley in Appalachia, took up a similar project building hydroelectric dams along the Damodar Valley in India. These TVA programs instituted in countries across the world represented the quintessential top-down modernization efforts.²⁵

Yet, as historian Daniel Immerwahr argues, in his work *Thinking Small*, top-down, state-led modernization was not the only method by which the United States sought to implement development programs in the Global South. Immerwahr discusses how another group of developers, typically viewed in opposition to modernization theorists, instead believed that “community development” programs represented the best way to fight political and economic inequalities globally. These community development programs, popular among Indian politicians and many American developers during the 1950s and early 1960s, rather than promote state-led and technologically-driven programs, hoped to build decentralized, grassroots

Order. (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); Amy L. S. Staples, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945-1965* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006); Daniel Klingensmith, ‘*One Valley and a Thousand*.’

²⁵Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 227-303; Daniel Klingensmith, ‘*One Valley and a Thousand*.’

movements designed and implemented by local populations.

Despite their use of more egalitarian rhetoric, these community development programs, Immerwahr contends, often served to reify social and economic inequality already present within a society. As such, Immerwahr is sure to note that community development was not the panacea that many American developers hoped it would be.²⁶ Home economics and agriculture instructors working through UTK's program often used the rhetoric of community development, noting the importance of working with, teaching, and learning from local populations. In reality, however, most of the educational and extension programs implemented by the College of Home Economics and, to an even greater extent, the College of Agriculture and their reliance on both American and Indian experts more closely resembled the ideology of modernization.

Historians have likewise written considerably on international Cold War development programs in India specifically. Indeed, notions of "development" within India reached back into the colonial era as British officials in the late-colonial period worked to increase Indian economic output. As historian Benjamin Zachariah argues, British officials often promoted and implemented these early development programs to justify their continued presence as a colonial power in India. At the same time, Indian nationalists also used the rhetoric of development within their fight for self-rule. It was amid these imperial versus nationalist debates that conversations first occurred between foreign and Indian politicians over whether or not India should accept foreign aid, what form modernization efforts, if they were needed at all, would take, and who should take charge of such efforts – conversations that would go on to influence

²⁶Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small, The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 1-14, 66-100.

future conversations over development in the 1950s and 60s.²⁷

India gained its independence from Britain in 1947. Instantly, this South Asian nation became the most populous democracy in the world and a critical player within Cold War global politics. As such, development programs instituted in India, by both the United States and the Soviet Union, often helped to shape the implementation of development programs throughout the rest of the Global South.²⁸ Furthermore, as a populous nation, India represented a crucial piece in Russia's and the United States' struggle both to gain political influence over unaligned nations and to establish exclusive trade relations with Global South countries. Because of this, historical works often characterize economic development programs in India as a struggle between the communist East and the capitalist West. Indeed, both the Soviet Union and the United States sent supplies, equipment, and specialists to India and instituted large-scale modernization programs, including American efforts to build dams in the Damodar Valley or the construction of the Bhilai Steel Plant by the Soviet Union.²⁹

It is important to note, however, that India and other recipients of Cold War aid were not passive actors to be used by the Soviet Union and the West as bargaining chips in a game of global power. Instead, as historian David C. Engerman describes in *The Price of Aid*, politicians in aid-receiving nations "used the aid to promote their economic visions and interests."³⁰

²⁷Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c. 1930-1950* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

²⁸For discussions on Cold War Development in India see Akhil Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments: Agriculture in the making of Modern India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), Klingensmith, 'One Valley and a Thousand'; Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*, 66-100; Engerman, *The Price of Aid*; Benjamin Robert Siegel, *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Sara Lorenzini, *Global Development*; for the importance of India and its role in shaping other international development programs see Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 4.

²⁹For analyses on the competitive nature between western and Soviet development programs globally and in India specifically see Lorenzi, *Global Development*, 38-49 and Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 227-302.

³⁰Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 9.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, proved adept at using both American and Soviet aid to benefit India and his political career. Although Nehru often proved reluctant to receive foreign aid in any form, when deemed necessary he often used India's Cold War neutrality to seek aid from both the United States and the Soviet Union based on who he and his government deemed most able to provide what India needed. Nehru's personal beliefs, in many ways, reflected his propensity for playing both sides. While he personally supported a form of democratic socialism, he remained politically close to the United States and Great Britain during his seventeen-year tenure as Prime Minister. That said, Nehru, and many politicians within his government, looked towards the Soviet Union as an economic model for industrialization and success – a position that frightened many western politicians and only served to increase western interest in India.³¹

Under these political and economic circumstances, the work of the University of Tennessee in India takes on an important global significance. Americans working in India, UTK's employees included, saw themselves and their work as central to the perpetuation of the United States' international political influence. By building relationships with Indian educators, farmers, and home economists, along with instituting programs that they viewed as "improving" Indian agricultural and home economics education, those working through the University of Tennessee's India program sought not only to aid in the creation and strengthening of schools of agriculture and home economics but to encourage a more sympathetic view towards the West among the Indian populations they encountered.

Furthermore, historians are increasingly recognizing the critical role the U.S. South played as a model for and participant in Cold War global development programs. Historian Tore

³¹Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 56-57, 128-29, 142; Lorenzi, *Global Development*, 15, 37-39.

Olsson, for example, hopes to restructure how historians think about the origins of the Green Revolution, or efforts by American agronomists to increase the Global South's crop production by pushing farmers to use lab-produced synthetic products such as fertilizers, insecticides, and hybridized seeds on their farms. Rather than place the origins of the Green Revolution in international development programs, as previous scholarship often did, Olsson argues that American reformers in the early twentieth century first worked to implement the tenets of the Green Revolution to fight rural poverty in the U.S. South. As such, when the Rockefeller Foundation took the Green Revolution abroad, first to Mexico and then across the Global South, they modeled their efforts after programs first tested and implemented in the U.S. South.³²

Along these lines, this thesis expands on the role Appalachia specifically played within Cold War international development programs. Most works that discuss Appalachia's role in global development focus on the Tennessee Valley Authority and efforts to implement similar hydroelectric and water resource management programs internationally. The TVA, instituted in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of his New Deal, sought to provide employment opportunities, flood control, fertilizer, and electricity to Appalachia and the Tennessee Valley through the building of hydroelectric dams along the Tennessee River. In the post-World War II era, the TVA, under the direction of David Lilienthal, inspired and aided in the institution of TVA-like programs in regions across the globe, including the Damodar Valley in India, the Helmand Valley in Afghanistan, the Papaloapan River basin in southern Mexico, and on the Yangtze in China.³³ While studying the international work of the TVA is undoubtedly important, analyzing the TVA alone neglects the other ways that Appalachia served as a model for Cold

³²Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings*, 7, 98-158.

³³Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*; Klingensmith, 'One Valley and a Thousand'; Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 16; Tore C. Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings*, 174-82.

War agricultural development.

Steven Stoll's *Ramp Hollow* also draws similarities between development programs in Appalachia and those implemented internationally. Specifically, Stoll analyzes the work of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) as an extension of international Cold War rural development programs. As he describes, "American development theory turned from matters abroad to those of the southern mountains in the 1960s," where it "confronted the same problem of using the assumptions of capitalism to solve problems created by capitalism."³⁴ Although the ARC failed to address the broader causes of poverty in Appalachia, namely the long history of exploitation and dispossession by industrial capitalism in the region, it did work to improve infrastructure, build hydroelectric dams, and promote commercialized agriculture – programs that were fairly common internationally as well. Likewise, the World Bank, heavily involved in funding and international development programs, praised the work of the ARC and its attempts to boost the economy of the Appalachian region.³⁵ Stoll's work undoubtedly reveals significant connections between Appalachian and international development programs and how such programs influenced economic development in the mountain South. That said, it still leaves much room to explore how Appalachian culture, economics, and agriculture shaped the implementation of development programs abroad.

UTK Abroad

Examining the work of the University of Tennessee in India helps to break down many of the barriers that so often divide our world, including those between the domestic and the political, local and international, East and West, and developed and developing. In adopting the

³⁴Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 258.

³⁵Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 260, 262; For discussions on the origins of the World Bank see Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 22-45.

ideas of gendered nation-building and emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural connections to build a strong, democratic India, the work of UTK's College of Home Economics demonstrates the critical role of gender in shaping the implementation of global development programs in the post-World War II era and Cold War international politics. Furthermore, the work of the College of Home Economics and the College of Agriculture helps to expand historical discussions of the role of East Tennessee and Appalachia within Cold War global development programs beyond their typical, and rather narrow, focus on the TVA and large-scale, international "modernization" programs. An examination of UTK's efforts to build political and cultural connections between the United States and India through home economics and agricultural education demonstrates how Appalachia's ties to global politics were forged, by not only the uppermost echelons of TVA organizers, but everyday men and women, both American and Indian working as farmers, home economists, educators, and students.

More broadly, analyzing the movement of Appalachian ideas and people across national boundaries helps to re-center Appalachia and East Tennessee into historical studies of the U.S. South and the world. The UTK-India program serves as a key example of how the Appalachian region and those who lived and worked within it sought to both forge critical international ties with colleagues and counterparts overseas and actively draw comparisons and build connections between Appalachia and India for what they believed to be the betterment of both societies.

By building both personal and political relationships between Indian and American educators and by drawing similarities between these two seemingly disparate regions, the work of UTK in India helps to blur the divide between the developed and the developing world. How useful is a term like "developing," for instance, when a region typically considered to be such, namely Appalachia, can draw comparisons between their own economic and political situation

and that of India, another region typically considered “underdeveloped,” while simultaneously leading programs designed to further “develop” agriculture and home economics in India? Terms such as “developed” and “developing” provide a useful shorthand by which historians, politicians, and everyday people categorize global politics and economic success. As the history of UTK’s work in India demonstrates, however, dividing the world into such disparate categories often serves to blur rather than reveal the complex web of global connectivity that holds societies together.

Chapter II

Democracy and Dharma

On July 4th, 1954, Jessie Harris, Vice Dean of the University of Tennessee's College of Home Economics, stepped off a plane in New Delhi, India, halfway across the world from her home in Knoxville, Tennessee, to begin her scouting mission. Although this was her first time in India, Harris was no stranger to international travel. As such, this independent and experienced woman undoubtedly held her head high as she took in the new sights and sounds of India. Tasked by the U.S. Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) to "appraise the situation" of home economics education in India and "make recommendations" for a possible inter-university contract between UTK and Indian "home science" colleges, Harris' twenty-three-day visit marked the beginning of a collaboration between Indian and Appalachian women that would last the next eight years.³⁶

Harris' visit to India came at the behest of the Indian government. Just a few years after India's independence in 1947, Indian home science educators, led by a Dr. B. Tara Bai, working through the newly established All India Home Science Association, requested that India's Ministry of Education examine means to improve home science education in India. At their request the Government of India approached the FOA and the Technical Cooperation Mission to India (TCM) for aid. Of all the universities in the United States, the FOA chose to approach Jessie Harris and the University of Tennessee, long a forerunner in home economics education

³⁶Jessie W. Harris, "Report of Home Science Program in A Selected Group of Indian Universities," 24 July 1954, University of Tennessee Office of the President Records, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Special Collections, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2-3, hereafter referred to as UTOPR. "Home science" and "home economics" refer to the scientific study, primarily by women, of domestic practices including, but not limited to, research in cooking methods, housekeeping, nursing, child development, home decorating and layout, and textile production. While most collegiate programs in the United States preferred the term "home economics," comparable programs in India typically preferred to use the phrase "home science." For purposes of this paper, I will primarily use "home science," except when quoting or referring to specific programs or projects in the United States.

amongst American universities, to survey the home science situation in India in preparation to undertake this contract.³⁷

As a result of this contract, upwards of seventeen representatives from the University of Tennessee worked with educators in India and a total of twenty-six Indian students came to Knoxville to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from UTK.³⁸ While in India on two year contracts, UTK assigned two Tennessee women to work at each of seven home science colleges throughout India. At these colleges, UTK instructors taught classes at the undergraduate and occasionally graduate level, in topics such as food science, nutrition, textiles, time management, home nursing, childcare, and how to conduct home science extension projects in rural villages. Likewise, UTK instructors provided teaching materials for use in home economics courses in the United States while also working with Indian instructors to write new material for home science education in India specifically. When the opportunity arose, UTK instructors also traveled around India speaking at and attending conferences and workshops at other institutions. These women likewise worked to establish an extension center at Tara Nivas, near the city of Bangalore in the state of Karnataka in southern India, where Indian students could gain practical experience working and teaching in local villages.³⁹

Gendered Nationalism

Harris and her fellow American home economics instructors saw themselves and their

³⁷Correspondence Harris to C. E. Brehm, 18 August 1954, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 2-3; Susheela Dantyagi, "An Exploration of Factors to Be Considered in Developing A Post-Graduate Program of Teacher Education in Home Science in the Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, India, Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1957, 23-24.

³⁸Jacquelyn Orlando DeJonge, ed., *Through the Arch: Home Economics to Human Ecology 1897-1994: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 30; *UT-India Home Science Program, 1955-1962* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee, 1962), 5, author unknown.

³⁹*UT-India Home Science Program*, 6-16; Claire Gilbert, "U.T./India Staff Letter Number 10," 18 March 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 3-4.

work at the very center of the growing Cold War conflict. Speaking in September of 1951 in New York City to women at a conference entitled “Women in the Defense Decade,” sponsored by the American Council of Education, Harris outlined a “national need *now*” for more women educated in home economics at the collegiate level. Harris went on to painted home economics as, not only one of the few sources of employment for women “both in the Defense Decade and in...peace time,” but as a matter of national security. “Our homes and our communities,” she contended, “are what makes America worth defending.”⁴⁰

Similar nationalist rhetoric continues throughout Harris’ speech, culminating in a final statement to the young women: “Be sure that you prepare to do your part now. America needs you.”⁴¹ To Harris and her colleagues, home economics education of the 1950s was not only about keeping a clean house or cooking dinner for a husband, as many women today may consider it, but also served a geopolitical purpose, integral to American foreign and domestic policy during the tense years of the Cold War. Harris and her colleagues did not want to rid society of “separate spheres” ideology, or, in simplest terms, the traditional gender roles that prescribed women work in and preside over the home while men worked outside of the home in the public sphere. Rather, the UTK staff believed that home economics, and the home more broadly, represented a crucial battle ground upon which the United States should wage political battles of the Cold War. In other words, maintaining a strong, well-ordered, democratic home, the type of home that proper home economics education helped to create, perpetuated the

⁴⁰Jessie W. Harris, “Meeting Your Responsibilities in Our Times,” September 1951, College of Home Economics Records, AR. 0396, box 2, folder 4, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Special Collections, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1, hereafter referred to as CHER; For more information on the “Women in the Defense Decade” conference, see Dorothy Veon, “Women in the Defense Decade,” *Pi Lambda Theta Journal*, vol. 30, no. 2 (Winter, 1951), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42916637>.

⁴¹Harris, “Meeting Your Responsibilities in Our Times.”

concept of “gendered nationalism,” or a belief held by women, both Indian and American, that women’s domestic work could strengthen national democratic ideology as much, if not more, than the traditionally masculine sphere of politics.

Although it contradicts how many in the twenty-first century might depict a “democratic household,” in which, ideally, both partners would participate equally in domestic management, to Jessie Harris and her colleagues, heteronormative separate spheres ideology and a democratic home were not mutually exclusive. Women were to remain primarily in the domestic sphere, performing tasks such as raising the children and maintaining the home, while their husbands would work outside the home. Within a truly “democratic” home, both men and women would recognize that these roles, while distinct, were equally important to building stable individual homes and a stable nation. These were equal housewives, not submissive ones.

Proponents of gendered nationalism, therefore, worked to promote these democratic relationships in their homes and encouraged other women to do the same, believing that building stable democratic homes would, in turn, help to strengthen national democracy. For example, one of the primary roles of women within this gendered nationalist ideology was to instruct children in the tenets of democracy and model, along with their husbands, what a proper democratic household would look like. By doing so, these women would help to instill democratic ideas into their children and perpetuate the next generation of good democratic American or Indian citizens. Within this system, home economics education served as an important method by which women worked through their separate sphere to promote and perpetuate democratic homes and a democratic nation.

As Cold War development programs sent Harris and her UTK colleagues abroad to India, they brought these gendered nationalist ideas with them and found that their Indian counterparts

shared them as well. Like the Americans with whom they were working, Indian home science educators viewed home science as critical to strengthening and perpetuating democracy in the newly independent Republic of India. As such, Tennessean and Indian home economics educators used this shared belief in gendered nationalism as a foundation upon which to build the cross-cultural connections they viewed as integral to the success of the UT-India program. Therefore, to UTK and Indian home science instructors, home economics was politics. By building a strong, democratic home through home economics education and gendered nation-building, UTK and Indian home science educators hoped to build a strong, democratic India sympathetic to the United States.

This chapter will argue that this use of gendered nationalism by both UTK's College of Economics and home science educators throughout India, coupled with a desire to learn about and share the respective cultures of both Appalachia and India led to uniquely hybridized methods of home economic education in India sympathetic to Americanized domestic science and democratic ideology, but uniquely adapted to the distinct and diverse cultural facets Indian domestic life. To illustrate this, it is first necessary to present a brief history of home economics in the United States and India before giving a short background on Jessie Harris and the UT-India program. This chapter will next examine how UTK and Indian home science instructors worked to promote gendered nationalism to build a strong, democratic India. It will then transition to a discussion on the other goal of the UT-India program – promoting cross-cultural exchange between the Indian and American home economists. Through these efforts to stimulate gendered nation-building and cross-cultural exchange, the UT-India program hoped to foster a friendly political relationship between the U.S. and India. Lastly, it will analyze the results of these efforts and the creation of a hybridized system of home science education that drew upon

Americanized home economic methods yet were adapted to fit the particularities of domestic management in India. In promoting gendered nationalism, cross-cultural exchange, and hybridized home science education, the UT-India program demonstrates how the University of Tennessee and the Appalachian region more broadly helped to shape international development programs while simultaneously strengthening the United States' Cold War political goals.

Gender and Development

Although historical studies of Cold War global development initiatives cover a wide variety of topics from theoretical to practical, few works examine issues of gender and the role gender ideology played in shaping global development projects during the post-World War II era. That said, historians have not excluded gender entirely from studies of U.S. international reform efforts. For example, Ian Tyrell, in his work *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire*, examines the work of American missionaries, social organizations, and individual reformers and their attempts to institute "moral uplift" programs abroad.⁴²

Within this work, gender plays a critical role in shaping the efforts of American missionaries abroad. Tyrell discusses, for instance, how two American missionary women, Mary and Margaret Leitch, sought to bring American notions of domesticity and femininity abroad through their work in Sri Lanka in the early 20th century.⁴³ The scope of Tyrell's work, however, does not extend beyond the 1920s, leaving much room for a gendered analysis of subsequent international development programs in the post-World War II era – a gap that studying the work of the University of Tennessee's College of Home Economics in India would help to fill.

⁴²Ian Tyrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 2-3.

⁴³Tyrell, *Reforming the World*, 28-45. Along with Tyrell, historian of gender and global poverty, Joanne Meyerowitz is currently working on a study, yet unpublished, that looks at the role of women within the United States' global anti-poverty efforts in the 1970s and 80s.

Home Economics in the United States

Since the second-wave feminist movement, the field of home economics faced criticism for adherence to patriarchal gender roles and a seemingly regressive attitude towards women's roles outside of the home. As historian Sarah Stage notes in the edited collection *Rethinking Home Economics*, historians of home economics have often treated the profession with much the same disdain, treating it solely as “little more than a conspiracy to keep women in the kitchen.”⁴⁴ Beginning with the publication of *Rethinking Home Economics* in 1997, a work which outlines the teaching and practice of home economics through a series of fifteen essays by historians of women and gender, scholarship on the subject has gained attention and sympathy among historians for its links to early women's empowerment and employment movements and for what it can teach scholars about the performance and perpetuation of perceived gender roles within society.⁴⁵

By the 1950s, home economics was an established field in the United States, with the first organized meeting for home economists occurring over fifty years previously in 1899. As historian Megan J. Elias argues, in her work *Stir it Up*, the early years of professional home economics stemmed from a desire among women activists, many of whom were deeply integrated into the women's suffrage movement, to bring national recognition to the importance of housework and the skills needed to run an orderly and effective home. Likewise, these

⁴⁴Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁴⁵Stage and Vincenti, *Rethinking Home Economics*. For other works on home economics in the United States see Megan J. Elias, *Stir it Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Emily Matchar, *Homeward Bound: Why Women Are Embracing the New Domesticity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013); for a quick overview of scholarship on home economics see Megan J. Elias, “No Place Like Home: A Survey of American Home Economics History,” *History Compass*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (January 2011).

activists sought to promote the implementation of technology and methods of home management designed to ease the domestic workload of, primarily white, women. The push for home economics education was also closely tied to the Progressive Movement that drove many middle-class reform efforts in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁶ As historian Nancy Tomes discusses in her work, *The Gospel of Germs*, the Progressive era push for cleanliness and order, especially within the home, and immigrant homes more specifically, led to the implementation of home economics courses in public schools, leading to an increasing need for home science educators at both the high school and the collegiate level.⁴⁷

In the post-World War II era, however, many of the overarching goals of the home economics profession shifted. Elias notes how many home economists throughout the United States sought to become the “mediators of crisis” after the tumult of the Great Depression and World War II and the upheaval of traditional gender roles that came from the need for white, middle-class women in the workforce. Home economists of the post-World War II era, argues Elias, therefore sought to use home economics as a means of returning to what they perceived, accurately or not, to be the “normalcy” of the pre-Depression years. Likewise, home economists viewed their work as a vital stabilizing force within an American society increasingly anxious about perceived gender roles and mounting Cold War tensions.⁴⁸ UTK’s College of Home Economics worked amid this transition, and the UT-India program undoubtedly perpetuated separate spheres ideology. Yet, the women working within this program did not see themselves as limiting women or their political influence. Instead, Indian and American home economics

⁴⁶Elias, *Stir it Up*, 8-17.

⁴⁷Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs*, 135-54.

⁴⁸Elias, *Stir it Up*, 103-13.

instructors viewed their work and the work of women within the home as vital to maintaining the stability of American democratic ideology. Likewise, home economists at UTK worked to promote a similar type of stability abroad within the newly formed Indian democracy as a means of furthering the United States' political influence in South Asia.

East Tennessee and Appalachia have a particularly storied relationship with home economics. Home economics education played a vital role in Progressive-era attempts to reshape life in the rural South, and Tennessee specifically, during the first three decades of the twentieth century. These reformers, often middle-class and white, pointed to the systemic poverty and racial inequality in the South as particularly fertile ground for reform measures. The progressives targeted southern domestic life in particular for their reform measures hoping to fix southern “backwardness” at what they viewed as its source – the home. As such, reformers and southern colleges, including the University of Tennessee, promoted home economics extension programs throughout the South with Appalachia representing a particular stronghold for home economics extension and education.⁴⁹

Reformers viewed schools as the primary means by which they could transfer these programs and ideologies into the rural home. As historian Mary Hoffschwelle argues, home science education in Tennessee “assumed particular importance in the reformed rural school” as “such programs would transmit new standards of domestic production and consumption through girls to mothers at home.”⁵⁰ It is important to note, however, that these efforts to reform rural homes often led to the inegalitarian imposition of white, middle-class values and methods of

⁴⁹For more on the South's relationship with home economics see Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1900-1930* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1998).

⁵⁰Hoffschwelle, *Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community*, 6-7.

homemaking on rural Appalachian women, many of whom could not meet these standards as they spent much of their time laboring on family farms or running cottage industries.⁵¹

This emphasis on home economics education extended beyond secondary school. As early as 1914, the University of Tennessee offered courses in home economics designed to enhance the standard of living within rural homes, both black and white – although through often segregated institutions – in Tennessee and Appalachia. This focus on working with local households helped to strengthen the ties between the University of Tennessee and the local community, led to increased enrollment in home economics at UTK, and added to the overall strength of UT’s home economics program.⁵² This previous work with development programs and Progressive-era reforms in Appalachia may have led, in part, to UTK’s selection by TCM for work in India. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, these Appalachian reform efforts provided UTK’s College of Home Economics with valuable experience in development and extension work that they would later take abroad to India.

Home Science in India

Unlike in the United States, a national and professionalized home science organization in India was a relatively new venture in the 1950s. The very first meeting of the organizing body for Indian home scientists, the All India Home Science Association, occurred in 1951, a mere four years before Harris first arrived in India. Indeed, it was at this first meeting that Dr. Tara Bai approached her colleagues about requesting foreign aid for home science education.⁵³ Women in

⁵¹Hoffschwelle, *Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community*, 105-11.

⁵²Hoffschwelle, *Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community*, 95-96, 146-47; for more discussion on UTK’s College of Home Economics see DeJonge, *Through the Arch*.

⁵³For more on the history of Home Science in India see Mary Hancock, “Home Science and the Nationalization of Domesticity in Colonial India,” *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 35, no. 4 (2001); Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors,” 22-23.

India, however, had long organized to enact political and nationalist change within their country, even during the colonial era. One of the largest organizations of women, the All India Women's Conference (AIWC), first organized in 1927 after a group of influential Indian women, including Sarojini Naidu, a political activist and poet, and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the future first health minister of India, along with the Irish feminist Margaret Cousins, met to discuss women's issues in India and their growing resentment towards European colonialism. Over the course of six decades, the AIWC emphasized women's education through India's university system and promoted Indian nationalism, both during the nation's independence movement and in the post-independence years.⁵⁴

Through the efforts of organizations such as the All India Women's Conference and individual female leaders in the Indian independence and suffrage movements, the constitution of the newly independent Republic of India, written in 1947, granted universal adult suffrage and dictated that women receive equal political representation and equality under the law. Likewise, Indian women served in many of the highest political offices in the years following independence, including, most famously, Indira Gandhi, the third Prime Minister of India, who served from 1966 until her assassination in 1984. As historian Gail Pearson notes, however, for Indian women, citizenship and participation in government often meant having to balance rhetoric of equality and equal representation with ideas of Indian "traditionalism," or the notion that women were supposed to be "religiously dutiful wives, inheritors of an ancient mythic past, bearers of the virtues of a pre-colonial social order and preservers of caste and community."⁵⁵

⁵⁴Marie Sandell, "Regional versus International: Women's Activism and Organisational Spaces in the Inter-war Period," *The International History Review*, vol. 33, no. 4 (2011), 612, 616.

⁵⁵Gail Pearson, "Tradition, Law and the Female Suffrage Movement in India," in *Women's Suffrage in Asia: Gender, Nationalism, and Democracy*, Louise Edwards and Mina Roces, eds. (New York: Routledge Press, 2004), 195; for more discussion of women and political participation in India around the time of independence see

These ideas of traditionalism and citizenship, however, often took on classist tones as lower-class and lower-caste women often lacked the means to participate in national politics or assume these “traditional” Indian domestic roles.⁵⁶

With this long history of both women’s political activism and its links to Indian traditionalism in mind, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of the newly independent Republic of India, and the recently founded All India Home Science Association alike viewed home economics education as vital to building democratic Indian homes and perpetuating traditional, and often patriarchal, domestic practices. Furthermore, by promoting both democracy and tradition, Indian home scientists believed that their work would also foster the growth of a national Indian identity and a politically strong, independent India.⁵⁷ As historians have noted, however, home science in India often failed to account for the diversity of Indian domesticity. For example, anthropologist Kim Berry describes how, like home economics in Appalachia and the United States, home science in India and the model brought over from the United States through programs such as the UT-India home economics program often promoted middle- or upper-class ideas of domesticity that many lower-class Indian women would struggle to maintain or implement due to a lack of funds or access to the required time and materials needed to uphold middle-class standards of consumerism and domesticity. Furthermore, few lower-class and lower-caste families fit the “nuclear family” model, in which the man works outside the home

Eleanor Newbigin, *The Hindu Family and the Emergence of Modern India: Law, Citizenship, and Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁵⁶Pearson, “Tradition, Law and the Female Suffrage Movement in India,”

⁵⁷For a discussion of the role of home economics as a means of promoting democratic ideals, tradition, and nationalism in India see Kim Berry, “Lakshmi and the Scientific Housewife: A Transnational Account of Indian Women’s Development and Production of Indian Modernity,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 38, no. 11 (March 2003), 1061-65 and Kim Berry, “Developing Women: The Traffic in Ideas about Women and their Needs in Kangra, India,” in *Regional Modernities: The Cultural Politics of Development in India*, K. Sivaramakrishnan and Arun Agrawal, eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 75-85.

while the woman oversees domestic matters and cared for children. Home economists from both the United States and India largely overlooked the needs of poor Indian women who worked outside the home. Likewise, such programs often failed to address the concerns of women living in non-nuclear domestic situations such as joint-family homes, a system in which multiple generations live together in one household under the patriarchal rule of a father, or single-mothers working to support their family.⁵⁸

Jessie Harris, Gendered Nationalism, and Democratic Homes in India

The work of the UT-India home economics program fit squarely into the All India Home Science Association's goals to use home economics as a tool of nation-building in newly independent India. Likewise, Harris, her UTK colleagues, and the mostly male-run agencies backing them, firmly believed that improving home economics education in India and promoting distinct, Americanized, gender roles would encourage the development of democratic values vital, as they saw it, to the continuation of Indian nationhood and democracy. Although the UT-India program had political goals, they hoped to accomplish them by working within, rather than against, Indian and American separate-spheres ideology of the 1950s, which often mandated that women remain primarily in the home as keepers of kitchens, culture, tradition, and children alike. As such, the UTK-India program was not radical in the sense that it called for complete social equality between men and women with no distinction or division of labor. It did, however, recognize that homes, in both the United States and India were uniquely political spaces, in which parents first educated their children in political ideas or family members, regardless of gender, made political decisions of equal or even greater significance than those made in the halls of Washington or New Delhi.

⁵⁸Berry, "Lakshmi and the Scientific Housewife," 1058-59.

As historians of gender have noted, however, the “separate-spheres ideology” to which UTK’s home economics instructors held often existed more as an ideal than a reality. Women of all social classes participated in life and politics both inside and outside of the home while men, likewise, held influence and sway over domestic matters as well. Historian of gender such as Joan Scott break down the strict binary between the public male sphere and the domestic female sphere of influence arguing that these “fixed oppositions conceal the extent to which things presented as oppositional are, in fact, interdependent.”⁵⁹ In the case of home economics education during the 1950s, and the UT-India project more specifically, this interdependency between the concepts of equality and difference is especially evident as few of the women working with UTK’s home economics program in India fit the traditional heteronormative, gender stereotypes they often promoted. Jessie Harris herself never married and retired to live in Little Rock with a fellow home economics instructor, Ida Adelaide Anders, a possible sign of her homosexuality.⁶⁰ Likewise, few, if any, of the initial instructors who traveled to India with UTK appear to have been married at the time. These were all independent and well-educated women, several with PhDs in home economics or a related field, and many were previously faculty at the University of Tennessee or other southern institutions.⁶¹

Indeed, Jessie Harris herself was a fascinating character. Born the daughter of a Baptist minister in Washington, Georgia in 1888, Harris received her Associate’s degree at the

⁵⁹Joan W. Scott, “Deconstructing Equality-versus-Difference: Or the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism,” *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1 (Spring 1988), 37, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3177997>.

⁶⁰“Two Retired U-T Faculty Members Change Residence,” Press Release, author unknown, January 1954, CHER, AR.0396, box 2, folder, 4.

⁶¹“Orientation Program for Personnel Participating in the India Program Under the Contract between The United States Foreign Operations Administration and the University of Tennessee,” 14 September 1955, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 1; “India Asks, Gets U-T to Revamp Home Ec Program,” Press Release, author unknown, 21 July 1955, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48.

University of Tennessee in 1908 and a Bachelor's degree in Home Economics from Columbia University in 1912. She then worked in the Home Economics departments of several universities, including Sam Houston State Teacher's College, Texas A&M, and the University of Nebraska. Harris went on to receive her Master's degree in home economics from Columbia University in 1924 before returning to the University of Tennessee to serve as the director of the then School of Home Economics in 1925.⁶² As such, Harris participated in and oversaw many of UTK's local extension projects designed to reform rural homes in Tennessee, experience that would prove useful in her later home economics work abroad.

Harris, as evidenced in her speech at the American Council of Education, was no stranger to the use of home economics as a means to promote gendered nationalism. During the Second World War, Harris took a leave of absence from the University of Tennessee to serve as the Chief of Community Nutrition Division for the War Food Administration from 1943 to 1944. In this position, Harris helped to coordinate the nutritional services offered by various federal agencies and ensured that these programs met the needs of state and local communities as they became engrossed in defense manufacturing and wartime rationing.⁶³ Following the war, Harris took her home economics experience abroad as a consultant to the U.S. State Department's Home Economics Administration and its Cultural Exchange Program. During a seven-month trip to Bavaria, Germany in 1950, Harris studied and worked to reestablish home economics

⁶²“Jessie Wooten Harris, Dean: College of Home Economics, 1926-1958 University of Tennessee,” author unknown, CHER AR. 0396, box 2, folder 4, 1; Through her tenure at the University of Tennessee, Harris oversaw the transition of UTK's school of home economics to the College of Home Economics, eventually become Dean of the college in 1947.

⁶³Ilene Brown, “Jessie Wooten Harris” in *Seventy Significant Leaders*, Lena Bailey and Beulah Sellers Davis, eds., (Washington D.C.: American Home Economics Association, 1982) in CHER, AR.0396, box 2, folder 4, 22; For more information on the Nutrition Division of the War Food Administration see U.S. Congress, Senate, Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, *Legislative History of the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs*, 94th Cong., 2nd sess., 1976, 296-98.

programs in West German schools staffed by German teachers who received home science training from Texas Tech University.⁶⁴ These experiences using home economics to both support the United States' war effort and help to rebuild the German education system in the years following World War II gave Harris useful, first-hand experience with both home economics abroad and the use of home economics education as a form of gendered nation-building.

In late summer of 1954, a few months after Jessie Harris visited India, the University of Tennessee's College of Home Economics formally entered into a three-year, \$500,000 contract with the United States' Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) to work with seven Indian home science colleges under the purview of the Technical Cooperation Mission to India (TCM). Available sources do not explain precisely why the FOA chose to select Jessie Harris and the University of Tennessee for this program above all other American universities. That said, UTK's College of Home Economics was recognized as a forerunner among collegiate home economics programs in the 1950s.⁶⁵ Much of the strength of UT's home economics program came from its history working with home economics extension projects in Appalachia. It is a distinct possibility that the FOA knew of UTK's relationship with rural reforms in Appalachia and selected them for this reason. Whether or not the FOA selected UTK precisely because of this previous experience matters little, however. In either case, this work with development programs in Appalachia boosted UTK's national prominence in home economics education and gave UTK's instructors valuable experience upon which they could build their later work in India.

⁶⁴Ilene Brown, "Jessie Wootten Harris," 22; Ida Anders and Eloise Davison, "Jessie W. Harris, Former AHEA President, Retires," January 1959, CHER, AR.0396, box 2, folder 4, 51.

⁶⁵Brown, "Jessie Wooten Harris," 23; Virginia Stames Anagnnost, "Highlights in the History of the College of Home Economics," 10 March 1973, CHER, AR.0396, box 2, folder 7; DeJonge, *Through the Arch*.

The specific goals of the UTK-India partnership, based on Harris' recommendations from her survey of Indian home science programs, were to strengthen available undergraduate home science programs, improve instructor training through establishing or strengthening graduate home science education, improve educational opportunities for dietitians, nurses, and school lunch providers, and provide home science training advisors to TCM to aid in home science educational outreach in communities throughout India. In addition, the FOA also agreed to fund the further education of Indian home science instructors and students at the University of Tennessee.⁶⁶

For Harris and her colleagues, these specific goals would help to reach their broader, long-term goals of promoting democratic nationalism and economic development in India. In a statement released to the Knoxville newspapers in April of 1956, Dr. C. E. Brehm, President of UTK and previous director of the Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, discussed the progress of UTK's home economics work after he personally visited them in India. After praising the home economics team for their educational work along with their service as "excellent emissaries" to India on behalf of the United States, Brehm discussed the importance of home economics education for the purpose of training the manpower, or in this case

⁶⁶C. E. Brehm, "Proposed University of Tennessee Contract in Home Economics With Colleges in India Through Foreign Operations Administration," 6 October 1954, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48; Harris, "Report of Home Science Program in Selected Group of Indian Universities," 3-5; "Contract between The United States of America and The University of Tennessee Draft," 22 July 1954, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48; Correspondence F.W. Parker to J. W. Harris – Draft Airgram, "Subject: Home Economics Contract FOA-University of Tennessee" 26 July 1954, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48; "Orientation Program," 1. The six home science schools with which UTK's home economics department worked include the Women's Christian College, Queen Mary's College, Lady Wellington Teachers College, and the St. Christopher's Teaching College at the University of Madras along with Maharani's College for Women at Mysore University, Baroda University, and Lady Irwin College in New Delhi; For information on Brehm's service as the director of the Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service see Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, *'Proud Past...Promising Future' Celebrating 75 Years: A Narrative History of the Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 1914-1989*, Knoxville: Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 1989, 17, https://extension.tennessee.edu/Documents/ProudPastPromisingFuture_OCRed.pdf.

womanpower, needed “before the nation can develop its potentially rich material resources.”⁶⁷

The importance of home economics went beyond material resources, however. Brehm went on to outline his hope that home economics education in India will also foster a better cultural understanding and respect between the two nations. As he notes, “This technical aid program is helping the Indian people to understand our way of life. It is in keeping with the principles of democracy, which is dependent on the education and knowledge of great masses of the population.”⁶⁸ To Brehm, the development of this cross cultural relationship, built, in part, through sharing, discussing, and encouraging westernized gender roles and ideology would build a strategic relationship between the United States and India crucial to the perpetuation of U.S. influence in South Asia during the Cold War. As Brehm’s speech illustrates, leaders of the UT-India home economics program viewed their work educating women in childcare and domestic skills as more than just improving personal family lives, but as integral to the economic and political future of the Indian nation-state and American international political power.

Indeed, Brehm, Harris, and the UTK team understood well the political importance of strengthening the relationship between the United States and India. As a recently independent nation and as the world’s most populous democracy – a point mentioned time and time again by both Americans and Indians working with this program – India represented a key battleground of Cold War political maneuvering between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both powers hoped to sway India in their political direction through the use of development programs such as

⁶⁷C. E. Brehm, “Statement by Dr. C. E. Brehm, President, University of Tennessee, Regarding His Recent Visit to India,” 4 April 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 2.

⁶⁸Brehm, “Statement by Dr. C. E. Brehm,” 3.

those implemented by University of Tennessee.⁶⁹

Recognizing India as a “strategic country,” Harris and other university administrators, including Dr. C. E. Brehm, the president of the University of Tennessee, often touted their belief that home science education was essential to strengthening India’s republican government and promoting the ideas of democratic citizenship. *Democracy in the Home*, a book published in 1954 by Christine Beasley, a professor of home economics at the University of Tennessee, offers insight into how Brehm and UTK’s home economics faculty believed this process worked. As she describes, proper home economics education encouraged democratic family relationships built on mutual respect for each individual within the home. In turn, this respect for all members of the household, promoted a mutual respect for the lives and ideas of all citizens, an essential tenet of democratic ideology. In other words, democratic family ideals taught through proper home economics education created “a more strongly democratic nation.”⁷⁰

Before the UT-India program could build democratic Indian homes, however, Harris and her colleagues had to first help train the next generation of home science instructors in India. Jessie Harris first outlined this need in her initial report on home science colleges written after her July 1954 visit, in which she called for more “young women in India, trained to teach Home Science in such schools.”⁷¹ To demonstrate this need, Harris explained how graduates of Lady Irwin College, an all-women’s college in New Delhi, “are in such demand” that the institution requested American aid to adequately train the number of teachers necessary to sate this

⁶⁹David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 7-11, 37-50; Benjamin Robert Siegel, *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 189-200.

⁷⁰Christine Beasley, *Democracy in the Home* (New York: Association Press, 1954), 12, 25.

⁷¹Harris, “Report of Home Science Program,” 5.

increasing desire for home science education throughout India.⁷² As Harris argued, only through training the staff required to meet this demand can “Home Science...make a major contribution to the improvement of standards of living in India.”⁷³

In addition to educating more home science instructors to teach in Indian schools, UTK’s College of Home Economics hoped to use home economics education to strengthen the Indian democratic system. Dr. C. E. Brehm, in a statement to local newspapers in Knoxville, described the UT-India program’s overarching mission as an attempt “to achieve better living for the masses, a major goal of Democracy.”⁷⁴ As this passage demonstrates, Brehm recognized the opportunity presented to the United States by India’s invitation to the FOA. By linking ideas of democracy with the program’s other goal to improve Indian standards of living, UTK and the College of Home Economics could use the home, which Beasley describes as the “very seedbed” of democratic thought, as a means to strengthen both private and public belief in Indian democratic ideology.⁷⁵

Furthermore, UTK administrators and home economics faculty also believed that home science education in India would foster a sense of cultural understanding and respect between the two nations. For example, Brehm considered cultural exchange to be effective in both encouraging friendly relations and promoting democratic ideals. As he notes, “This technical aid program is helping the Indian people to understand our way of life. It is in keeping with the principles of democracy, which is dependent on the education and knowledge of great masses of

⁷²Harris, “Report of Home Science Program,” 11.

⁷³Harris, “Report of Home Science Programs,” 2.

⁷⁴Brehm, “Proposed University of Tennessee Contract,” 2.

⁷⁵Beasley, “Democracy in the Home,” 25.

the population.”⁷⁶ To Brehm and his colleagues, the development of this cross-cultural relationship, built, in part, through the sharing of western home economics practices with Indian home science educators, would help to build a strategic relationship between the United States and India critical to the future strength of the Indian democracy.

It is also important to remember the political aims of these programs. By advocating for a democratic home, which, despite claiming to promote egalitarian domestic roles, still dictated that a woman’s place was in the home, these programs offered a counterexample to Soviet gender roles that endorsed, at least in rhetoric, that men and women participated equally in productive labor.⁷⁷ Americans like Brehm and Harris hoped that the perpetuation of separate spheres ideology would appeal to Indian women, particularly those of the middle class, many of whom still viewed women as both equal participants in democratic politics and keepers of tradition, and by doing so, further American influence in South Asia.

Home Science and Indian Nationalism

UTK’s Indian counterparts likewise discussed the development of home economics education as essential to building a strong, independent India. Home science students who received their master’s degrees at the University of Tennessee through the UT-India program often discussed the importance of home science as a tool of nation-building in their writings. For example, Susheela Dantiyagi, in her master’s thesis discussing the possible implementation of a post-graduate home science education program at Lady Irwin College in New Delhi, analyzed the importance of higher education for women in India. Dantiyagi argued, in a section titled, “Home Science – An Instrument for Social Change” that for India to become a successful and

⁷⁶Brehm, “Statement by Dr. C. E. Brehm,” 3.

⁷⁷Barbara Alpern Engel, “Women in Russia and the Soviet Union,” *Signs*, vol. 12, no. 4 (Summer 1987) pp. 781-96.

thriving nation, it would require more than just the political or economic aid offered by other contemporary development programs.⁷⁸ The foundation for national success since “time immemorial,” Dantiyagi wrote, was found, not in government buildings, banks, or fields, but in the home, for “it is the home that sets the standards for society and for the nation.”⁷⁹ To Dantiyagi, such a home would combine democratic ideas in which the family saw the women as vital to the success of the home, an equal member of the family, a full citizen under Indian law, and a keeper of the Indian traditions that, in tandem with democratic ideals, would promote Indian nationalism – daunting goals that many women, especially lower-class and lower-caste women, would struggle to obtain.⁸⁰

Similarly, Bani Sen, in her UTK thesis on home science education in secondary schools in West Bengal, outlined the aspects of home economics that most “intrinsically correlated to national development,” namely household management, food and nutrition, health and home nursing and child rearing.⁸¹ Working her way through each of these four points individually, Sen discussed how educating high school girls in these skills could practically and effectively address issues of poverty, political turmoil after the partition of India and Pakistan, deficient housing, large-scale unemployment and other difficulties facing India in the late ‘50s and early ‘60s.⁸² To

⁷⁸For descriptions of other such development programs in India see, Klingensmith, *‘One Valley and a Thousand;’* Engerman, *The Price of Aid*; David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and Construction of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); Benjamin Siegel, *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

⁷⁹Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors,” 16.

⁸⁰Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors.”

⁸¹Bani Sen, “Analysis of the Second Five Year Plan of India With Implications for the Home Science Program in Higher Secondary Schools (Multipurpose) with Special Reference to West Bengal State,” Master’s Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1960, 12.

⁸²Sen, “Analysis of the Second Five Year Plan,” 3-6.

both Dantiyagi and Sen, securing the foundation of the home through home science education in fields such as scientific home management, childcare, and nutrition would serve India as much, if not more, than the more commonly discussed political or economic reforms of the era.

While it is difficult to tell the extent to which Dantiyagi, Sen, and their classmates personally believed in this nationalist rhetoric before joining the UT-India program or whether this belief stemmed from their workings with American instructors, their writings do point to a broader belief among Indian politicians that home economics encouraged a civically-minded, democratic population in India. Dantiyagi noted how as early as 1951, when Indian home scientists first approached the government of India to request foreign aid in implementing and improving home science education, the government recognized the “need for Home Economics for national progress” and agreed to seek out aid.⁸³

Indian politicians and women of the Home Science Association of India also drew the connection between home science education and the establishment of democratic citizenship. In a speech at the Home Science Association’s second biennial conference, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, India’s first Minister of Health, encouraged home science education for women for the good of Indian democracy. She argued that “homes, then, must have enlightened leadership, where women, the natural guardians of the home, can interpret in their daily lives, the very best for which the constitution of the new India stands.”⁸⁴ Many Indian and American government officials, college administrators, home economics instructors, and students shared the belief, although such beliefs often overlooked the realities of life for many lower-class Indian women,

⁸³Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors to Be Considered,” 23.

⁸⁴Speech by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur from “Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference, Home Science Association of India, September, 1954, at Lady Irwin College, New Delhi,” quoted in Janaky Tucker Paul, “Exploration of Factors Involved in Bringing About a Closer Relationship Between the Home Science Program in Madras, South India, and Family Living,” Master’s thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1957, 6-7.

that home economics represented an integral space in which primarily middle-class wives and mothers promoted democratic ideals, preserved Indian traditions, and confronted the economic and political difficulties facing India in the years following its independence. This shared belief in the power of home science as a means of democratic nation-building formed the foundation upon which UTK and home science educators based and continued to develop their relationship.

This is not to say that Indian and American participants in the UT-India program always saw eye to eye. With demand for home science education in India far exceeding the number of available educators, Dr. A. R. Irawathy, the principal of Queen Mary's College in Madras, wrote to Brehm requesting that UTK "help us in the way we want" and provide more funding for the graduate education in India rather than continuing to send graduate students to take classes in Tennessee.⁸⁵ As such, Dr. Irawathy requested that UTK work to alter their TCM contract to allow for more American instructors to come to India and run upper-level graduate courses for thirty to forty students rather than send one or two Indian students to the University of Tennessee for graduate education.

UTK had grievances of their own. That same year, Jessie Harris exchanged heated correspondence with Dr. Ralph W. Ruffner, the Chief Educational Advisor for TCM, after the Government of India denied UTK's appointment of Ms. Margaret L. Browder as the coordinator for the program on the ground in India, a position UTK titled the "Chief of Party," because she did not have her doctorate. While it is difficult to know exactly why the Indian government denied Browder, it perhaps stemmed from their desire to expand the graduate programs of several women's colleges and universities throughout India and wanted to work with a Chief of Party who had a terminal degree and extensive graduate experience. Debates over these issues

⁸⁵Correspondence A. R. Irawathy to C. E. Brehm, 14 February 1957, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 1.

spanned the next several months, as any solution had to please not only Irawathy, Harris, and Ruffner, but the Indian Ministries of Finance and Education, TCM, and the University of Tennessee as well.⁸⁶ In the end, cooler heads did prevail, and UTK agreed to place more emphasis on teaching graduate courses in home economics in India while continuing to educate selected students in Tennessee. Likewise, while Browder never served as Chief of Party, Harris did name her coordinator over the UT-India program in 1958.⁸⁷

Cultural Exchange

Save for these squabbles, relations between India and UTK's home economics department appeared to go quite smoothly throughout the program. In fact, this shared idea of home economics as an essential tool for nation-building enabled American and Indian women to build cross-cultural relationships and, by extent, foster friendly relationships between the United States and India. Outlining the political and cultural benefit of this exchange, Brehm, in another statement to local Knoxville newspapers, argued that the "big problem" of American Cold War foreign policy was that "we do not understand them, and they do not understand us." To Brehm and his UTK counterparts, fostering this relationship between UTK and India would promote "better understanding and better relationships between the United States and these foreign nations."⁸⁸

While Brehm's rhetoric about the importance of cultural exchange may have been hot air to appeal to local Knoxvilleans, the women working in India seemed to take cultural exchange seriously and viewed such exchanges as vital to building relationships with their Indian

⁸⁶ Correspondence Harris to Ralph W. Ruffner, 2 October 1957, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48; Correspondence Ruffner to Harris, 9 October 1957, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48.

⁸⁷ Correspondence Harris to Brehm, 30 June 1958, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48; Statement to Newspapers, "Miss Browder to Head U-T's India Project," 22 September 1958, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48.

⁸⁸ Brehm, "Statement to Newspapers," 3.

counterparts and foster pro-American sentiment in India. Participants in the UT-India program actively sought opportunities to participate in cultural exchange through their home economics work in both East Tennessee and India. Beyond learning westernized styles of domestic science and how to teach it from their graduate courses at UTK, Indian home economics educators studying in Tennessee often sought experiences for cultural exchange outside of school. This exchange often involved visits to American homes or home economic clubs. In one meeting, for example, Virginia Boswell, a professor at UTK, took four Indian women to the Everett Hill Home Demonstration Club in Knoxville to meet with a group of American women. While it is unclear exactly what these women spoke about, we do know that both groups asked and answered questions regarding their respective cultures, including how to make and wear a traditional Indian sari. Afterward, the women exchanged gifts of coins, silver spoons, and a miniature elephant carved out of ivory.⁸⁹

Just as Indian women working and studying in Tennessee experienced Appalachian culture and home science practices, practices often deeply steeped in white patriarchal ideology, American educators learned from their time in India. In traveling throughout India, attending conferences and visiting various schools of home economics, the American representatives from UTK had plenty of opportunities to experience and learn from the unique culture of India so that they may better adapt their programs to fit Indian culture and promote friendly relations between themselves and their Indian colleagues. In one such instance, Berenice Mallory, UTK's specialist in instructor education, and Claire Gilbert, a teacher in extension methods and home management, had the opportunity to celebrate and experience Holi, a Hindu festival of Spring, while working at Lady Irwin College in New Delhi. During the celebration Americans with

⁸⁹Bess Baugh, "Blount Chatter," n.d., newspaper clipping included in CHER, AR. 0396, box 2, folder 8.

whom they were staying warned Mallory and Gilbert against going into the streets for fear that local children would soak them with dyed water or smear them with brightly colored paint as is the custom during Holi. Mallory and Gilbert, nevertheless, ventured out to go to a local hair salon. Although the first part of their trip was largely uneventful, they did see several men and women smeared with the bright paint. Their return journey, however, proved much more exciting. Mallory recounted, in a letter to her UTK colleagues, how local children, stationed on almost every block, mischievously, but harmlessly, soaked the car with squirt guns filled with colored water.⁹⁰

Mallory continued on in her letter to recount, in detail, the historical, cultural, and religious significance of Holi celebrations for the Indian people. Delving into Indian mythology, Mallory explained to her UTK colleagues several possible origins of the festival. For example, she described how, in some traditions, Holi celebrations symbolize the death of winter in remembrance of the god Krishna's defeat of a demoness, Putana. She then noted the possible origins of several other Holi traditions, including a myth that describes how Shiva killed the Hindu god of love, Kama, reducing him to a pile of ash. This burning of Kama, according to Mallory, could serve as the possible origin of the Holi bonfire tradition.

In describing these traditions and myths, Mallory does more than tell exciting stories to her friends in Tennessee. She ends her letter about Holi with the following: "Taking part in and learning about the basis for holidays, such as Holi, helps us to understand better this fascinating country in which we have the privilege to be for a short time."⁹¹ Although having their car squirted with dyed water may have inconvenienced Mallory and Gilbert, they and their UTK

⁹⁰Berenice Mallory, "U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12," 10 April 1956, UTOPR, AR. 0006, box 20, folder 48, 1; For descriptions of Mallory's and Gilbert's designated roles in India see, Orientation Program," 1.

⁹¹Mallory, "U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12," 2.

colleagues understood that only through experiencing, researching, and truly understanding Indian tradition and culture could they build a reciprocal and sympathetic partnership between the United States and India.

While UTK instructors certainly learned much from Indian culture through festivals and holidays, most cross-cultural exchange occurred through their day-to-day efforts in India. Working with Indian instructors to develop curricula, teaching classes at various home science colleges, and attending and giving lectures on home economics and nutrition all taught American instructors valuable lessons and gave them needed experience in the particulars of home science education in India and how cultural practices influenced life in an Indian home. Furthermore, between their time working and traveling from one home science school to another, instructors from UTK often visited Hindu temples, toured gardens, and even studied Hindi at the American Embassy.⁹² Such lessons in both Indian cultural practices and domestic life often made the UTK faculty more sympathetic to the adaptation of Americanized home economics initiatives to fit Indian needs, something I will discuss in more detail later.

While living in India, American women had to manage their home as well. As a result, these Tennessee women learned through first-hand experience some of the difficulties, particularities, and rewards of running a home in India, and they were not always complimentary. For instance, Mary Rachel Armstrong, assigned to overseeing institutional administration for the Women's Christian College in Madras, discussed the difficulty, but necessity, of managing a household staff of five people, including a cook, a sweeper, a gardener, and a laundryman. Armstrong believed that, despite the expense, "these people are all necessary in India because all means of working are so horribly inconvenient – impossible to run house

⁹²Mary Rachel Armstrong, "U.T./India Staff Letter Number 11," 10 April 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48, 4; "Orientation Program," 1.

from work and cook, keep house, etc.” Likewise, she described how running a home under such circumstances took “more time, more energy, more patience, and more money than [in America].”⁹³ As these quotes help to demonstrate, Armstrong and her UTK colleagues occasionally criticized the domestic situation in India, but understood that they often had to work within this system rather than alter it completely. Furthermore, as with other cultural experiences, the practice of employing and managing their own household staff offered these American women a glimpse into home life for a middle-class woman in India.

Beyond running their own home, the UTK home economics team also took opportunities to stay with Indian families, observe and learn from them, and experience their domestic culture. In one instance, Nell Logan, another specialist in teacher education at St. Christopher’s Teachers College in Madras, Mary Rachel Armstrong, and Dr. Lorna Gassett, who specialized in home management and textiles, visited the home of a Miss Vatsala, a home science teacher at Lady Willington Teachers College. Vatsala’s family still retained the traditional Hindu joint-family system, in which a large extended family, made up of several generations, lived together under the patriarchal rule of a father or grandfather – a familial structure of great interest and curiosity to Logan, Gassett, and Armstrong.⁹⁴

After a 3:00 A.M start on the morning of April 16th, 1956, Vatsala, Logan, Gassett, and Armstrong traveled by car to Tanjore from Mysore, about a 200-mile trip, sharing the road with cattle carts and herds of goats, sheep, ducks, and other livestock. Alternating between stopping for cattle to cross and proceeding at a breakneck pace with only a reassurance from their driver

⁹³Mary Rachel Armstrong, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 11,” 4-5.

⁹⁴Eleanor Newbiggin, *The Hindu Family and the Emergence of Modern India: Law, Citizenship, and Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 16; Nell Logan, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12,” 22 April 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 28, 4-5.

that “the rest was in the hands of the gods” to comfort them, the women proceeded along the route for several days. Along the way, the group stopped at several temples and holy sites, in a set itinerary planned by Vatsala’s family. At these sites, the four women observed several religious ceremonies, instructed by Vatsala in proper respectful behavior and conduct. With Vatsala’s guidance, Logan noted that the temple priest allowed them to participate in the traditional prayer ceremony of *puja*, take some sacred flowers, and look inside the temple itself, practices not typically accessible to tourists.⁹⁵

When the women finally arrived in Tanjore, Vatsala’s family, friends, and neighbors, greeted them warmly. Logan commented quite extensively in her letter, in a tone more comical than critical, about the unique experience of living in a communal joint-family household. Logan describes how under traditional Hindu custom, Vatsala’s father, as the oldest son, would typically run the household, but as her father was currently working and living in Madras, her uncle, a lawyer, “presid[ed] in his absence.”⁹⁶ After all the women bathed together in the same tub, ate without the use of utensils, and conversed with several young male family members and neighbors, they all slept outside on bed-rolls, benches, and palates on one side of the veranda with more of Vatsala’s family members occupying the other half. Demonstrating this lack of privacy, Logan described how just as they got into their beds, Vatsala brought her youngest uncle to meet them. Logan and Armstrong introduced themselves to him with “Mary Rachel in her short gown, me in my short pajamas” – quite scandalous for the 1950s. Vatsala likewise found the sharing of her culture with her colleagues significant. When asked by her aunts and

⁹⁵Logan, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12,” 5-6.

⁹⁶Logan, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12,” 6.

uncles why she treated her American guests as she would any other family member, Vatsala explained that she “want[ed] them to live as we do.”

The women returned to Madras after several days, via several stops: first to a temple, then to Annamalai University to meet with a family friend working there as a zoology professor, and lastly to the lignite mines in Neiveli. There they observed the mining operation, noting, interestingly, that it reminded them of a Tennessee Valley Authority dam as, “there was so much similarity in things being done.” After their arrival home in Madras, Logan wrote her letter and summed up her overall experience with this family. Logan and her colleagues seemed to legitimately enjoy their time with Vatsala’s family. Save for one comment about Vatsala not taking many trips without her family as “women are quite protected,” Logan did not criticize the patriarchal or communal nature of the joint-family lifestyle.⁹⁷ Rather, she commented extensively on the generosity and kindness that Vatsala’s family showed her and the fellow Americans visiting with her, marveling at the “hospitality we had received everywhere,” despite these women being “three westerners hardly known to any one of these kind people.” Logan also expressed her gratefulness that “the hearts, as well as the home, of a strict orthodox Hindu family had been opened to us,” and that there was, “hardly a rule in the book that hadn’t been broken in order for us to have a better understanding of religion and of family life in the Hindu society.”⁹⁸

As her letter suggests, home economics instructors from both Tennessee and India firmly believed these visits and moments for cultural exchange, whether they be visits to temples, understanding holidays and traditions, and experiencing traditional living situations, were of vital importance to the success of the UT-India program and, by extent, the growth of a democratic

⁹⁷Logan, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12,” 4.

⁹⁸Logan, “U.T./India Staff Letter Number 12,” 6, 8.

India sympathetic to the United States and the West. Furthermore, by focusing on the openness and adaptive nature of the joint-family system rather than the patriarchal and potentially oppressive system, Logan demonstrates, in part, some of the openness towards diverse Indian domestic institutions and willingness to work within these systems, not overthrow them entirely, in their efforts to promote Americanized ideas of home economics and democratic ideology.

Hybridized Home Science

This willingness to share and understand their respective cultures led to a hybridization of home economics based on American systems and institutions with necessary adaptations that allowed such methods to fit within Indian domestic culture and religion. Close collaboration between UTK and Indian home science instructors created programs based on, as one UTK pamphlet describes “an Indian pattern” that was “realistic and functional.”⁹⁹ Similarly, a release to Knoxville newspapers discusses how these UT programs, were “tested and remodeled to meet India’s specific needs through visits of teachers and advanced students of that country to U-T and through the familiarity gained by on-the-spot observations of the U-T/India staff.”¹⁰⁰

In India, this “remodeling” often took the form of adapting American home science textbooks to fit Indian family dynamics and gender norms, implementing nutritional standards that worked within traditional Indian diets, integrating western textiles, washing, and coloring techniques to Indian clothing, and writing literature specific to domestic science in India. These educational programs also focused on extension projects designed to take these adapted practices to Indian villagers living in rural areas. Furthermore, the UT-India program helped to develop

⁹⁹*UT-India Home Science Program 6*; Margaret Fedde, “Tennessee Women In India Report History in Making,” 7 March 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48.

¹⁰⁰Margaret Fedde, “Tennessee Women In India Report History in Making,” 7 March 1956, UTOPR, AR.0006, box 20, folder 48.

master's degree programs at four Indian universities: The Universities of Madras, Delhi, Baroda, and Mysore. Through these programs, American and Indian educators worked together to encourage further research in "the adequacy of [vegetarian] diets, management of family resources, durability of Indian fabrics, [and] the development of children within the Indian family setting," which "if planned cooperatively," could contribute to "the total research programs of India."¹⁰¹ In promoting this future cooperative research, UTK home economics instructors hoped to perpetuate these hybridized home science initiatives even after the end of the UT-India program.

This melding of East and West was evident most noticeably through the master's theses written by Indian students studying at the University of Tennessee.¹⁰² Although these students wrote their theses with their instructors at UTK in mind, they do not promote fully Americanized models of home economics as one might expect. Rather, they very much illustrate this fusion of western educational models with the cultural sensitivity needed for their implementation in India, demonstrating, in many ways, the respect and understanding UTK home economics instructors had for Indian domestic life and culture.

Janaky Tucker Paul, for example, wrote her thesis on how best to implement home science programs in secondary schools in Madras. These programs, Paul argued, should focus on improving family life in India through practical implementation of scientific methods of home management while, "giving special attention to those traditions and customs which are powerful factors in guiding families" in India, harkening back to the dual responsibilities of Indian women

¹⁰¹UT-India Home Science Program," 9-13, 11.

¹⁰²Beyond blurring the divide between the "developing" and the "developed" world, this hybridization of East and West also challenges Edward Said's concept of orientalism and the idea that the West and the East exist as binary "others" and define themselves in contrast to each other. Rather, the relationship between the East and the West is in reality a much more fluid relationship. For more see, Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978).

as both full democratic citizens and keepers of Hindu traditions.¹⁰³ This is not to say that Paul was not critical of Indian cultural practices relating to the home. She spent a great deal of time discussing how the joint-family system and other standard home practices in India led to the repression of women. As she examines, “the most important result of the patriarchal type of family...was the complete subjection of women.”¹⁰⁴ Yet, to Paul, home science education for women at both the high school and college level was helping to break down some of these oppressive systems and help “girls be brighter, happier individuals, and potential builders of happy homes with improved ways of living” but only as long as it mirrors “more closely to actual family living” conditions in India.¹⁰⁵

As Paul noted, these “actual” living conditions took many forms. Paul, in her thesis, described the diversity among Indian homes, each shaped by language, religion, and caste, and emphasized teaching methods that promoted an individualized home economics education. Such personalized learning enabled students and their families to implement scientific home management without foregoing their unique traditions. Paul based her educational system on what she described as “democratic principles” that would consider “individuals and group welfare [as] interdependent.” As such, this more individualized methodology would enable students to practically apply what they learned through home science education to circumstances particular to the customs and traditions of their religion or social standing – a necessity in a

¹⁰³Paul, “Exploration of Factors Involved in Bringing About a Closer Relationship Between the Home Science Program in Madras,” 5.

¹⁰⁴Paul, “Exploration of Factors Involved in Bringing About a Closer Relationship Between the Home Science Program in Madras,” 40.

¹⁰⁵ Paul, “Exploration of Factors Involved in Bringing About a Closer Relationship Between the Home Science Program in Madras,” 41.

country as culturally diverse as India.¹⁰⁶

Others wrote of more technical methods of adapting Americanized home science techniques for India. Usha Navele, for instance, wrote her thesis on the implementation of home management houses at the Central Institute of Home Science in Bangalore, India. These houses, commonly used in home economics programs in the United States, were fully stocked homes in which several students would live and maintain for a semester of course credit. In adapting these homes to the Central Institute, Navele recommended several changes. For one, she encouraged the hiring of domestic servants to aid the students in their care of the house, a feature not typically included in U.S. programs. Navele argued that providing this hired help would give “the students valuable experience in planning, directing, guiding and coordinating the work of others,” a skill her American faculty in India by then knew well.¹⁰⁷ Likewise, Navele made note that the only electrical appliances available in the home would be a hotplate and an iron, the few available in a typical middle-class Indian home. Instructors would stock the rest of the house with appliances more common in India, including kerosene and charcoal stoves.¹⁰⁸

Similarly, in her detailed and technical thesis on ways to improve cooking time for a traditional vegetarian meal based on research conducted by scientists in the United States, Rathnam C. Sundaram sought to develop a new kitchen layout for a more efficient Indian home. Like Navele, Sundaram suggested technical alterations to American systems to better fit Indian

¹⁰⁶Paul, “Exploration of Factors Involved in Bringing About a Closer Relationship Between the Home Science Program in Madras,” 60, 61-81.

¹⁰⁷Usha Navele, “A Study of Selected Home Management Houses in India and the United States with Recommendations for a Home Management House in the Central Institute of Home Science, Bangalore, India,” Master’s Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1962, 1-5, 41.

¹⁰⁸Navele, “A Study of Selected Home Management Houses,” 38.

needs, including arranging spaces to allow for servants, accounting for a possible lack of running water, and adjusting the heights of cabinets for the smaller average stature of Indian women.¹⁰⁹

Beyond mere technical alterations, the implementation of home economics programs took on a spiritual significance for Susheela Dantiyagi in her thesis on developing a post-graduate program for home science education at Lady Irwin College. Building upon the notion that “no nation is healthy that parts company with its traditions,” Dantiyagi argued that the pursuit of higher education, especially education in home science, should promote the spiritual ideas of Dharma and tolerance.¹¹⁰ Universities, therefore, must “stand for the ideals of tolerance” and work towards “the transmission of the common cultural heritage toward common citizenship” if they wish to fully align with the tenets of Dharma.¹¹¹

While most of her thesis reads as a scientific analysis of home economics education in both the United States and India, Dantiyagi used the tenets of Dharma, tolerance, unity, and Hindu teachings more generally to form the foundation of her thesis. For example, Dantiyagi advocated for classes within home science curricula that taught women how to promote successful inter-personal relationships between themselves and other members of their family, in particular, the preparation of young women for the “moments of uncertainty, doubt, stress and strain,” that came with arranged marriages.¹¹² Dantiyagi then quoted an excerpt from *The Mahabharata*, an epic poem important to the Hindu faith, detailing the ideal husband-wife relationship, one not too unfamiliar to her 1950s instructors, and a relationship which these home

¹⁰⁹Rathnam C. Sundaram, “The Effect of Applying Certain Work Simplification Techniques on Preparing a Simple South-Indian Vegetarian Meal,” Master’s Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1959, 7-14, 34-35.

¹¹⁰Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors to Be Considered,” 10, 12-14.

¹¹¹Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of the Factors to Be Considered,” 14-15.

¹¹²Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of the Factors to Be Considered,” 49.

economics classes would help to promote. In the very next paragraph, Dantiyagi went on to describe how a course in family relationships designed to build the ideal marriage outlined by *The Mahabharata* also promoted good democratic citizenship. As she noted: “A course in family relationships can help young people with practical suggestions for future patterns for democratic living in the home.” Dantiyagi then provided a quote from Christine Beasley’s *Democracy in the Home*, outlining the importance of a “satisfying” home life to truly achieve the “inalienable right to life, love, and the pursuit of happiness.”¹¹³ By quoting both *The Mahabharata* and Beasley’s rendition of the Declaration of Independence within the same conversation, Dantiyagi’s work demonstrates, in practice, this hybridization of western home economic principles and Indian cultural practices for the promotion of democratic ideals.

Although the UT-India program officially ended in 1962 when TCM failed to renew their independent contract with the College of Home Economics, instead choosing to consolidate the UT-India home science program with the College of Agriculture work, the legacy of this international and intercultural relationship continued. Several home economics consultants, including Dr. Laura Odland and Ms. Eloise Davison, continued to work in India at various institutions through TCM’s contract with UTK’s College of Agriculture.¹¹⁴ While this work through the College of Agriculture was not as extensive as the work done through the separate home economics contract, it nevertheless continued this relationship between the University of Tennessee and home science colleges in India into the 1970s.

¹¹³Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors to Be Considered,” 50; Christine Beasley, *Democracy in the Home*, quoted in Dantiyagi, “An Exploration of Factors to Be Considered,” 51.

¹¹⁴Lura M. Odland, “The Dean’s Letter: Alumnae Contribute to College Prestige, UT-India Advances,” *The University of Tennessee College of Home Economics Alumnae Newsletter*, June 1961, CHER, AR.0396, box 3, folder 5; Correspondence Rajammal P. Devadas to Lewis H. Dickson, 12 November 1971, Agency for International Development and College of Agriculture Records, AR. 0387, box 7, folder 2, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Special Collections, Knoxville, Tennessee, hereafter referred to as AIDCAR; Correspondence N.D. Peacock to E. J. Long, 26 June 1961, AIDCAR, AR. 0387, box 3, folder 12.

Furthermore, many of the twenty-six students who studied at the University of Tennessee later earned doctorates in home science from universities in India and worked in administrative positions in colleges and universities throughout India. Dr. Lakshmi Santa and Dr. K. Nirmala Thyagarajan, for instance, both graduated with a Master of Science from Tennessee in 1961 and worked as the Dean of Home Science Faculty at Sri Avinashilingam Deemed University in Coimbatore and Principal of Bharathi Women's College in Madras respectively. Other UT-India students went on to serve in political positions, including Dr. Selvie Das, who received her bachelor's degree from UT in 1957 and, after presiding as the President of the University of Mysore, served as a member of the Union Public Service Commission in New Delhi.¹¹⁵

This shared belief in gendered nationalism and the vital role home economics played in crafting a stable, democratic Indian home along with a strong Indian nation laid the foundation for cross-cultural interactions in both India and the United States that fundamentally shaped the outcomes of the UT-India program. Through community meetings in Knoxville to visiting temples in Tanjore to learning about Holi celebrations and experiencing life within a joint family home, American and Indian home science educators used these daily connections to build stronger and friendlier relations between coworkers in the hopes that such relationships would extend to a political alliance between India and the United States as well.

But more than this, these efforts to share and learn from cross-cultural experiences fostered the implementation of a home science educational curriculum uniquely adapted to the domestic culture and religious life of India. This hybridization of eastern and western home science education took many forms, including applying western methods of textile care to traditional Indian cloth, employing American scientific approaches to food preparation in

¹¹⁵DeJonge, *Through the Arch*, 30.

cooking a traditional vegetarian meal, or discussing how courses on familial relationships can bring students the promises of both *The Mahabharata* and the Declaration of Independence. By building their relationship on shared ideas of nation-building and cultural exchange, home economics instructors from India and East Tennessee trained a new generation of women in home science practices, influenced by and sympathetic to the West, but undoubtedly Indian.

Chapter III

Exporting Appalachia

Over a year after Jessie Harris first stepped off her plane in India, her colleague, Dr. Erven J. Long, group leader of the signed contract between TCM and the University of Tennessee's College of Agriculture, followed in her footsteps. In January of 1956, UTK's Department of Agriculture entered into another agreement with TCM as one of five land-grant universities selected for a cooperative mission to work with agricultural and veterinary schools throughout India, the first in a series contracts that would span until 1972, a total of seventeen years.¹¹⁶ Dividing the country into geographic regions, TCM tasked the University of Tennessee with overseeing development in Region V, located in southern India, with most work focused on the countryside surrounding the cities of Madras and Mysore.¹¹⁷ The budget provided by TCM allocated the money to hire six advisors of various specialties including agronomy, agricultural economics, and agricultural extension. These advisors, under the direction of the group leader Erven Long, arrived in India in mid-to-late 1956 to begin their work with the seventeen agricultural and veterinary schools in the region.¹¹⁸

To an even greater extent than the College of Home Economics, faculty working with the College of Agriculture, such as Long, drew connections between the agricultural situation in India and that in Appalachia. Such comparisons were not necessarily between the physical

¹¹⁶Correspondence from McLeod to Middaugh, 13 Jan 1956, AR.0387, box 10, folder 50, Agency for International Development College of Agriculture Records, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville, Tennessee (hereafter referred to as AIDCAR); "Time Schedule on Negotiation of ICA Regional Contract (India)," unknown author, 6 Feb 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 10, folder 50.

¹¹⁷Correspondence from Long to Shealy, 13 April 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11,

¹¹⁸"Organization Chart and Work Plan of The University of Tennessee Technical Assistance Team in Southern India (Region V) Andhra, Coorg, Madras, Mysore, Travencore-Cochin for the development of Agriculture and Veterinary Colleges and Agricultural Research Institutions," author unknown, 8 March 1956, AR.0387, box 10, folder 50, AIDCAR; Correspondence McLeod to Parker, 1 Dec 1955, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

environment of the two regions, seeing as Appalachia is a temperate, mountainous region and southern India is an arid environment that relies almost entirely on monsoons for rain. Likewise, UTK's College of Agriculture only rarely drew comparisons between the crops grown in East Tennessee and India as southern India was a primarily rice growing region, a crop not suited to the climate of Appalachia.

The comparisons they did draw, however, often stemmed from the socioeconomic difficulties experienced by farmers in rural Appalachia in the post-World War II era, including widespread poverty, a lack of access to markets, and a lack of access to credit. Likewise, UTK's faculty looked towards recent development projects implemented in Appalachia itself and hoped to implement similar programs in India. As UTK's agriculture instructors would later note in a funding application sent to USAID in 1971, "many problems encountered in Tennessee agriculture are similar to those of India and other developing countries."¹¹⁹ Both UTK's agricultural instructors working in India and the U.S. government officials funding this program looked to development programs implemented in Appalachia that began in the first few decades of the twentieth century and extended into the post-World War II era, including the TVA, Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, and other agricultural improvement measures, as important models for programs they hoped to implement in India. As such, Appalachia's own struggles with poverty, economic instability, and agricultural reforms did not preclude their involvement in international development. Rather, UTK's instructors sought to export these Appalachian development programs, drawing upon the comparable agricultural and economic difficulties in the two regions, in their efforts to "modernize" and "improve" agricultural practices in India. Like the College of Home Economics, UTK's College of Agriculture hoped that the

¹¹⁹Extension and Augmentation of 211(d) grant," AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, 1-3.

implementation of these development programs would, in turn, foster friendly relations between the United States and India that would prove beneficial for America's international political influence during the tense conflict of the Cold War.

Poverty and Development in Appalachia

Like the scholarship on international development programs discussed in the introduction, historical scholarship on domestic development programs, including those implemented in Appalachia, is also extensive. Historical works discussing development programs in East Tennessee tend to focus on Appalachia's struggle to implement modernization programs designed by government agencies or outsiders unfamiliar with Appalachian society, its continuing poverty, and the often-contentious relationship between the Appalachian people and those seeking to exploit their land and resources.¹²⁰ For example, Steven Stoll's *Ramp Hollow* discusses both Appalachia's environmental and economic exploitation at the hands of large-scale mining or industrial companies and the struggles of employing rural reform programs such as those designed by the Appalachian Regional Commission within the mountain South.¹²¹ Looking at Appalachia in an international context, however, complicates the narrative of isolation and demonstrates the global implications of agricultural development in Tennessee.

Indeed, the mountain South of the post-World War II era represented a particularly poverty-stricken and economically challenged region within the United States. Appalachia faced a long tradition of rural poverty, illiteracy, and a lack of adequate housing and amenities like

¹²⁰For a detailed analysis of Appalachia's long struggle with development and government intervention see Steven Stoll, *Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2017); for discussions on poverty and Johnson's efforts to combat Appalachian poverty through his War on Poverty see Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Scribner, [1962] 2012); for a more general discussion of development programs in Appalachia see Ronald D. Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2008).

¹²¹Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 244-290.

electricity and indoor plumbing. Likewise, the mountainous terrain and unfertile soil limited commercial agricultural production in the region, which, coupled with capitalistic exploitation at the hands of large fossil fuel companies, led to high percentages of malnourishment and poor standards of health among the rural poor. In response to these issues, works such as Michael Harrington's *The Other America* sought to bring popular and political attention to the poverty of Appalachia in the hopes that the federal government would step in with measures designed to promote economic growth in Appalachia.¹²²

In response to these issues, the federal government instituted several development projects designed to fight rural poverty. One of the earliest reforms came with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act and the institution of the Agricultural Extension Service in 1914. Through this program, employees of the USDA and land-grant universities such as the University of Tennessee would serve as agricultural advisors to local farmers. Extension specialists often helped farmers balance their books, gave advice about what to plant and when, and served as liaisons between agricultural research centers and those working the land.¹²³

While the Agricultural Extension Service worked throughout the United States, extension played a particularly vital role in shaping southern agriculture. Even before the creation of the Extension Service, organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation funded farm demonstration and agricultural extension programs in the South. The Foundation hoped that such measures would solve some of the worst ills of cotton production including extensive debt and unsustainable monocropping. With the creation of the Agricultural Extension Service in 1914, extension's importance in the South only grew, although the work of the Extension Service often

¹²²Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 259-260; Harrington, *The Other America*, 41, 45.

¹²³Deborah Fitzgerald, *Every Farm a Factory: The Industrial Ideal in American Agriculture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 46-57; Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings*, 109.

reified rather than dissolved socio-economic inequalities in the South. As historian Deborah Fitzgerald argues, agents often focused their efforts on “prominent farmers” in the region, hoping that these larger farmers would “take the lead” in spreading both information and examples.”¹²⁴ This demonstrates the classist tendencies of agricultural extension in the United States and the South in particular. Extension often targeted largescale landowners while ignoring many of the needs of small-scale landowners or tenant farmers.

Race also shaped southern agricultural extension. Although African American extension agents did work with black farmers throughout the South, the limited number of black extension agents meant that the African American population was largely underserved. As historian Pete Daniel notes, “The default setting for USDA policymakers, state and county employees, and land-grant university staff was white and male.” It is, therefore, interesting and serves to highlight the absurdity of the racial system in the South that UTK agricultural instructors were willing to aid poor farmers of color in India while largely ignoring poor farmers of color at home. It also speaks to the importance of India as a strategic Cold War ally for the United States and the outside pressure the Cold War placed on southern racial ideology.¹²⁵

Tennessee’s relationship with agricultural extension began in 1909 when a representative of the USDA first arrived in Jackson, Tennessee to build interest in extension among Tennessean farmers. UTK’s College of Agriculture first became involved in extension with the passage of the Smith-Lever act and soon employed agents in thirty-one counties throughout Tennessee. By

¹²⁴ 53; Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings*, 102-11; Deborah Fitzgerald, *Every Farm a Factory: The Industrial Ideal in American Agriculture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 53.

¹²⁵For more on exclusion of African Americans in agricultural extension see, Pete Daniel, *Dispossession: Discrimination Against African American Farmers in the Age of Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 28, 26-58; for further discussion on Cold War challenges to southern racial ideology see Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

the 1960s, the UT Agricultural Extension Service worked with local farmers to institute programs designed to improve soil fertility, control erosion, increase farm income, and teach farm management skills with much of their effort focused on fighting rural poverty in Appalachia.¹²⁶ The University of Tennessee's College of Agriculture's work in India would rely heavily on this previous experience working in agricultural extension in Appalachia. Furthermore, UTK's College of Agriculture would work to implement some of the very same programs first tested in Appalachia in southern India as well. It is important to note, however, that the exportation of Appalachian extension programs to India brought with it much of the classism that shaped southern extension as well. UTK's programs often focused on larger farms and experimented with technology too expensive for many of the poorest farmers in India. Likewise, when some Indian visitors came to Knoxville to observe extension programs in Appalachia, they occasionally faced racial discrimination at the hands of their white colleagues or other Tennesseans.

The Agricultural Extension Service was by no means the only rural development program instituted in the South by the federal government. Historians consider New Deal legislation of the 1930s and subsequent post-World War II agricultural reforms to be a turning point in modern American agriculture, especially the agriculture of the U.S. South. For example, historians Sarah T. Phillips, in her work *This Land, This Nation*, and Paul K. Conkin, in *A Revolution Down on the Farm*, discuss how innovative methods for agricultural conservation, coupled with technological advances and limited land tenure reforms, helped to create a more productive agricultural system within the United States. While New Deal era reforms, and historical works

¹²⁶Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 'Proud Past...Promising Future' Celebrating 75 Years: A Narrative History of the Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 1914-1989, Knoxville: Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, 1989, 7-15, https://extension.tennessee.edu/Documents/ProudPastPromisingFuture_OCRed.pdf.

analyzing them, often targeted agricultural regions outside of East Tennessee, including the cotton and corn belts of the South and the Midwest, Conkin does discuss the effects of these programs on small Appalachian farms as well. The institution of mechanized agriculture, rural electrification projects, and the development of commercial fertilizers and hybridized seeds all served to alter, to the great expense of farmers, agriculture in East Tennessee.¹²⁷

Furthermore, Roosevelt and his administration created the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to help combat the effects of the Great Depression and systemic poverty in Appalachia. Along with constructing dams along the Tennessee River and its tributaries to improve navigation, control flooding, and produce electricity, TVA officials also advocated for an increase in environmentally sustainable agricultural practices like crop diversification and the use of more land for livestock and pastures. The work of the TVA was not entirely beneficial, however. The damming of rivers and subsequent creation of reservoirs displaced thousands of Appalachians and TVA reformers often promoted unsustainable or expensive farming practices such as the use of synthetic fertilizers that hurt rather than aided rural farmers.¹²⁸

Similarly, President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, which began in the early 1960s, targeted economic deprivation in the mountain South through the creation of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 1963. Like the TVA, the ARC provided jobs for residents of Appalachia and emphasized the importance of livestock, hydroelectricity, and the improvement of infrastructure in rural areas. Although programs such as the ARC often garnered criticism for addressing the symptoms rather than the root causes of Appalachian poverty, the

¹²⁷For discussions of New Deal conservation and limited land reform policies and their effect on the American environment and agricultural economy see Sarah T. Phillips, *This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); for discussions on the technical innovations of the New Deal era and beyond see Paul K. Conkin, *A Revolution Down on the Farm: The Transformation of American Agriculture since 1929* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 97-122.

¹²⁸Phillips, *This Land, This Nation*, 94-104.

measures did see some success as Appalachian poverty levels dropped 4.2 percent from 1960 to 2000.¹²⁹ Despite this economic progress, the general public continues to regard Appalachia as a developing area excluded and isolated from the rest of the developed United States culturally and economically.

Poverty and Development in India

Like Appalachia, India also struggled with hunger and poverty following World War II. After gaining its independence from Great Britain and violently separating from Pakistan in 1947, India faced economic uncertainty and political instability.¹³⁰ Many of India's struggles with hunger and famine stemmed from generations of exploitation, discrimination, and mismanagement at the hands of British colonial officials who often controlled the production and distribution of food in India. For example, Indian independence itself came, in part, as a result of a decade-long famine that resulted in the deaths of approximately three and a half million Bengalis.¹³¹ Widespread hunger continued into the early years of the republic and the newly established government of India struggled to provide the food, supplies, and monetary support to its citizens needed to combat the issue. In an attempt to combat the issue, political leaders in India instituted the first of many five-year plans designed to end the famine in 1951. These projects focused on developing infrastructure, agriculture, and industry in the areas most struggling with hunger.¹³² Despite these efforts for reform, however, famine continued and led to

¹²⁹Stoll, *Ramp Hollow*, 261-62; For more on the Appalachian Regional Commission and the War on Poverty and criticisms of these development programs see Ronald D. Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2008), 53-176 and John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 360-66.

¹³⁰Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 29-30.

¹³¹ Benjamin Robert Siegel, *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 22-23.

¹³²Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 3.

popular uprisings and civil unrest throughout the country.¹³³

As Indian research institutions struggled to find the funding needed to continue their work and combat this famine, American institutions gained influence in South Asia. With Soviet power growing in India through the implementation of their own development programs, President Truman worked to reach an agreement between himself and Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru regarding U.S. development efforts in India. The impetus for these negotiations stemmed back to Truman's inaugural address in which he outlined his "four major courses of action" for U.S. Cold War foreign policy. In Point IV, Truman discusses his plan for "making the benefits of [the United States'] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas."¹³⁴ Truman and his advisors believed that by taking these "scientific advances" abroad, of which agriculture reforms made up a significant component, the U.S. could in, the words of historian Sara Lorenzini, "capture world public opinion."¹³⁵

Negotiations between the United States and India led to the creation of the Indo-American Technical Cooperation Mission (TCM) in 1952. TCM adopted the idea that there was nothing inherently wrong about Indian agriculture itself. Rather, as they understood it, local farmers lacked access to the best knowledge of agricultural practices and the resources to implement them. American participants with TCM, therefore, focused mainly on developing

¹³³Siegel, *Hungry Nation*, 120; for more on the food crisis and populist movements in India see Akhil Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments: Agriculture in the making of Modern India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 59-105; for a discussion of famine and the human cost of famine under colonialism in southern India see Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso Books, 2001).

¹³⁴Harry S. Truman, "Inaugural Address of Harry S. Truman," (1949), quoted in Sara Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 26.

¹³⁵Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 26, 26-32.

agricultural extension and education projects in India.¹³⁶ To this end, agricultural education became a vital tool in TCM's plans for development.

Yet, American developers faced their own challenges. Fierce competition from the Soviet Union and China, not only in the industrial sector, as mentioned before, but in agriculture as well, made the United States' position in India precarious. For example, in the mid-1950s, around the same time that UTK first signed a contract to work in India, Indian politicians and agriculture advisors traveled to communist China to observe large scale mechanized farming efforts. Such visits led to the opening of an experimental, government-owned mechanized farm in Rajasthan, a state in northern India, with machinery provided by the Soviet Union. Although this particular farm did not entirely live up to the Indian government's expectations, as Indian laborers ended up harvesting most of the crops produced on this "mechanized" farm by hand, farms like it were an enticing alternative and competitor to American development plans.¹³⁷ With this Soviet competition, Americans working in India had to please their Indian colleagues as Indian politicians or agricultural experts who did not like the direction an American program was taking could enlist Soviet aid instead. As such, the Cold War battle over India ensured that Indian politicians and development organizers maintained some level of control over development within their country.

Whether or not American or Soviet development programs actually accomplished their goals, however, is up for debate. While American developers working in India often discussed the gains made by these programs, recent scholars tend to argue that, in reality, the efforts of the United States to "modernize" Indian agriculture were not as successful as many believed at the

¹³⁶Siegel, *Hungry Nation* 187-89; Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 64.

¹³⁷Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 136-37.

time. Instead, these programs often greatly expanded state authority, brought political turmoil, complicated Indian notions of self-identity and culture, and failed to reduce hunger or rates of famine in the country.¹³⁸ This essay does not argue with such conclusions. Even if viewed as a failure, the University of Tennessee College of Agriculture's use of Appalachian and Tennessean agriculture as a model for rural reform complicates popular belief in the divide between the developed and developing worlds.

Agricultural Economics Education in Appalachia and India

In January of 1956, UTK's College of Agriculture entered into an agreement with TCM as one of five land-grant universities selected for a cooperative mission to work with agricultural and veterinary schools throughout India. TCM selected these five universities, the Universities of Illinois and Missouri, Kansas State, Ohio State, Pennsylvania State, and the University of Tennessee out of a larger group of ten American universities. Of the ten universities considered, the University of Tennessee was the only southern school included, the others being northern or midwestern schools with strong agricultural programs. It is difficult to know based on the available sources whether TCM initially selected the University of Tennessee because they perceived the similarities between the economic situation in India and East Tennessee and valued UTK's experience working with recent development programs, because of their prior relationship between TCM and the College of Home Economics, or because of UTK's proximity to organizations such as the TVA and Oak Ridge National Laboratories, a prominent technology research center run by the U.S. Department of Energy. In case, TCM valued the University of Tennessee's prior experience with development and would later draw even more direct

¹³⁸For discussions of Cold War development in general see Cullather, *The Hungry World* and Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); for Cold War development in India and its lack of success see Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, Akhil Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments*, and Benjamin Robert Siegel, *Hungry Nation*.

connections between Tennessee and India as the program progressed.

Dividing the country into geographic regions, TCM tasked the University of Tennessee with overseeing development in Region V, located in southern India, specifically the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.¹³⁹ The budget provided by TCM allocated the money to hire six advisors of various specialties including agronomy, agricultural economics, and agricultural extension. These advisors, under the direction of the group leader and director of UTK's Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Erven J. Long, arrived in India in mid-to-late 1956 to begin their work with the seventeen agricultural and veterinary schools in the region.¹⁴⁰

At first glance, selecting the University of Tennessee to work with agricultural universities in southern India seems perplexing. South Indian agriculture bears little resemblance the farming practices of East Tennessee with which UTK agricultural instructors were most familiar. Southern India was, and still is, a typically arid climate with farmers relying on the monsoon season and extensive irrigation to produce their staple crop, rice. Furthermore, India's southernmost states had been historically susceptible to drought and famine. These challenging agricultural conditions often led to unrest, protest, and food riots among peasants and rural laborers in the region throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Such conflicts over food and hunger made the Indian government particularly interested in agricultural reforms in southern India, reforms they and the University of Tennessee hoped to implement.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Correspondence from Long to Shealy, 13 April 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

¹⁴⁰“Organization Chart and Work Plan of The University of Tennessee Technical Assistance Team in Southern India (Region V) Andhra, Coorg, Madras, Mysore, Travencore-Cochin for the development of Agriculture and Veterinary Colleges and Agricultural Research Institutions,” author unknown, 8 March 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 10, folder 50; Correspondence McLeod to Parker, 1 Dec 1955, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

¹⁴¹For discussions of drought, famine, and unrest in southern India see Siegel, *Hungry Nation*, 51-56, 76-84 and Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso

Yet, most agriculture instructors at the University of Tennessee, accustomed to the temperate climate of Appalachia, had little experience cultivating or researching tropical agriculture and rice. Indeed, before instructors from UTK traveled to work in India, they first attended seminars at the University of Hawaii, an institution that specialized in tropical agriculture, to take a crash course in rice cultivation.¹⁴² Organizers of the program in Tennessee, Washington, and New Delhi alike, however, overlooked the ecological differences between southern India and Appalachia, focusing instead on the University of Tennessee's "specialized competency to deal with the problems of disadvantaged farmers, using experience gained in Tennessee."¹⁴³ UTK instructors may not have been familiar with rice, but they did have experience working with both small-holder farms in rural Appalachia and recent development projects at home. As the previous quote suggests, TCM and Indian organizers valued Tennessee's familiarity with Appalachian research and development and hoped that such experience could prove beneficial to India as well.

From the moment agricultural instructors from the University of Tennessee first arrived in India, the Tennessee team led by Long focused their efforts to fight poverty and famine in India on the development of graduate training programs in agricultural economics and rural sociology. Those two fields, first developed in the 1920s at the University of Wisconsin, gained popularity during the Great Depression and emphasized the study of agricultural markets, farm

Books, 2001), 29-44; For recognition of the importance of rice cultivation to southern India by UTK instructors in particular see Correspondence Lewis H. Dickson to John N. Stalker, 26 April 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 10 folder 48.

¹⁴²Correspondence Don E. Hansen to Dickson, 24 Nov 1970, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 3, folder 30; Correspondence Dickson to C. Peairs Wilson, 3 Sept 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 20, folder 14.

¹⁴³"Extension and Augmentation of a Grant to Develop Within the University of Tennessee, Institute of Agriculture, Specialized Competency to Deal with Problems of Disadvantaged Farmers in Developing Countries with Emphasis on India," May 20, 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, 4.

management, and rural life to educate farmers on the economic and social forces driving their livelihoods.¹⁴⁴ Long, also a graduate of the University of Wisconsin's agricultural economics program, taught and researched in agricultural economics and rural sociology at the University of Tennessee since 1950 with publications on assisting low income and smallholder farmers in both Wisconsin and the South.¹⁴⁵ As such, he understood the difficulties of working with underprivileged farmers in Tennessee and across the United States.

For example, in 1955, Long testified before Congress' Subcommittee on Low-Income Families on the "Rehabilitation of Depressed Rural Areas" in 1955 discussing how economic difficulties in the region often stemmed from a lack of capital, outmigration, and agricultural unemployment. Within this discussion, Long cited East Tennessee as an example of one of these "Depressed Rural Areas" and argues that in order to relieve rural poverty and agricultural underemployment in a region such as Appalachia, policy makers should focus on and provide increased monetary support for the "coordination and reorientation of the activities of employment services, vocational education, Agricultural Extension Service, and other agricultural agencies and governmental agencies generally."¹⁴⁶ Long's belief in governmentally funded development and social aid programs as a prime solution for the agricultural and financial difficulties facing economically depressed regions would undoubtedly influence his subsequent work in India. With his previous experience working and researching in East Tennessee in mind, Long sought to stimulate agricultural growth in southern India through the implementation of

¹⁴⁴Jess Gilbert, *Planning Democracy: Agrarian Intellectuals and the Intended New Deal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 40, 49-50.

¹⁴⁵Erven J. Long, "Biographical Data: Erven John Long," March 1956, AR.0387 AIDCAR, box 5 folder 11.

¹⁴⁶Erven J. Long, "Rehabilitation of Depressed Rural Areas," Hearings before Subcommittee on Low Income Families of Joint Congressional Committee on The Economic Report, Washington, 1955, pp. 426-436, [https://www.jec.senate.gov/reports/84th%20Congress/Low-Income%20Families%20\(78\).pdf](https://www.jec.senate.gov/reports/84th%20Congress/Low-Income%20Families%20(78).pdf), 428.

state-sponsored education in agricultural economics and rural sociology and the dissemination of that knowledge to rural communities through extension projects.¹⁴⁷

The Government Agricultural College in Hebbal had the only thoroughly developed department of agricultural economics in southern India in 1956. A lack of funding and trained agricultural economists, however, hindered their efforts to open up new agriculture markets, advise local Indian farmers as to which crops to plant, and relieve poverty in the region. Working closely with the Indian government and the faculty and staff of the Government Agricultural College, Long and the Tennessee team worked to establish properly funded research centers for agricultural economics in the region.¹⁴⁸ These centers specialized in research on farm management and provided supporting research for more practical extension projects. For instance, in an address to the Vellayani College in Travancore-Cochin, Long examined the potential for cooperative research between agricultural economists and extension specialists to develop agricultural education programs in areas such as fertilizer production, poultry virology, and agricultural engineering. These educational programs, Long argued, would help build “leaders in the agriculture of the State in the years ahead,” from within the local population who would, in turn, help to develop long lasting programs tailored to local farmers of all social classes and sensitive to “actual cultivator conditions,” within the region.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷Long, “Rehabilitation of Depressed Rural Areas,” 426-36; Correspondence Long to Peacock, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14.

¹⁴⁸For cooperation with Hebbal and discussions on expansion of agricultural economics programs see “Proposal for the Establishment of Agricultural Economics Research, Extension, and Post-Graduate Teaching Sections in Indian Colleges of Agriculture,” author unknown, 1 Nov 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14, and Correspondence Long to Parker, 8 Oct 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14; for the successful creation of research centers for agricultural economics see Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 1 July 1964, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 19.

¹⁴⁹Long, “Some Comments for Consideration in the Development of Vellayani College, Travancore-Cochin,” AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14, 2, 3.

Tennessee's agricultural training extended beyond educating students in India. TCM's contract with UTK allocated funds for seven agricultural students a year to study in Knoxville or a similar land grant university.¹⁵⁰ In the beginning, most students studying in the United States did not obtain a degree from UTK. As this intercultural training program grew, however, TCM and UTK later allowed and encouraged students to enroll in UTK's Master's program. This training in the United States introduced students to the peculiarities of rural culture in East Tennessee, taught them educational methods, and encouraged their participation in agricultural extension projects in local farm communities.¹⁵¹

In training Indian students at UTK, Tennessee's faculty remained aware of some of the cultural and socioeconomic factors that limited the implementation of distributing the knowledge gained through agricultural education to local farmers who may lack the literacy or educational level to understand these complicated scientific agricultural methods, both in Tennessee and in India. For example, Long, in his address to incoming students studying at UTK, describes how through this program, the Indian students will observe how "scientific information is passed on to the farmers" through in-person meetings, through pamphlets and extension books, and even over the radio and "how the research programs are shaped to meet practical problems of farmers" who may lack the income or resources needed to fully implement these programs.¹⁵²

Furthermore, the exact nature of a student's curriculum in the United States would vary based on their field of study. For example, in 1961, UTK faculty organized a curriculum for a student from the Madras Veterinary College, M.S. Srinivasulu, that included courses in farm

¹⁵⁰Correspondence Long to Vijaya, 5 May 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

¹⁵¹Long, "Note to Our Participants," 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11, 1.

¹⁵²Long, "Note to Our Participants," 2-3.

management, animal production, and practical poultry extension projects that demonstrated the “actual solving of farmers’ problems.” For example, Srinivasulu’s instructors recommended to him that he learn methods by which he can more effectively educate local Indian farmers in generally low-cost methods of disease prevention among livestock populations through sanitation initiatives taught at UTK. By teaching Srinivasulu how he might better educate local Indian farmers in these methods, the UTK agricultural instructors hoped to make Indian farmers more independent and less reliant on teams of veterinarians who occasionally traveled through the countryside inoculating cattle against a limited number of diseases.¹⁵³ Similarly, agriculturalists in UTK and India hoped that other students, like Srinivasulu, would use what they learned from extension projects in Appalachia to help solve similar problems and improve agricultural output back home.¹⁵⁴

Education in Tennessee proved quite popular among Indian students. Students eager to study at UTK sent letters to Long before UTK instructors even arrived in India, demonstrating the widespread interest in the program within the agricultural community, although it is important to note that primarily elite or middle-class families would possess the monetary capability to send such letters. This interest was not limited to undergraduate students at Indian universities. Long received letters from graduate students, already licensed veterinary students, and employees of the Madras State Department of Agriculture seeking further opportunities at the University of Tennessee. For these men, studying in Tennessee represented an opportunity to increase their chances for employment and learn skills that might help improve the agricultural

¹⁵³M.B. Badenhop, “Group Leader’s Statement,” 29 April 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 9, 1.

¹⁵⁴Long, “Note to Our Participants,” 1.

situation in India.¹⁵⁵

In some instances, TCM would provide funding for Indian instructors to travel to the United States and earn degrees at American universities as well. In October of 1956, Long arranged for B. A. Balachowdiah, the director of the agricultural economics at Hebbal, to receive his Ph.D. in the United States. With this degree, Balachowdiah could then return to India and establish graduate-level training programs in his department. Despite UTK's emphasis on agricultural economics in India, however, the University of Tennessee could not offer Balachowdiah this education, as they would not offer Ph. D. training in agricultural economics until 1963.¹⁵⁶

UTK and the University of Wisconsin instead organized for Balachowdiah to study at Wisconsin's Department of Agricultural Economics in cooperation with research projects at Tennessee. Balachowdiah would also spend his summers in Knoxville studying with Tennessee's agricultural economics faculty.¹⁵⁷ Balachowdiah's situation demonstrates the challenges of implementing Appalachia as a model for development. While the University of Tennessee believed in the importance of agricultural economics to India and the value of learning from Tennessee, UTK itself, by lacking a PhD program, was not as "developed" as Long would have hoped.

Agricultural Extension

Despite these setbacks, educational work in India and Tennessee continued. The same

¹⁵⁵Correspondence Dr. G. Dasaradha Ramaiah, B.V.Sc. to Long, 17 April 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11; H.S. Monohar to Long, 9 April 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11; P.K. Vijayan, 10 April 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

¹⁵⁶"Requests of the CUSURDI Universities for Extension and Augmentation of 211(d) Grants," 11 June 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, 1.

¹⁵⁷Correspondence Long to Peacock, 17 Oct 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14.

year that Balachowdiah traveled to the University of Wisconsin, junior instructors at the Hebbal College of Agriculture journeyed to UTK to study agricultural extension.¹⁵⁸ Likewise, an increasing number of Indian students and instructors studied at the University of Tennessee each year. By 1961, the number of participants supported by UTK and TCM to study in the United States increased from seven to eighteen students.¹⁵⁹

These students studying in Knoxville received practical training in local extension projects. For example, in 1962, two students, M. S. Srinivasulu and H. S. Hanumanthappa, spent five weeks working with Charles Edwards, the county agent of Maryville, Tennessee in Blount County, to observe extension work in rural Appalachia. By working with Edwards, Srinivasulu's and Hanumanthappa's instructors at UTK hoped that they would leave with knowledge of practical extension work and a "better understanding of Extension's challenging task of helping people learn to help themselves."¹⁶⁰ While this statement nicely summarizes how UTK faculty viewed their work in India, whether this knowledge learned in Tennessee actually transferred to India and made the lives of smallholder farmers easier as UTK, TCM, and the government of India intended, however, is more difficult to determine.

Tennessee instructors in India did work to ensure that students returning from the United States applied what they learned. To keep students from returning to "old routines of work," UTK organized annual seminars and workshops to ensure a "fuller use of their knowledge" and address any questions regarding the implementation of this knowledge in their research and

¹⁵⁸Correspondence Long to The Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Tennessee, 1 Oct 1956, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 14.

¹⁵⁹Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 1 April 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0378 box 1, folder 8.

¹⁶⁰Correspondence Robert S. Dotson to Charles Edwards, 20 July 1962, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 21, folder 29.

extension projects.¹⁶¹ These follow-up seminars show the importance the American team members put on the practical application of tactics learned in the United States, and Tennessee specifically, to their mission of improving Indian agriculture. Likewise, practical application often occurred through extension projects UTK instructors hoped would both increase and diversify agricultural production in southern India. These agricultural extension programs grew under the direction of Vernon E. Ross, previously a county agent, farm management instructor, and extension specialist in East Tennessee, all experience that UTK's program coordinator, Merton B. Badenhop believed would allow Ross to "fit extremely well in to the type of work that needs to be done here."¹⁶²

During his tenure as extension advisor from 1961 to his departure to work with the Rockefeller Foundation in 1969, Ross encouraged Indian farmers to grow everything from hybrid maize to new strains of watermelons and cantaloupes.¹⁶³ Ross also requested eclectic supplies that demonstrate some of his more unusual efforts to improve the lives of farmers in India. Such orders included a request for a popcorn drying machine for a local acquaintance's popcorn factory and a mounted bison head shipped on the government's dollar for undisclosed reasons. It is unclear whether Tennessee supplied the first. The American Consulate in India denied the second.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹M.B. Badenhop, "The University of Tennessee India Agricultural Program: Program of Work, 1961-1966," 21 April 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 9, 10.

¹⁶²Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 20 May 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 9.

¹⁶³For examples of similar extension programs see. Siegel, *Hungry Nation*, 200-210.

¹⁶⁴For Ross' employment information see Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 20 May 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 9, and Thorpe to Dickson, 2 April 1969, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 8, folder 5; for Ross' advocating for the growth of hybrid maize see Ross, "Make 2000 Rupees or More Net Profit Per Acre By Growing Hybrid Maize" Pamphlet published by the Extension Wing, Agric. College, Hebbal and the University of Tennessee-India Team of the USAID., Bangalore, Sept. 1965, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 3, folder 2; for information on watermelon and cantaloupe project see Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 8 May 1963, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 6; for popcorn drying system see Correspondence Buehrer to Peacock, 11 May 1965, AIDCAR,

Of these first extension projects, several drew direct influence from agricultural methods and reports on agricultural production in Tennessee. In late 1955, before Long officially arrived, the director of the Institute of Agriculture at Anand in northwest India requested a 1939 report on agriculture in Tennessee published by the University of Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station outlining the various geographical and agricultural regions of the state. Although he does not specify the aspect of Tennessee agriculture they hoped to emulate precisely, the director of this school noted that his team received bulletins from UTK in the past, which they found were “very useful to [them]” in both the application of farming principles in Gujarat and as a model for similar reports they hoped to published at the Institute of Agriculture at Anand on types of farming in northwest India.¹⁶⁵

Similarly, projects in southern India also drew influence from Tennessee during these early years. Beginning in 1955, agricultural advisors expressed interest in experimenting with tobacco cultivation in Mysore. Tobacco already made up a significant portion of agricultural exports in both Appalachia and India with nearly 200,000 acres of tobacco planted in southern India during the 1950s. With tobacco’s growing importance in southern India, tobacco farmers and agricultural instructors in Mysore often experimented with new cultivation techniques using resources supplied by UTK regarding tobacco cultivation and seeds from East Tennessee.¹⁶⁶ To

AR.0387, box 2, folder 17; for shipment and denial of payment for Ross’s bison head see Correspondence Buehrer to Peacock, 6 Nov 1965, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 3, folder 2.

¹⁶⁵Correspondence Director, Institute of Agriculture at Anand to the Director, Agricultural Experiment Station, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 10 Dec 1955, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11; B.H. Luebke, S.W. Atkins, C.E. Allred, and W.J. Roth, *Types of Farming in Tennessee*, Bulletin No. 169, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, 1939, Web, https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agbulletin/118/.

¹⁶⁶For tobacco production in Appalachia see Elsie Taylor Bird, “Tobacco in East Tennessee,” (Master’s Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1948), 36, https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/2989; for production in India see Cullather 228 and P. Maheshwari and S. L. Tandon, “Agriculture and Economic Development in India,” *Economic Botany*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (July – Sep, 1959), 233.

this extent, Hans Kardel, an advisor to the Mysore ministry of agriculture, contacted Long for information regarding tobacco production in East Tennessee. Long, in response to Kardel, included bulletins on Bright Leaf Tobacco growing in North Carolina and leaflets on Tennessee Burley Tobacco.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, in 1961, the Tennessee and Indian team ordered more Tennessee #1 White Burley tobacco seed to analyze its potential for growth in India.¹⁶⁸

Reorganization and Comparisons within the 211(d) Grant

With Tennessee advisors spread between teaching in universities, advising on agricultural extension projects, and arranging the travel of Indian students to the United States, organizers in Washington and Tennessee began to feel that these demands over-stretched their resources. To combat this, in 1961 UTK and TCM shifted their focus from widespread support for farmers and colleges in southern India to a more focused relationship between UTK and a few state agricultural universities created under the American land-grant model.¹⁶⁹ This decision coincided with a larger reorganization of departments in Washington pushed by John F. Kennedy in the early years of his presidency. Kennedy and his political advisors sought to make the 1960s a “Decade of Development” as a means of gaining vital allies amongst unaligned nations. As such, Kennedy increased U.S. funding for development programs by upwards of twenty-four percent in the first year of his presidency alone. This new emphasis on international development in Washington led to combination of several agencies, including TCM, in 1961 into the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with the passage of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. From 1961 onward, USAID would replace TCM as the primary agency

¹⁶⁷Correspondence Long to Kardel, 29 Oct 1955, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 5, folder 11.

¹⁶⁸Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 28 March 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 8.

¹⁶⁹Correspondence Ray G. Johnson to Peacock, 22 Dec 1961, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 21, folder 29.

providing funding and guidance for UTK's work in India.¹⁷⁰

These readjustments in Washington and India served as a turning point for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and its agricultural development program in southern India. Rather than advising ten schools, Tennessee would instead work closely with two newly-created land grant universities, the Mysore University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Bangalore and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore modeled after American land grant universities such as the University of Tennessee.¹⁷¹ To this end, the Mysore government passed the University of Agricultural Sciences Act that designated funds to the creation of UAS. This institution began operations on October 1, 1965, under the leadership of Dr. K. C. Naik as Vice Chancellor.¹⁷² Although travel between Tennessee and India existed from the beginning of UTK's time in India, this transition to more focused support for fewer universities increased the connections, comparisons, and transfer of people between the two regions.

The perceived similarities between agriculture in India and Tennessee manifests most clearly in grant proposals written by members of the Tennessee team. Although USAID provided most of the funding for the projects in India, UTK's agricultural department benefitted from other government grants to increase their available budgets for work in India. Therefore, when a 1966 amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 allocated an extra ten million dollars to institutions to "strengthen their capacity to develop and carry out programs concerned with the

¹⁷⁰David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michale E. Latham, eds. *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 81-83.

¹⁷¹Correspondence Badenhop to Peacock, 1 Jan 1962, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 12.

¹⁷²Government of Mysore Legislative Department, *The University of Agricultural Sciences Act, 1963*, Mysore Act No. 22 of 1963, 25 May 1963, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 6; James L. Anderson, "Report of the Consultant to the Comptroller University of Agricultural Science, Hebbal, Bangalore, India, March 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 1, folder 2,

economic and social development of less developed countries,” UTK jumped at the opportunity to receive money from this “211(d) grant.”¹⁷³

Tennessee submitted a joint grant proposal with the four other American land-grant universities working in India. These schools, the Universities of Illinois and Missouri, Kansas State, Ohio State, and Pennsylvania State, worked cooperatively with Tennessee to form the Council of United States Universities for Rural Development in India (CUSURDI). The 211(d) proposal outlined the aspect of development each university would oversee. Interestingly, while CUSURDI tasked other participating universities with overseeing technical issues like “grain utilization” or “control of crop disease,” CUSURDI with USAID’s approval selected UTK to oversee “economic issues of agricultural development.”¹⁷⁴ Although the University of Tennessee only offered a Ph.D. in agricultural economics beginning in 1963, CUSURDI accepted UTK’s proposal to direct this field, emphasizing the similarities between Appalachian development projects and needed development programs in India.¹⁷⁵

For example, in UTK’s original 1968, 211(d) proposal, they requested \$200,000 over five years to continue assisting agricultural economics programs in India. The grant noted how Tennessee faculty currently working with UAS and Tamil Nadu had previous experience with economic research and development, particularly highlighting their experience “dealing with problems associated with low incomes in specific areas of [Tennessee], such as Appalachia.”

¹⁷³U.S. Congress, Senate and House of Representatives, *Foreign Assistance Act of 1966*, HR 15750, 89th Cong., 2nd sess. 19 Sept 1966, 797, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-80/pdf/STATUTE-80-Pg795.pdf>.

¹⁷⁴“Requests of the CUSURDI Universities,” 11 June 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, AIDCAR, 1.

¹⁷⁵“Supporting Document to the Proposed Basic Grant Document for an International Professorship, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee,” unknown author, 29 April, 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 13.

Such Appalachian “problems” involved issues of “rural taxation, land tenure, credit, and community development” along with “the changing characteristics of farms, the current and potential level of economic efficiency of farms, development projects involving storage, transportation, processing and distributing food, and the acquiring of needed production inputs” in East Tennessee. All of these concerns, the author contended, were “very similar to those found in India.” UTK concluded that “the methodology applied in the solution of problems in Tennessee should be very applicable to many of the economic problems encountered in India [sic] agriculture.”¹⁷⁶ As such, agricultural development work in Tennessee should serve as a model for similar projects abroad. Indeed, USAID agreed with this sentiment as they did fund their proposal for a 211(d) grant.

In a subsequent, and likewise successful, extension application submitted to USAID in May of 1971 to extend the 211(d) grant for a third time, Tennessee’s agricultural faculty again highlighted how “many problems encountered in Tennessee agriculture are similar to those of India and other developing countries.” The author of this proposal also examined the difficulties facing small-scale farmers in both eastern Tennessee and southern India, describing both groups as undereducated, lacking in managerial experience, and distant from markets in which to sell their produce. Furthermore, the report highlights Tennessee’s work with other development agencies, include the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, a USDA sponsored agency promoting family nutrition in Appalachia, granted UTK’s agricultural instructors “unusual experience in using interdisciplinary, multi-

¹⁷⁶For general description of the grant see T. J. Whatley, “A Proposal for an Institutional Grant through the Agency for International Development to Strengthen the Capacity of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, College of Agriculture, The University of Tennessee in Agricultural Development Work in India,” 12 Feb 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 13, AIDCAR; for description of similarities between Tennessee and India see “Supporting Document,” AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 13, 5.

agency approaches to deal with such problems.”¹⁷⁷ As such, UTK’s experience working with both local research projects and government agencies in the region made them a good candidate for participation in Indian development programs.

In these proposals, UTK also included a list of research projects they hoped to transfer from Tennessee to India. Listing almost seventy publications and studies conducted by members of the Tennessee staff, these reports covered a wide variety of subjects from economics and rural poverty in East Tennessee to more practical studies on milk distribution markets. In the eyes of Tennessee educators, these reports and the research interests of Tennessee’s agriculture instructors “should be very applicable to many of the economic problems encountered in India agriculture.”¹⁷⁸

Implementing Appalachian Reforms in India

UTK faculty worked to implement Appalachian reforms in India as well. Many extension and educational development projects conducted by UTK in India continued to draw their influence from programs in Appalachia and the wider Tennessee region. Beginning in 1968 under the guidance of D. M. Thorpe, UTK started work on developing pilot farms using 211(d) grant money. Thorpe and Noel Rebello, an Indian graduate student in agricultural economics, modeled these pilot farms after small production farms located on the Ames plantation in western Tennessee that one of UTK’s agricultural instructors in India, D. M. Thorpe, describes as “similar in some respects” to those they plan to implement in India. Although the agricultural, environmental, and socio-economic factors of West Tennessean agriculture, largely dominated by large-scale plantation farming, varied greatly from East Tennessee and even more so from

¹⁷⁷“Extension and Augmentation of 211(d) grant,” AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, 1-3.

¹⁷⁸“Extension and Augmentation of 211(d) grant,” AIDCAR, box 17, folder 12, 6-9.

southern India, the Ames plantation offered the space needed for UTK's agricultural instructors to build these model smallholder farms used to research agriculture on small Appalachian farms.¹⁷⁹ Although UTK scientists did not conduct this research in Appalachia, this work at the Ames plantation focused on helping smallholding farmers like those in Appalachia and India transition from subsistence farming to larger scale commercial farming.¹⁸⁰ With Tennessee pilot farms as a model, Rebello and Thorpe hoped to help Indian farms make a similar transition.

These pilot farms in India may have also drawn inspiration from Tennessee's "rapid adjustment farms." Later in this same letter, Thorpe arranged for Rebello to gain practical experience in farm management by observing these farms in Knoxville.¹⁸¹ Beginning in 1960, UTK's agricultural researchers, in partnership with the TVA, developed these rapid adjustment farms, most located within Appalachia, to experiment with firmly regimented agricultural management strategies, namely the use of strict budgeting and extensive planning procedures. Researchers would then examine how applied agricultural economics, including how efforts such as detailed calculations of the proper numbers and care of livestock a parcel of land could sustain, detailed budgeting of wages and equipment during the harvest could noticeably improve farm production and efficiency within a short period.¹⁸² While it is questionable whether such detailed calculations would be made available to rural farmers in India, Thorpe believed that the implementation of similar pilot and rapid adjustment farms in India would, nevertheless, "provide an opportunity to begin some work on [the] application" of farm management programs

¹⁷⁹Correspondence D. M. Thorpe to David W. Brown, 22 Aug 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 8, folder 1.

¹⁸⁰"Extension and Augmentation of 211(d) grant," AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 12, 2.

¹⁸¹Correspondence Thorpe to Brown, 22 Aug 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 8, folder 1.

¹⁸²R. M. Ray and E. H. Hudson, *Tennessee's Rapid Adjustment Program – An Analysis of the First Six Farms*, Bulletin No. 443, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1968, Web, https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1237&context=utk_agbulletin.

in southern India where they were “mostly a classroom exercise.”¹⁸³

Indeed, Rebello did learn useful knowledge from East Tennessee’s rapid adjustment farms with practical benefits for Indian development projects. Drawing from research conducted in both Knoxville and India, Rebello’s dissertation examined Indian development programs like the Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and how they would benefit from analyzing research conducted at the farm level. Specifically, his work focused on the importance of considering farmer motivations, capabilities, and available resources to develop practical agricultural reforms. Although Tennessee’s records lost track of Rebello after his return to India, his advising professor at UTK, David Brown, encouraged him to discuss his findings with the Department of Agriculture upon his arrival in Mysore.¹⁸⁴

UTK also hoped to use Tennessee as a model for broader development projects in India. In the first annual report for 211(d), written in 1969, the author outlined three programs under development by UTK’s agricultural department back home. The first came through a partnership with the Atomic Energy Commission to ensure proper government food preparedness in the case of a nuclear emergency. Another designated funds to use aerial reconnaissance imagery to plot out resource distribution and estimate crop yields. The third analyzed the role of the government in promoting development by promptly releasing scientific innovations to the public.¹⁸⁵ While the Tennessee team did propose these three projects, there is little evidence that UTK further considered or attempted to implement these programs in India because of a lack of funds,

¹⁸³Correspondence Thorpe to Brown, 22 Aug 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, AIDCAR, box 8, folder 1.

¹⁸⁴For information on SFDA see Gupta, 69, 142; for information on Rebello’s dissertation see Brown to Gist Welling, 30 Dec 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 5.

¹⁸⁵“Annual Report Related to the AID/Section 211(d) Institutional Grant ‘Agricultural Economic Issues in India’ The University of Tennessee July 1, 1968 through June 30, 1969,” Author Unknown, 1969, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 8, 7.

resources, and time. Nevertheless, these proposals do demonstrate the idealistic nature of UTK's efforts to implement recent Appalachian development programs in India.

Other plans to use research from the University of Tennessee in India proved more practical. Frank Bell, a short-term consultant to the Mysore University of Agricultural Sciences and professor of Agronomy at UTK, analyzed the effects of erosion and soil loss to agricultural production in southern India.¹⁸⁶ To better conserve this soil, Bell recommended the adaptation of the Universal Soil Loss Equation to conditions in Mysore. This formula uses local conditions such as rainfall, slope, and soil composition to predict future soil erosion in a specific environment. Soil conservationists first adapted and used this formula to analyze soil erosion in Tennessee during the early 1960s.¹⁸⁷ In his final report, Bell included a copy of a research bulletin issued by UTK that describes the process of adapting this formula to the local conditions of Tennessee. Using Tennessee as an example, Bell recommended that UAS conduct the research needed to adjust this formula to fit Mysore.¹⁸⁸

Bell also advocated the use of Tennessee as a model in the classroom. In an outline for a graduate level course on "Soil Management for Crop Production," Bell and his colleagues at UAS combined local research on soil conservation with discussions of agricultural conditions in Tennessee. For example, the class discussed the types of crops cultivated in Tennessee as part of

¹⁸⁶Frank F. Bell, "Application for Federal Employment," 1969, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 2, folder 2.

¹⁸⁷For general information on the formula see Walter H. Wischmeier and Dwight D. Smith, *Predicting Rainfall-Erosion Losses From Cropland East of the Rocky Mountains: Guide for Selection of Practices for Soil and Water Conservation*, Agricultural Handbook No. 282, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1965, Web, https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARUserFiles/50201000/USLEDatabase/AH_282.pdf; for its implementation in Tennessee see C. H. Jent, Jr., F. F. Bell, and M. E. Springer, *Predicting Soil Losses in Tennessee Under Different Management Systems: Guide for Selecting Systems and Practices For Soil and Water Conservation*, Bulletin No. 418, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1967, Web, https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1332&context=utk_agbulletin.

¹⁸⁸62. Frank F. Bell, "Mysore University of Agricultural Sciences Report," 1 June 1970, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 2, folder 2.

their larger discussions on experimental crop selection within India and internationally.

Furthermore, Bell lists out a series of thirteen factors that influenced decisions over “cropping systems,” or the sequencing of crop rotation, in Tennessee itself. The outline for the course then analyzed, in great detail, each of these factors individually as an instructional model for Indian agriculture.¹⁸⁹ In both the classroom and the field, agriculturalists like Bell planned development projects for southern India based on agriculture in distant Tennessee and recent developmental efforts in Appalachia.

While work in India continued, students also traveled to study in Tennessee through USAID funding. In the years just following the creation of the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bangalore, however, not all students who traveled to UTK for practical experiences in America returned satisfied. When asked in a conversation with Buehrer, the group leader for Tennessee, whether he found his stay in Knoxville useful to his work in India, one of the participants from UAS, Mr. Nanjundappa, replied, “not one bit.” Buehrer chastised the instructors at UTK for not allowing Nanjundappa to observe agricultural practices in Tennessee or work with local farmers and county agents. Buehrer then pushed the agricultural faculty to devote more time to teaching and demonstrating practical methods of farming rather than purely theoretical.¹⁹⁰ For Najundappa, his time in Tennessee did not offer him enough opportunities to observe Tennessee as a model for India.

Instructors at UTK seem to have taken this criticism to heart. Later visitors to UTK did receive practical experience on small farms in Tennessee. When G. V. K. Rao, the Development Commissioner for the State Government of Mysore, visited Knoxville in March of 1968, he

¹⁸⁹Frank F. Bell, “Soil Management for Crop Production,” attachment to correspondence Bell to Lewis Dickson, 22 Jan 1970, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 2, folder 2.

¹⁹⁰Correspondence Buehrer to Peacock, 3 Nov 1965, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 3, folder 2.

spent a weekend living on a small family farm near Knoxville, owned by a Mr. Thompson, where W. D. Bishop, an agricultural instructor at UTK and Webster Pendergrass, the Dean of the College of Agriculture hoped he would learn and experience firsthand Tennessean agricultural practices, “become acquainted with life on an American farm,” and “discuss with the farm family its knowledge and use of services available from the University, the State Department of Agriculture, and agencies of the Federal Government.”¹⁹¹ He also visited the local Farmer’s Cooperative with his host family to see how Appalachian farmers used and benefitted from this local center. As Rao’s job in India involved the coordination of government agencies and local populations, UTK believed Rao would find observing Tennessee agencies useful to his work in Indian agricultural production.¹⁹²

Indeed, Rao did go on to work extensively in Indian agricultural and community development, chairing a committee that produced an influential report from the Committee on Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programmes in 1985 emphasizing the importance of local governments in creating development policies. In this report, Rao advocated for the strengthening of the *panchayati raj* system in India. Under this system, local *panchayats*, or village level committees, that would organize community level development projects to improve local infrastructure, meet regional agricultural needs for irrigation or seed distribution, or manage local education or sanitation initiatives. While these programs sought, according to Rao’s 1985 report, to “ensure that the poor are properly taken care of,” in reality, programs pushed by local *panchayats* often served to reify social divides and led

¹⁹¹W. D. Bishop to Webster Pendergrass, 22 March 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 21, folder 32.

¹⁹²Rao’s itinerary and job description is included in correspondence W. D. Bishop to Webster Pendergrass, 22 March 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 21, folder 32.

to further exploitation of the rural poor in India.¹⁹³

Nor was the relationship between UTK's faculty and their Indian counterparts entirely without conflict. Rather, some documents regarding Indian visitors to the United States highlight the controversial nature of development programs. In a letter to W. F. Moss, the Commissioner of Agriculture for Tennessee, Lewis Dickson, the director of UTK's program, wrote in October of 1968, that he enjoyed a recent meeting with Moss without having to "bother [him] with Indian visitors."¹⁹⁴ This letter is interesting for both its dismissive tone towards the Indian agriculturalists meeting with Moss and the fact that Dickson deems it important that these visitors meet with him at all. Letters such as this demonstrate the often-patronizing nature of Tennessee's work. Indian visitors brought to Moss frequently held similar or even superior positions to Moss in India, yet the Americans often viewed such meetings as an inconvenience. Although Dickson had good intentions, sincerely believing that Indian visitors would benefit by meeting with people like Moss, these disparaging comments demonstrate the cultural and racial tensions present within the work.¹⁹⁵

Re-importing Indian Reforms for Tennessee

There is also irony behind Dickson's subtle condescension. The University of Tennessee

¹⁹³Department of Rural Development Ministry of Agriculture, *Report of the Committee on Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programmes* by G. V. K. Rao, chairman, New Delhi: Ministry of Agriculture, 1985, Web, https://www.panchayatgyan.gov.in/documents/30336/0/Recommendations+of_G_V_K_+RaoCommittee.pdf/6f0bdc21-c055-4190-82f7-c754321f808b; for influence of report see Indira Hirway, "Pachayati Raj at Crossroads," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 42, No. 29 (1989): 1663-67, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4395107>; for further discussion on the *panchayati raj* and community development programs see Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 66-101.

¹⁹⁴Correspondence Dickson to W. F. Moss, 24 Oct, 1968, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 10, folder 48.

¹⁹⁵It was quite common for international visitors to Appalachia and the U.S. South to face racial discrimination during their visits. For more on these visitors and their efforts to navigate Jim Crow see Robert Rook, "Race, Water, and Foreign Policy: The Tennessee Valley Authority's Global Agenda Meets 'Jim Crow,'" *Diplomatic History*, vol. 28, no. 1 (January 2004).

learned from recent development in India at the same time India learned from UTK. As part of the 211(d) grant, USAID provided funding for American graduate students to travel to UAS to study with Indian instructors and learn from their development work. UTK hoped that these graduate students researching in India could learn valuable lessons applicable to development projects in both the United States and countries throughout the world.¹⁹⁶ Study in India also served another purpose. David Brown, the advisor for graduate students in this program, noted that research in India could bring “fresh insight in tackling Tennessee’s agricultural modernization and rural development problems.”¹⁹⁷ This idea mirrors a broader trend among American international developers to re-import development programs tested abroad to help fight poverty and “rural development problems” in the United States. For example, Daniel Immerwahr examines how institutions like the Peace Corps worked to institute community development programs in American cities modeled off of programs implemented in countries like India and the Philippines.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, Brown and other UTK faculty realized that Tennessee, considered a developing region in its own right, could have benefitted from rural development programs in India like any other developing country.

In 211(d)’s short duration, approximately ten graduate students from Tennessee traveled internationally for research.¹⁹⁹ Those who studied in India typically researched topics related to the use of credit and government subsidies by smallholders attempting to transition to commercial farming. For example, the first student from UTK sent to India, an aptly named

¹⁹⁶For general information on 211(d) fellowship program see Whatley, “A Proposal for an Institutional Grant,” 4; for studying with Indian faculty see correspondence Welling to Brown, 2 Feb 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 9.

¹⁹⁷David W. Brown, “Fifth Annual Technical Report,” 15 Aug 1973, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 8.

¹⁹⁸Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*, 132-164.

¹⁹⁹Brown, “Third Annual Technical Report,” 9 July 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 8.

graduate student in agricultural economics, Parker Cashdollar, researched the importance of federal subsidies to farmers implementing new irrigation practices in southern India.²⁰⁰

Cashdollar went on to become a professor of economics at the University of Tennessee, Martin and published research looking at the economic effects of his university within on surrounding Tennessee communities.²⁰¹

Another student, Glenn C. W. Ames, also researched for his dissertation in Mysore. Studying with Rebello, recently returned from his studies in Tennessee, Ames' research focused on the issues of local credit distribution and the difficulties of loan repayment in southern India. As USAID terminated its contract with UTK soon after Ames' arrival in India, he and Cashdollar were the only two who completed their dissertations through the India program.²⁰²

Unfortunately, this cut short the plans of students like George F. Smith who also wanted to study in India. Instead, Smith studied in Latin America through another UTK sponsored program and later taught at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville while conducting extensive research in Tennessee agriculture and development.²⁰³ Despite the brevity of American graduate study in India, the fact that instructors at Tennessee recognized the learning opportunities for Appalachia

²⁰⁰Correspondence T. J. Whatley to Dickson, 17 Sept 1970, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 10; for Cashdollar's completed dissertation see Parker Ditmore Cashdollar, "An economic analysis of crops and land use localizations in the Tungabhadra Irrigation Project of Mysore State, India," PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1971.

²⁰¹Parker Ditmore Cashdollar, *The Economic Impact of the University of Tennessee at Martin on Weakley and Obion Counties, 1986-87*, University of Tennessee at Martin, School of Business Administration, Department of Economics and Finance, 1988.

²⁰²Correspondence Brown to Welling, 30 Dec 1971, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 17, folder 5; Ames, after completion of his dissertation, earned a professorship at the University of Georgia researching fruit production in the United States and Latin America, see L. Rebecca Martin, James E. Epps, and Glenn C. W. Ames, *Characteristics of Firms Engaged in Fruit and Vegetable Trade Between the United States and Latin America*, Bulletin No. 434, Athens: The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, 2009.

²⁰³For information on George F. Smith and India see Correspondence Brown to Welling, 30 Dec 1971; for information on Smith's work at UTK see "Dr. George F. Smith," The University of Tennessee Agricultural Economics, <http://web.utk.edu/~gsmith/steward.html> (accessed 14 April 2019).

inherent in international development projects is noteworthy. Students like George F. Smith and their long careers in Tennessee agricultural extension after studying development abroad show the possibilities of what could have occurred if Tennessee had more time to work with India.

End of the Program

News of the termination of USAID's contract with UTK and the other CUSURDI schools came abruptly in June of 1972. As work in southern India continued, the tension between the Indian and American governments grew. Starting around 1966, the United States steadily decreased its USAID funding to India, reaching a low in 1972 as economic competition from the Soviet Union pressured the American government to end direct aid measures in India in exchange for stronger economic ties. Furthermore, the federal government in India increasingly promoted ideas of Indian self-sufficiency. These two factors led the Indian government to terminate the majority of USAID's contracts in June of 1972.²⁰⁴ While all those working in southern India knew about the growing tension in New Delhi, the actual notice of termination came as a surprise to both Tennessee and USAID.²⁰⁵

UTK employees in India spent the last few months organizing their departure, arranging to return to or find employment in the U.S., and saying goodbye to their Indian colleagues. Tennessee leadership also arranged to turn over most supplies purchased with USAID money to UAS or Tamil Nadu.²⁰⁶ While tension may have existed between the Indian and U. S. governments, both Americans and Indians in Bangalore and Coimbatore appeared genuinely sad to see the program end. William Ward, who oversaw Tennessee's withdrawal from India,

²⁰⁴Engerman, 334, 352; Correspondence Dickson to Ward, 20 June 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 20, folder 23.

²⁰⁵Correspondence between Ward and Dickson, 5 June to 27 June 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 20, folder 23.

²⁰⁶"Property Disposal Plan Proposal," author unknown, June 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 20, folder 23.

received letters from Dr. Rangaswami and Dr. Naik, the Chancellors of Tamil Nadu and UAS respectively, expressing their sadness to see the UTK's team depart and thanking them for "the role you all have played in developing this young University," an act that he promised would "ever be green in our memories."²⁰⁷ Ward likewise received a note from G. V. K. Rao, still the Development Commissioner for the Mysore State Government, expressing gratitude to the Tennessee team for "the excellent work that was done by all the persons who had come under the contract programme."²⁰⁸

Like their Indian counterparts, UTK's staff expressed sadness at having to leave India. Ward wrote a letter to Dickson on September 29th, the day before his departure, stating that he hoped the work done in India would be "worthwhile and lasting."²⁰⁹ Dr. Naik, in an address at the farewell luncheon for Dr. Ward, expressed his faith that Tennessee and India's efforts accomplished much and would continue to influence developments in the future. Naik noted in his speech that while other programs focusing on nuclear development bring destruction and hatred, agricultural reforms brought "a positive form of assistance," through providing food and employment for local Indian farmers and agricultural educators. "These are assuredly," he stated, "a form of assistance of lasting value."²¹⁰

During the almost two decades UTK worked with agricultural universities in India, Tennessee paradoxically served as a teacher, model, and student of international rural

²⁰⁷Correspondence Rangaswami to Ward, 26 June 1972, and Naik to Ward, 22 June 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 9, folder 7.

²⁰⁸Correspondence Rao to Ward, 8 July 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 9, folder 7.

²⁰⁹Correspondence Ward to Dickson, 29 Sept 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 9, folder 7.

²¹⁰K. C. Naik, "Statement by Dr. K.C. Naik, Vice Chancellor of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, India, at the Farewell Luncheon for Prof. and Mrs. William B. Ward, Chief of Party, University of Tennessee/USAID India Agricultural Programmes on Sept. 21, 1972," 21 Sept 1972, AIDCAR, AR.0387, box 9, folder 8.

development programs during the Cold War. Advisors from the University of Tennessee used their experience fighting poverty in Appalachia to create extension programs they hoped would help fight persistent hunger and famine in India. Tennessee agriculturalists also implemented or modeled Indian programs off of similar methods of development used to fight poverty, end hunger, and improve farming conditions in Appalachia.

This transfer of ideas also brought a transfer of people. Through funding by UTK and TCM/USAID students and instructors traveled between India and the United States to learn from each other. While Indian visitors to Tennessee observed Appalachian agriculture, American students and faculty in India learned valuable lessons in development useful to Tennessee's other international development projects and Tennessee itself. While it is difficult to measure precisely how lessons learned in the one country improved the agricultural situation of the other, the fact that these two regions separated by distance, language, and culture cultivated this reciprocal relationship challenges the divide between the developing and the developed world.

UTK's work in India did not just cross borders; it blurred them. That Appalachia served as both an exporter and a model of agricultural improvement challenges the binary and polarizing nature of Cold War politics surrounding development. Likewise, the two-way sharing of knowledge, culture, and experience between Tennessee and India alters the typical narrative of a post-World War II world divided neatly between the developed and the developing, the First and the Third World, the East and the West. As the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's work in Tennessee shows, reality was rarely so simple.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

While writing this thesis over the past year and a half, I have spoken with archivists, faculty, students, and acquaintances across the University of Tennessee and the surrounding Knoxville area about this project. Save for two people, a woman who studied home economics at the University of Tennessee in the 1950s and a former UTK Professor of Agricultural Economics, few had even heard of UTK's eighteen-year program in India, and those who had heard of the program knew few details about the university's work there. As such, this program remains widely forgotten. In contrast, Netflix plans to release a film adaptation of J. D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elogy*, directed by Ron Howard, to the streaming platform's 61.04 million paid U.S. subscribers later this year. Appalachians and scholars of the region have widely criticized Vance's book for its negative and stereotypical depictions of Appalachian people and culture as backward, remote, and isolated. Such depictions often ignore the diversity within Appalachia or the historical connections that have so long linked Appalachian people, politics, problems, and programs to global communities and events. With renditions of Appalachia like *Hillbilly Elogy* reaching such a broad audience, studying programs such as the University of Tennessee's work in India help to reveal the influence Appalachia has had on the wider world.

During the eighteen years the University of Tennessee spent in India, American home economics and agricultural instructors worked to build personal, cultural, and political ties with their Indian colleagues and further the international political goals of the United States during the tense years of the Cold War. By traveling to India, building these relationships, and furthering the aims of American global influence, the UTK Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics found themselves at the center of Cold War geopolitics and by doing so, demonstrate the central

role Appalachia, typically depicted as an isolated region, played in shaping both American national and global politics. Likewise, the participation of Appalachia – a region that was itself undergoing the process of economic and rural development in the 1950s and '60s – in Cold War global development programs helps to blur the line that so often divides the developed from the developing world.

UTK's work in India began with the efforts of Jessie Harris and the College of Home Economics. Since the early twentieth century, UTK's College of Home Economics participated in rural reform and home economics extension programs aimed at implementing standardized and scientific methods of domestic management among Appalachian households. Taking this experience abroad, UTK's home economics faculty worked closely with their Indian home science colleagues to promote a form of gendered nationalism in which women would work within the home to build a democratic household and, by extent build a more democratic society. Through this gendered nationalism, UTK's College of Home Economics worked to strengthen Indian democracy and promote a friendly political relationship between the United States and India. UTK's home economics instructors and Indian home science educators built upon this shared belief in the power of home economics as a tool of nation-building to foster cross-cultural exchange that, in turn, led to a hybridized system of home science education based in Americanized home economic methods adapted to fit Indian domestic culture. Tennessee home economists hoped that the implementation of these hybridized systems, which they hoped would be more attuned to Indian culture, or at least middle-class Indian culture, would further strengthen the political alliance between India and the United States and help to win the U.S. a valuable ally for their global fight against communism.

While instructors and students of the College of Home Economics worked to build a

version of home economics that blended Indian and American domestic practices, educators with UTK's College of Agriculture hoped to export Appalachian development projects and implement them in India. As such, these agricultural instructors often drew direct comparisons between the agricultural and economic problems in Appalachia with the issues they perceived in India. UTK instructors and the government agencies funding them, believed that the previous experience many of these Tennessean farmers or UTK agricultural educators had working with and researching rural poverty, agriculture, and development in India would provide invaluable experience for their work with development programs in India. Like the home economics program, which also encouraged Indian students to study in the United States, the College of Agriculture placed heavy emphasis on Indian students studying at UTK where they could observe, practice, and learn from Appalachian agricultural and rural development programs in the area. As with the College of Home Economics, the work of UTK's College of Agriculture also took on political goals. UTK's agricultural instructors believed that through instating Appalachian reforms on southern India, they could promote what they believed were more profitable and effective agricultural methods to promote pro-American sentiment among the Indian people with whom they came in contact.

Through their work in India, UTK's Colleges of Home Economics and Agriculture took Appalachia abroad. In doing so, the instructors, students, administrators, farmers, and home economists working through this program crossed and blurred physical, cultural, political, and economic borders. In sending instructors halfway across the world to India and providing funding for Indian instructors and students to learn and study in Tennessee, the relationship between UTK and India fostered a movement of people more indicative of a globalized U.S. South, politically, socially, and economically integrated with the rest of the world, than typical

depictions of Appalachia as a region isolated from global society by both distance and culture. Furthermore, in drawing upon UTK's skill with home economics education and their previous experience with the implementation of agricultural development efforts in Appalachia, the UT-India program demonstrates how a region typically considered to be "developing" drew comparisons between itself and other "developing" regions across the world while also instituting and modeling development programs for others. In blurring this divide between the "developers" and the "developing," examining the work of the University of Tennessee in India challenges the legitimacy of dividing the world into two such disparate groups.

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Vita

Kaitlin Simpson is a Ph.D. student in the department of history at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Louisiana Monroe in 2018 with a bachelor's degree in history and a minor in English. Simpson began her graduate career at the University of Tennessee that Fall, graduating with a concurrent Master's degree in American History in the Spring of 2020. She is continuing her graduate education at the University of Tennessee where she is working towards a Ph.D. in American History with a focus on the twentieth-century U.S. South and the World.