

INDIRAN

The newsletter of the Ancient India & Iran Trust

Issue 15: Winter 2021



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Editor's letter

News from the Ancient India & Iran Trust

Welcome to the fifteenth edition of *Indiran*. Although life at the Trust remains altered by the Covid-19 pandemic, you will find in these pages a sense of it coming back to life.

A key objective of the Trust is to bring people with related interests together and spark dialogue. It was, therefore, a particular pleasure after the relative dormancy of the last 18 months, to open our doors in early October to a gathering of scholars concerned with early interactions between China, India and Iran (p. 5). This workshop was co-hosted with Cambridge University's Needham Research Institute and Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and was clearly enjoyed by all the attendees. The lively discussions, both during the sessions and the breaks, were a reminder of the importance of in-person scholarly events and interactions, and the role the Trust plays in facilitating these in a unique and welcoming environment.

That said, the last year has also opened up new possibilities in terms of digital events, a realm we might not have ventured into otherwise. Our online lectures (p. 3) have featured speakers in the UK as well as India and Israel, and have attracted large audiences from around the world. Many people have also appreciated being able to watch some of the talks afterwards on our new [YouTube channel](#). While we do hope to return to an in-person Friday lecture programme in the near future – a key and much-loved activity of the Trust – there is a strong case for also continuing to host occasional online events. As the success of the first ever online Allchin Symposium (p.4) underlines, this format enables a greater diversity of speakers and audiences and is, in certain respects, more inclusive.

Following the introduction of our library booking system to enable people to come and use our materials safely, there has, interestingly, been a rise in new visitors, highlighting the value of our specialist collections to researchers and students. The pieces here by AllT Bursary recipient Liam Devlin on his research on the Ateshgah of Tbilisi (p. 9), and PhD student Ruiyi Zhu (p. 10) on her use of the Charles Bawden collection illustrate the range and distinctiveness of what our library has to offer people working in diverse fields. And, as our Assistant Librarian, Joanna Salisbury, reports (p. 8), our collections continue to grow through valuable donations from scholars' personal libraries and photographic archives, which we can now make widely available through our presence on the Cambridge University Digital Library (CUDL): <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/aiit/1>

Much of the meticulous background work that goes into making new materials available and keeping the library in good shape is aided by the dedication of our volunteers, one of the first of whom was James Rankin who sadly passed away earlier this year. James and his wife Grace volunteered at the Trust for a decade before moving back to Scotland in 2011 and were very much members of the Trust family. Our Custodian, James Cormick, a close friend of the Rankins, pays tribute to James on page 7.

Following on from his piece in the previous issue, our trustee Nicholas Barrington shares more about his collection of books on Afghanistan during 'the Great Game' period (p. 11). And, as the country has featured much in the news lately, our cover image – the plaster/stucco head of a woman from Kunduz (3–4 century CE) – one of the artefacts photographed at Kabul Museum in

1951 by our founding trustee Bridget Allchin, seemed fitting. The full photographic archive can be viewed on CUDL.

Finally, as many of you have not been able to visit us for some time, we remind of you being greeted at the door by our large carved figure of Ganesha, another object of interest at the Trust that James Cormick has chosen to enlighten us about (p. 14). Hopefully, you will be able to see it again soon, knowing a little more about its part in the story of the Trust.

Munizha Ahmad-Cooke is the Administrator of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

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Events calendar 2020–21

Michaelmas Term 2020

30 October: Joe Cribb (British Museum; Ashmolean Museum; Ancient India and Iran Trust): Coinage in Afghanistan during the period of Islamic conquest c. AH 30–256 [AD 650–870]

4 December: Dinyar Patel (S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai): Naoroji: pioneer of Indian Nationalism

5 December: Seventh Allchin Symposium on South Asian Archaeology

Lent Term 2021

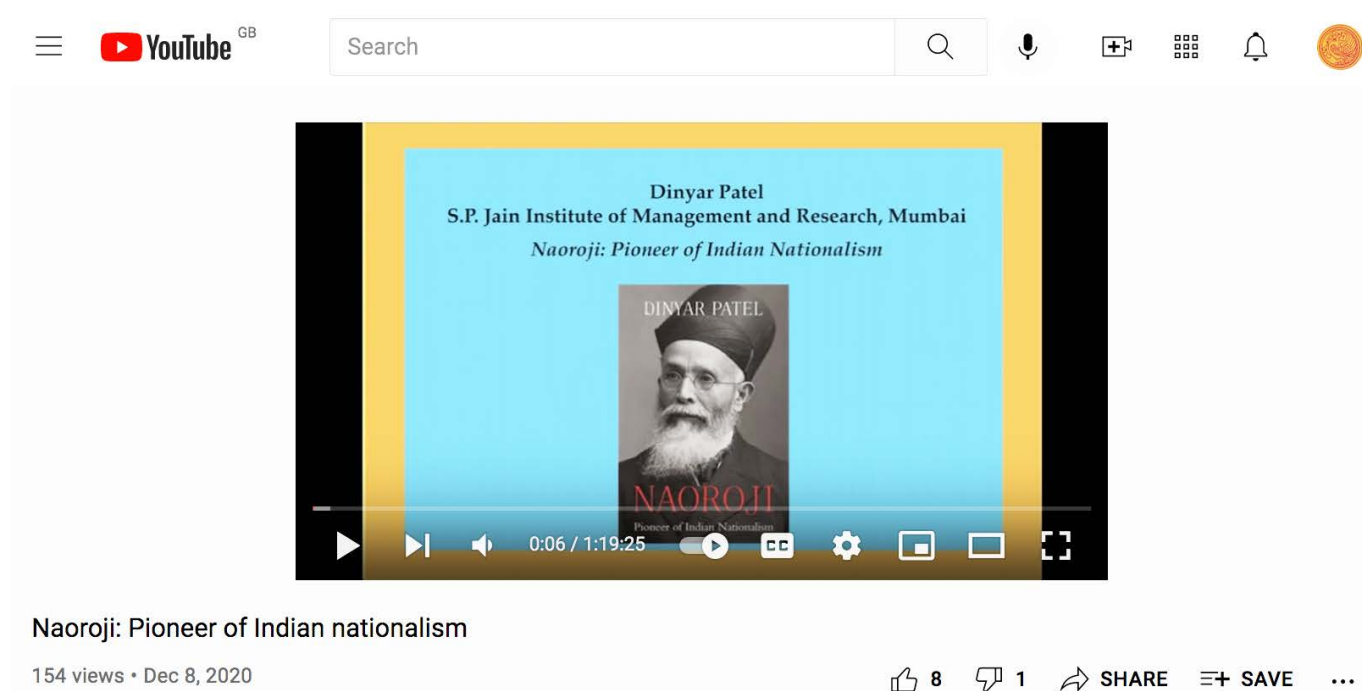
12 February: Domenico Agostini (Tel Aviv University) and Samuel Thrope (National Library of Israel; University of Haifa): The search for lost time: insights on Zoroastrian literature from the new translation of the *Bundahišn*

26 February: Emily Hannam (Royal Collection Trust, Windsor Castle): Persia in the Royal Library, Windsor

26 March: Cambridge Festival. Samuel N.C. Lieu (International Union of Academies; Robinson College, Cambridge; Ancient India and Iran Trust): Before Gallipoli there was Homer: the new Trojan war of 1915

Easter Term 2021

11 June: Cameron Petrie (University of Cambridge; Ancient India and Iran Trust): Living in the borderlands: a lecture to launch the book *Resistance at the Edge of Empires: The Archaeology and History of the Bannu Basin from 1000 BC to AD 1200*



YouTube GB

Search

Dinyar Patel
S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai
Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism

DINYAR PATEL
PIONEER OF INDIAN NATIONALISM
NAOROJI

0:06 / 1:19:25

Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian nationalism

154 views • Dec 8, 2020

8 1 SHARE SAVE ...

Some of our online talks can be viewed on The Ancient India & Iran Trust [YouTube channel](#). Subscribe to be notified of new content.

Special events – Allchin Symposium

7th Allchin Symposium on South Asian Archaeology: an online success

Alessandro Ceccarelli and Cameron Petrie

On Saturday 5 December 2020, the first ever online version of the Allchin Symposium was hosted in Cambridge. In keeping with the tradition of the event, scholars at various stages of their careers, usually based in the UK, presented their papers in front of an audience of their peers, but the new online format made it possible to diversify both the speakers and the audience. Rather than a limit imposed by the size of a room at the Ancient India and Iran Trust, hundreds of students and researchers joined the remote event from all over the world, including South Asia, the USA, Spain and Italy.

The first group of speakers presented papers on the prehistoric and protohistoric periods. These included Dr Parth R. Chauhan (HSS, IISER Mohali, India): 'New paleoanthropological evidence from the Central Narmada Basin, India'; Charusmita Gaddekar (Institució Milà i Fontanals, Barcelona): 'Early Harappan interaction between Sindh and Gujarat: as evidenced by lithic tools from Juna Khatiya, Gujarat'; and Carolina Jiménez Arteaga and Óscar Parque (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona): 'Bioarchaeology of the Indus civilisation: a multi-proxy

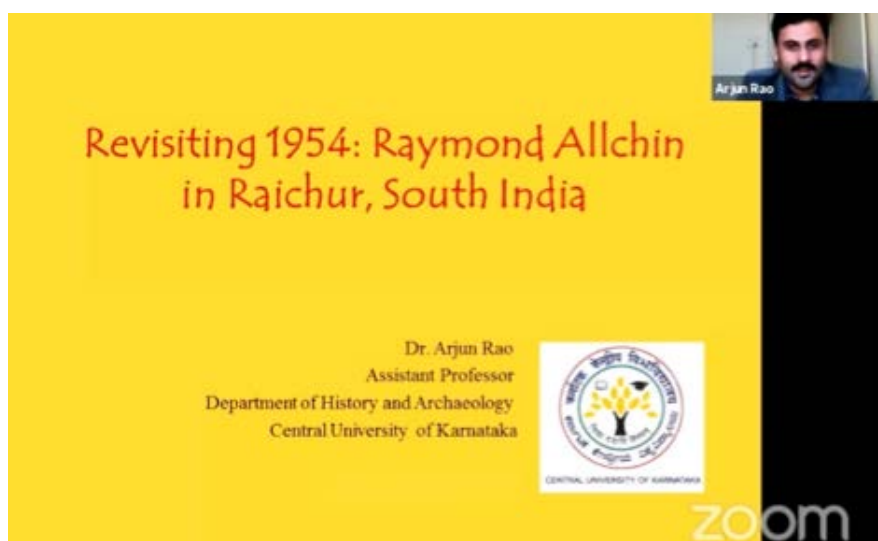
analysis from Bhando Qubo, Sindh, Pakistan.

A second group of speakers presented research papers spanning from ancient to modern South Asia, with a special emphasis on the impact of their projects on contemporary cultural heritage. These presenters included Professor Arjun Rao (Central University of Karnataka), the NTICVA Visiting Fellow who came to the Trust in March 2020 (see [Indiran 14](#)): 'Revisiting 1954: Raymond Allchin in Raichur, South India'; Jiajing Mo (Durham University): 'Re-interpreting Xiyu ji and reconsidering its role in the study of early India'; Srija Sahay (University of Delhi): 'Monuments to water: a study of the Chand Baori Tughlaqabad Fort, Delhi'; and Diptarka Datta (Deccan College, Pune): 'Prospects of rescue archaeology and heritage tourism'.

In the middle of the day, Professor Massimo Vidale (University of Padua, Italy) delivered an exciting keynote

speech on the warehouse of Tappeh Taleb Khan 2 (Sistan, Iran) and the development of sealing in the second half of the 3rd millennium BC.

The final session focused on themes of ancient South Asian crafts, settlements and food production. The speakers were former AIIT Bursary recipient Nicholas Groat (University of Sheffield): 'Settlements, crafts and food rethinking technological complexity: a critical overview of proffered distillation apparatus in Gandhāra and South-Central Asia'; Eduard L. Fanthome (Stanford University): 'Walking within walls: politics, movement and settlement on the margins of the cosmopolis in medieval southern India'; and Jennifer Bates (University of Pennsylvania): 'Refitted bone, food lumps and terracotta cakes: thinking through the complex creation of a midden pit at Kadebakele'.



A recording of the 7th Allchin Symposium is available at: <https://bit.ly/2ZchP7a>

Alessandro Ceccarelli recently completed his PhD in Archaeology at the University of Cambridge and is a Research Associate there. He is also a Research Manager for the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Cameron Petrie is Reader in South Asian and Iranian Archaeology at the University of Cambridge, and Honorary Secretary of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

Special events – China, India, and Iran

Trust holds joint workshop with Needham Institute and FAMES

Bill Mak

On 8–9 October 2021, the Needham Research Institute, the Ancient India and Iran Trust and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, jointly organised a workshop on 'China, India, and Iran: scientific exchange and cultural contact through the first millennium CE'. The event was first proposed by Bill Mak in 2019 when he was the Ho Peng Yoke Fellow of History of Science at the Needham Research Institute, and was due to take place in October 2020 after receiving the support of the three organising partners and the generous sponsorship of the Glorison Network and the Tsz Shan Monastery in Hong Kong. Postponed for a year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the two-day workshop, held at the Needham Research Institute and the Ancient India and Iran Trust on its first and second day respectively, revived the convivial, social atmosphere that is an integral part of the identity of the two institutes. This was aided by the bright and warm weather, which enabled participants to enjoy both the garden and the lecture venues.

The workshop began with a keynote lecture by Professor Sam Lieu FBA: 'From Qin to Cathay – names for China and the Chinese on the Silk Road'. Over the two days, 15 speakers from Cambridge, Oxford and SOAS covered a wide range of topics from religion and ancient codices to astronomy and the transmission of metallurgical recipes and aromatics across Eurasia. (Regrettably Nicholas Sims-Williams was unable to participate due to a recent injury). The cross-disciplinary, plurilingual and transcultural content, the discussions facilitated by the six discussants (Jianjun Mei, Imre Galambos, Erica Hunter, Bill Mak in lieu of Nicholas Sims-Williams, Tim Barrett and François de Blois), and the collaborative organisation of the event contributed to its richness, offering new insights to its participants in terms of the interconnectivity of the three ancient, neighbouring cultures. Due to space limitations and consideration for social distancing, both venues accommodated no more than 30 participants. However, nearly 100 online participants from over 20 countries, mostly researchers and students at universities around the world, were able to join the event at some point through Eventbrite and Zoom live-streaming of the lectures.



The full workshop programme with abstracts can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/3jcqjja>



China, India, and Iran

Scientific Exchange and Cultural Contact
through the First Millennium CE

October 8-9, 2021
Cambridge, UK

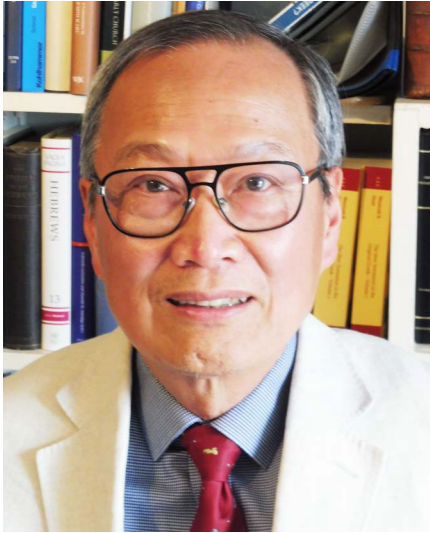
Workshop jointly organized by
Needham Research Institute (NRI)
Ancient India and Iran Trust (AIIT)
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES), Cambridge University
with support from Glorison Network and Tsz Shan Monastery



Bill Mak is Principal Researcher at the Tsz Shan Monastery Buddhist Art Museum, Hong Kong, Research Associate at the Needham Research Institute and a Bye Fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge.

Congratulations

Sam Lieu elected Fellow of the British Academy



Each year, the British Academy elects to its fellowship up to 52 outstanding UK-based scholars who have achieved distinction in any branch of the humanities and social sciences. Among the five Cambridge-based academics to be elected Fellow this year is one of our trustees: Emeritus Professor Samuel N.C. Lieu, Bye Fellow of Robinson College, and former co-ordinator for the Friends of the Trust. See the Cambridge University news story at <https://www.cam.ac.uk/news/cambridge-academics-elected-to-british-academy-0>

Born in Hong Kong in 1950, Sam was an Exhibitioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge (1969), and took his DPhil degree in Ancient History at Oxford (1981) where he was also a Junior Research Fellow at Wolfson College (1974–76). He was successively Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor of Ancient History at Warwick University. In 1996 he was appointed to the Chair of Ancient History at Macquarie University in Sydney where, in 2010, he was awarded the title of Inaugural Distinguished Professor. He was Alexander Von Humboldt Stipendiat at the University of Tübingen (1989–1990) where he studied Middle Iranian and was Walker-Ames Visiting (Professorial) Fellow at the University of Washington, Seattle (2009). He has been co-director of the UNESCO-sponsored Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum project since 1996 and is also coordinator of the ‘China and the

Ancient Mediterranean World’ project of the Union Académique Internationale (UAI). In 2003 he was awarded a Centenary Medal by the Governor-General of Australia for his contribution to both Classical and Asian Studies and was awarded a DORA (Discovery Outstanding Research Award) in 2012 by the Australian Research Council for three years (2013–15). He has been a delegate of the Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities to the UAI since 2002 and was elected President of the Union at the 89th General Assembly at Tokyo (2017). Besides researching Manichaean and Christian texts from the Silk Road, he is also working on a monograph on the Classical and Byzantine Thracian Chersonese – more popularly known as the Gallipoli Peninsula. He has given lectures on all his various research interests to the Trust during the past decade.

Sam is the fourth trustee to be elected an FBA, the other three being our Chair, Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams, Professor Almut Hintze and Professor Julius Lipner.

A celebration for François de Blois

On the afternoon of 26 September 2021, the Trust hosted a party for long-time Friend and associate François de Blois. François is a scholar of Semitic and Iranian languages and the history of religions in the Near East in pre-modern times. The celebration marked two things: the proximity of his 73rd birthday and the publication of a *Festschrift* in his honour by the Royal Asiatic Society.

The guests were treated to a lavish spread of Middle Eastern delicacies and a large birthday cake commissioned by and transported to the Trust by his wife Charlotte. And half way through the festivities we were further entertained by a speech (available at: <https://www.arashzeini.com/the-roar-of-silence/>)



Standing: Arash Zeini and AIT Chair Nicholas Sims-Williams. Seated: François de Blois and Charlotte de Blois.

by Arash Zeini, one of the editors of the *Festschrift*, detailing the genesis of this particular publication.

It was a lovely sunny day, much to the delight of the considerable number of children and grandchildren present, who were able to park their scooters on the lawn and play in the garden.

The Roar of Silence: A Festschrift in Honour of François de Blois, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 31(3), is available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-the-royal-asiatic-society/>

Remembering James Rankin (1941–2021)

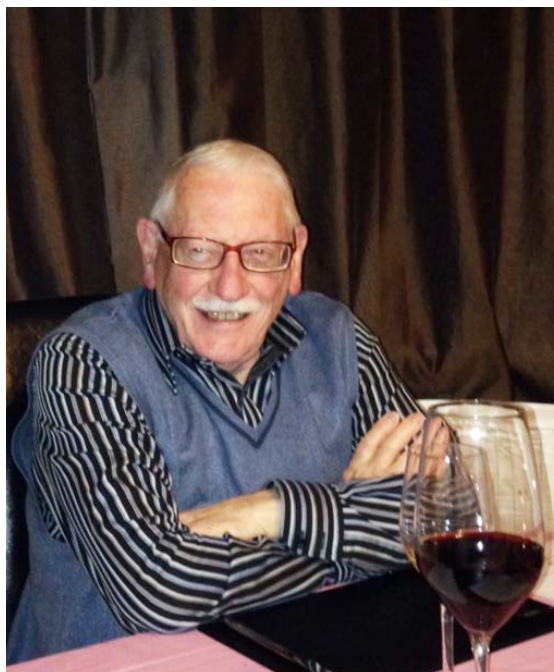
James Rankin (20 July 1941–1 June 2021)

James Cormick

We were all terribly sad to hear of the death of James Rankin on the 1 June 2021. James and his wife Grace lived in Ely for many years before returning to Scotland in 2010 to Bathgate in West Lothian, the area Grace was brought up in as a child. One year before they left, our Administrator, Munizha Ahmad-Cooke, wrote about him in the Trust's [2009 newsletter](#):

James Rankin visited the Trust 10 years ago on an open day in which several local establishments were participating. As well as having worked in the Middle East, he had visited both India and Iran and had a keen interest in the history of these regions. He was shown around the Trust and remembers our Chair, Dr Bridget Allchin, inviting him back for some of the curry she was preparing. He didn't make it back for lunch but a couple of years later, following his retirement from the civil service, he revisited the Trust, which the Allchins had told him was quite hard up, and offered his services as a volunteer. Since then, James has completed several important and painstaking projects in our library including the listing of the Allchin Slide Collection, Sir Harold Bailey's and Charles Bawden's offprints and sorting through Sir Harold's correspondence.

He and his wife Grace, another longstanding volunteer of the Trust (who has also made a significant culinary contribution to our in-house celebrations), also spent a week in Germany sorting out Professor Emmerick's offprints. James is currently carrying out a detailed stock



check of the library. He says he has been able to adapt well to these somewhat laborious jobs because of his past auditing experience. He adds that what attracted him to the Trust was its 'lovely, calm and friendly atmosphere' and he has always enjoyed meeting the variety of people who come here to work on specific projects or use the library during the morning coffee break, which brings everyone together and has become an institution in itself.

And Grace herself wrote, at our request, this tribute to him shortly after his death this year. She recalls two of his most striking and endearing characteristics: his insatiable curiosity and his thoroughness, both of which I personally witnessed as a friend on our trips together abroad to St. Petersburg and Budapest. James insisted on doing a touristic site thoroughly, seeing every room in a palace or church, examining every artefact and climbing every staircase and tower, much to Grace's and my amusement and admiration. Grace writes:

James was born in Kinglassie, Fife, where he grew up. On leaving school he applied to the Civil Service for a job in a Scottish city – he was sent to London!

As always, he made the most of this posting, i.e. he walked, explored areas and buildings etc. and got to know as much as he could about his surroundings. He also went to as many West End shows as he could afford, often sitting in the gods.

In the early 1960s he accepted a post in the Middle East, where he stayed for 3 years. Again, he explored as much as he could, hiring a car with a driver to tour around, meeting Bedouins (one being a cousin of his driver) and sharing a meal in their tent. He used his leave to visit Kenya, Lebanon and Jordan, to name but a few places. He thoroughly enjoyed his time there.

On his return to London he attended either Pont Street or Crown Court Church of Scotland. It was at Crown Court that we met. Our first home was in Luton, quite a commute, but London prices were out of our reach. After 5 years we moved to Nailsea, near Bristol, for 12 years, on to Durrington, near Salisbury, for 6 years, Ely next for 14, before finally heading 'home'. We have been in Bathgate now for 10 years.

He had a really happy few years at the Ancient India and Iran Trust. He always spoke fondly of the many folk he met and enjoyed hearing of the interesting things you all did.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

James Cormick is the Custodian of the Ancient India and Iran Trust

News from the library

The Trust library in lockdown and beyond

Joanna Salisbury

Although the Trust was closed to readers for substantial periods of time during lockdown (March–August 2020 and December 2020–April 2021), this did not stop researchers and supporters from all over the world engaging with us via email, our blog and social media. We may not have been able to offer access to our physical collections for almost 12 months, but being able to direct people to resources in other ways highlights the collaborative nature of libraries and repositories today and the importance of developing digital collections.

Over the past year, there has also been increased interest in our duplicates book list. These sales not only help researchers to obtain specialist and out of print books but also provide valuable income for the Trust to direct towards keeping our collections up to date. The current duplicates list can be viewed via our Library webpage: <https://www.indiran.org/about/duplicates/>

That said, it has been wonderful not only to be working back in the library, but also to welcome back readers, from regular researchers, academics and students to bursary recipients, new visitors to the Trust and, of course, a number of our trustees! Our volunteers Janet Pope, Peter Jackson and Charlotte Pippard have also made a welcome return and are currently working on book repairs and the correspondence archive of Charles Bawden. Booking in advance was introduced to the library and has seen numbers using our collections rise considerably compared to before lockdown. Interestingly, one PhD student commented that booking a room regularly at the Trust is a great



Interior of the Rock Temple at the Elephanta Caves in Maharashtra, India. Photo: Anna Dallapiccola, 1971–72. Part of the collection currently being digitised for the Trust's collection on the Cambridge University Digital Library.

motivator, as well as giving them the opportunity to use the library's collections.

One positive effect of having to close the library was that additional cataloguing could be undertaken, adding new and donated books and journals to our collections. Following Professor Anna Dallapiccola's donation of books and journals related to Indian art in January 2020, over 200 books have been catalogued and are now listed on Cambridge University Library's iDiscover platform (<https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/>) and are available for reference at the Trust. In June 2021, we received a collection of Georgian books from Professor James Clackson (Faculty of Classics, Cambridge), which have also been catalogued and added to the Trust's Caucasus collection.

In addition to her substantial donation of books, Professor Dallapiccola has also kindly donated her extensive collection of over 10,000 slides and photographs of outstanding images of art

from sites all over India. They are currently being digitised, to form the next Trust collection added to the Cambridge University Digital Library (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/>). This digitisation project was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Luigi and Laura Dallapiccola Foundation (<https://www.wssociety.co.uk/charities/dallapiccola>).

Joanna Salisbury is Assistant Librarian at the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

If you wish to enquire about the library or make a booking to use items in our collections, please email library@indiran.org, or call 01223 702095.

Trust Bursaries



Research on the Ateshgah of Tbilisi

Liam Devlin

For a week in late June 2021, I had the pleasure of visiting the Ancient India and Iran Trust to perform library research on the Ateshgah of Tbilisi. This structure is a semi-derelict, Sasanian period Zoroastrian fire temple located in the heart of the Old District of Tbilisi. With a research background in cultural heritage preservation and at-risk archaeology, I am interested in the contemporary social and religious contexts of this structure, and my ultimate plan is to travel to Georgia in order to learn more about what motivates local people to care for this temple, and understand how it is perceived by Orthodox Christian and Muslim communities resident within the area. A necessary first step in this process was to build up a sufficient knowledge base on the structure, and conduct what in archaeological terms is known as a 'desk based assessment', whereby a systematic survey of the present literature is undertaken, and the current knowns and unknowns are determined. However, in all my research up until that point, the Ateshgah had proved

to be a bit of an anomaly, for I could find almost no direct references to it in any of the works I consulted.

Thus, it was with a great deal of excitement that I learned of the vast and varied library housed by the Ancient India and Iran Trust, and with an even greater deal of excitement I learned that my application for a Trust Bursary was successful. Over the course of the week, I benefited from access to academic conference publications which elucidated upon Zoroastrianism in the Caucasus; pamphlets dealing with Sasanian contributions to Zoroastrian liturgy; lavishly illustrated encyclopaedias showcasing Zoroastrian religious architecture, and book chapters dealing with the complex interplay between religion and state in the Sasanian world. The concentration of so many specialised works on such a niche topic would be difficult to locate in any other UK library, and these were of immense use in expanding my bibliography.

As ever, the more I delved into the literature, the more questions arose and novel angles of approach to the Ateshgah presented themselves. To this end, the staff offered much enthusiastic assistance, with Jo, the Librarian, contacting several relevant

international scholars on my behalf; and the Custodian, James, guiding me through a series of picture books and parallel text volumes dealing with the Old Town of Tbilisi and the wider Georgian landscape. In spite of these concerted efforts and vast literary resources, the coveted chapter, page, or indeed paragraph dealing directly with the Ateshgah could not be located. Whilst this was partly unexpected, it has only served to incentivise me further and highlight the current gap in the literature which needs to be addressed.

Looking to the future, I will travel out to the Ateshgah in late summer next year to conduct interviews with the local populace and write up a research paper. The preliminary studies I carried out during my week at the Ancient India and Iran Trust have fortified my knowledge of Zoroastrian religion and the Sasanian Empire, and allowed my research questions to take on a sharper focus. Whilst the Ateshgah remains somewhat elusive in the literature, thanks to the generosity of the Trust and enthusiasm of its staff, I will head out into the field far better equipped than I would have been without spending this week in Cambridge.

Liam Devlin is an archaeologist specialising in cultural heritage protection and the illicit antiquities trade. He is currently a Kennedy Scholar at Harvard University.

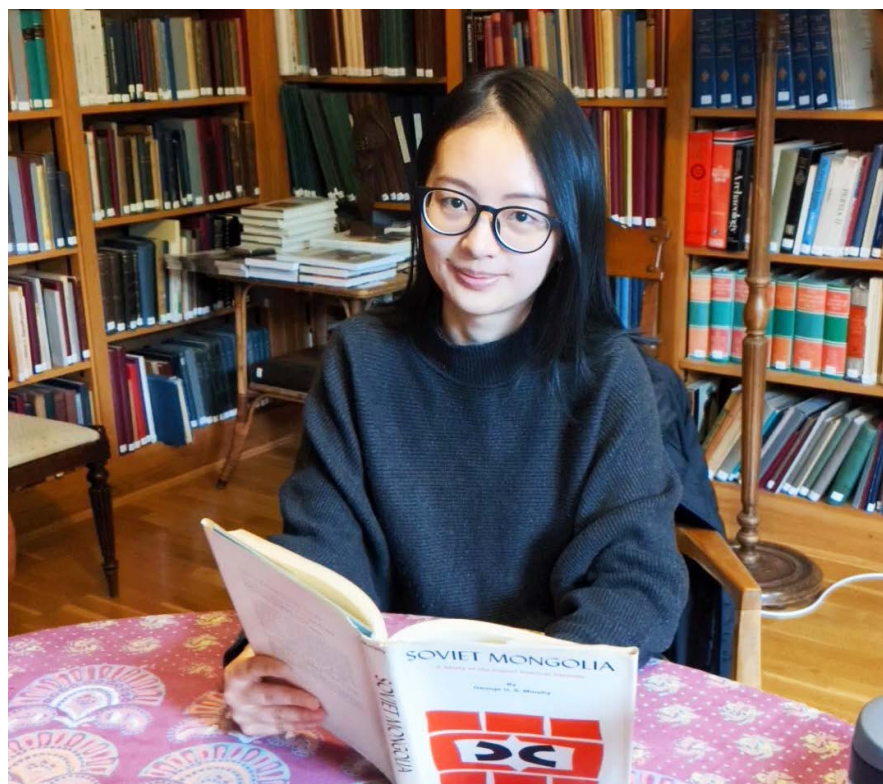
Visitors to the Trust

Delving into the Charles Bawden collection

Ruiyi Zhu

I have long hoped to explore the Charles Bawden collection at the Ancient India and Iran Trust. A pioneer in Mongolian Studies in Britain, Bawden donated his library (books, offprints, photographs and correspondence) to the Trust in 2001 and 2014. Fortunately, I was able to spend the summer in the final year of my doctoral research at the Trust, surrounded by extensive library collections and delightful company. As a PhD candidate in Social Anthropology at Cambridge, I am writing a dissertation on contemporary Sino-Mongolian relations from the perspective of industrial encounters. Between 2018 and 2019, I conducted my 18-month fieldwork at a fluorspar mine in Mongolia among Chinese and Mongolian workers. While this ethnographic study sheds light on the general dynamics shared by the recent dissemination of Chinese capital and human resources in various parts of the world, my research foregrounds the unique historical entanglements at the Sino-Mongolian interface.

A related interest of mine has been Sino-Mongolian relations during the socialist era, particularly the Chinese labourers dispatched to Mongolia between 1955 and 1964 with the stated goal of 'assisting the construction of socialism'. My archival research at the Trust has mainly focused on this period. I have relished reading Bawden's book collection from the 1960s, including both discourses of Mongolian statesmen and analyses by eminent Mongolists. In retrospect, the once 'indissoluble' and 'eternal' socialist fraternity seems strikingly short-lived, given the Sino-Soviet rift and



the collapse of the Soviet Union, but the progressive optimism and internationalist vision could perhaps shed an alternative light on the present.

Of course, one of the joys of working at a library is unexpected encounters. Beyond the scope of my research, I enjoyed reading Bawden's meticulous translation of a Mongol tract from the early 20th century speaking to the evils of strong drink, a pearl of timeless wisdom. Additionally, the collection contained several Mongolian newspaper clippings sent by Alan Sanders, who shared with Bawden the joy of tracking neologisms in Mongolian as the country entered the Information Age.

When time became amorphous and space congealed during successive COVID lockdowns, my weekly visits to the Trust helped set a healthy routine outside my homestead. The daily coffee time, hosted by James and enlivened by the wonderful company of Joanna and

Munizha along with other visitors, provided quality human contact. Our conversations ranged wide and far, from Chinggis Khan's genes to contemporary gender-bending practices, and from the etymological roots of tea to personal porcelain collections (a delicate hobby shared by Bawden himself).

Though distanced from the Mongolian plateau, Cambridge has proven to be a natural habitat for Mongolists, thanks to the rich legacy of interdisciplinary research at the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit (MIASU), the Charles Bawden collection at the Ancient India and Iran Trust and the Owen Lattimore collection at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES). This intellectual heritage will be an enduring inspiration for aspiring researchers like me. For that, I am deeply grateful.

Ruiyi Zhu is a PhD candidate at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

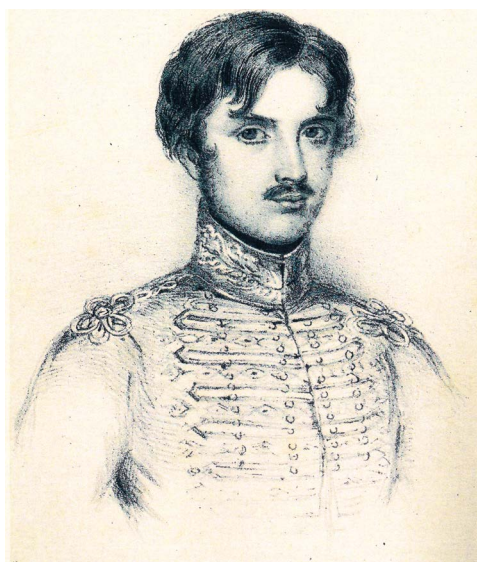
Books about Afghanistan 2

Nicholas Barrington

With reference to my article in *Indiran* last year about my collection of books related to Afghanistan, what follows are a few further thoughts about 19th-century history. It is hoped that in due course a full report will be available via the Trust's website.

I became personally interested in one of the heroes of the First Anglo-Afghan war: the young Bengal gunner Vincent Eyre. Guns were often crucial in battle in those days, along with gunnery skills, manhandled with difficulty over craggy inhospitable tracks. After returning to London in 1961 following my first posting in Kabul, I bought a series of 17 lithograph portraits of the 'Kabul prisoners' which I subsequently had framed. They were based on sketches by Eyre, and delicately hand-coloured, with the names written below in ink. Later, I acquired a fine-bound booklet that had these drawings printed in black and white with names added. This set included some landscapes by Eyre, including of the Bamian Buddhas, with further portraits based on sketches by Vigne.

Among the Kabul prisoners, Eyre, accompanied by his wife and child, was often quite ill, but he managed to get the story of the Afghan disaster out on scraps of paper, which were published by a brother (address: the Athenaeum) in London at the same time as Lady Sale's more famous diaries. In a book that he, now Major-General Sir Vincent Eyre, later published in 1879, he repeated his original report preceded by a summary assessment of the mistakes made in the war, adding that his earlier volume had 'unpardonably deprived the great Duke of Wellington of a whole night's



Portrait of Vincent Eyre, from the first edition of The Military Operations at Cabul, which ended in the retreat and destruction of the British Army, January 1842: with a journal of imprisonment in Afghanistan by Lieut. Vincent Eyre, London: John Murray, 1843.

slumber'. One of the points he made was that 'we could have taken a salutary lesson from the Afghans on the use of fire-arms. They invariably took steady deliberate aim seldom throwing away a single shot, while our men seemed to fire entirely at random'. He mentioned no art work.

Details about the prisoners that Eyre omitted from this book were reported fully in in his *Journal of an Afghan Prisoner* published in 1976, with an introduction by James Lunt, which included a full list of names of those killed, and saved, during 'the rebellion'. The Afghans had taken mercy on most of the British women and children, bringing them to join the prisoners. Among those listed was 'Mrs Mainwaring and child'. About 20 years ago a friend who knew my interest in the period gave me an original manuscript letter signed by a Colonel Mainwaring – that very child. It mentioned his mother's suffering when the camel on which she was travelling was shot dead and she was trying to carry her three-month old baby through the

snow. I feel a tactile link now with those events.

Another of the most attractive young characters among the prisoners was George Lawrence, who had been military secretary to Sir William MacNaughton. He was with him, saved just in time by an Afghan friend, when MacNaughton was murdered. At Lady Sale's suggestion, he became a sort of unofficial organiser of the prisoners. His book *Reminiscences of Forty-Three Years in India* tells the story clearly, as well as of his subsequent distinguished career. He was the second of five sons of an impecunious protestant family in Ulster who made a significant impact on Indian history. Two of his younger brothers, Henry and John, whose preferment he helped, became more famous but had less to do with Afghanistan.

Stressed after his Kabul experience, Lawrence earned a long break back at home and was then given a post in Peshawar, where he became popular with the local Pathan tribesmen. It was there one day that a merchant just arrived from Kabul offered to sell him an English sword, which he was delighted to find was his very own sword that had been taken from him just before MacNaughton's murder.

Many prominent Indian personalities were involved as young men in the humiliation of the First Anglo-Afghan war. Captain John Nicholson was one of the garrison of Ghazni who were taken to join the Kabul prisoners. It was he who made a name for himself and died at the siege of Delhi in 1857. Another prisoner released from Ghazni fort was the surgeon and geologist Dr Thomas Thomson, a respected explorer who spent his later life at Kew as one of the greatest botanists of his time. Lt Henry Rawlinson, recruited at first with an intelligence brief to watch for Russian activity in Iran, became political adviser to General Nott who commanded the British

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invasion force in Qandahar. He was always apprehensive about Afghan popular antagonism to the British, and was said to be the first to coin the expression 'the Great Game'. Later, as Sir Henry Rawlinson, he was known as an archaeologist as well as soldier, having been the first to decipher cuneiform after climbing to the rock inscriptions at Behistun. Among junior officers with Sale's brigade in Jalalabad was Henry Havelock, struggling throughout his career for chances of promotion to earn a suitable income for his family. He was a noted evangelical Christian who gave sermons to his troops. He ended as General, dying a national hero, commander of the relief of Lucknow. He is one of the two soldiers commemorated by a statue in Trafalgar Square. Not far away, on the Embankment, is a memorial to General James Outram. A member of the British invading army taking Kabul, he nearly succeeded in capturing the fleeing Dost Mohammed Khan. Returning to India through Baluchistan before the disaster of retreat he played a major role in Sindh where he was sympathetic to the local people, then served with distinction in other parts of India including heading a successful expedition to Bushehr in the Gulf. I used to wonder why someone about whom I knew little was so honoured. It was because he was widely known as the 'Bayard of India' who was not only an able commander but was unfailingly kind and thoughtful towards his men and to all the deprived people with whom he came into contact. One of the warmest tributes paid at the time of his Westminster Abbey funeral was by his friend General Vincent Eyre.

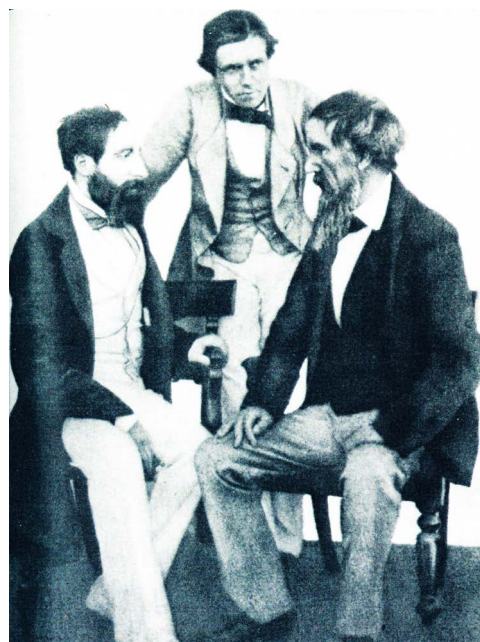
In this group should also be counted the young engineer Lt Henry Durand who had played a key role in the successful British assault on the fort of Ghazni. He went on to

positions of greater responsibility, including Lt Governor of the Punjab. He was the father of another set of remarkable men who bear comparison with the Lawrences. One gave his name to the controversial boundary between Afghanistan and India, now Pakistan.

Despite all of the great Ranjit Singh's qualities, the Sikh ruler completely failed to ensure a smooth succession after his death, which took place while the British were occupying Kabul. Bitter rivalry between his family heirs, ambitious wazirs and army commanders led to the assassination of five aspiring maharajahs until only a child of dubious parentage was left: Duleep Singh, under a Council of Regency headed by his mother. Someone called the Rani 'the Messalina of the Punjab'. East India Company administrators, led by the Resident in Lahore, Henry Lawrence (George's brother) who had earlier been based at Peshawar, were invited to take charge in the name of the Durbar (the Court). But the Sikh armies, the Khalsa, with their own form of self-government, hating the British and despising the Durbar, initiated the first of the two Sikh wars by invading British territory south and east of Lahore. These were short but hotly contested, resulting in considerable loss of life.

During a two-year peaceful interval Henry Lawrence established a group of loyal young British officers around the borders of the Sikh empire and reorganised British military, including the creation of the Corps of Guides, dressed not in bright uniforms but in Khaki. He was in many ways an unworldly figure, known to understand and love local Indians and trusted by many of them.

One young officer, Herbert Edwardes, in due course to give his name to a much respected Christian



George Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes and Henry Lawrence, from A Year on the Punjab Frontier in 1848-49 by Major Herbert B. Edwardes, London: Richard Bentley, 1851.

college in Peshawar, described in his impressive two-volume book *A Year on the Punjab Frontier* (1851) how, after pacifying tribes in the area of Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, he led a force of loyal Pathans, almost single-handedly, to invest the walled city of Multan in southern Punjab where two British officials had been killed. These events triggered the Second Sikh War. Sikh armies clashed with hard-pressed British forces all over the Punjab. At one point George Lawrence was isolated in Peshawar and taken prisoner with his family. A sad memorial site at Chillianwala near Rawalpindi, which members of the British High Commission used to visit in my time, marked a huge loss of life on both sides. For the British it was at best a draw but it took a final British victory at Gujrat to persuade Sikh commanders to surrender. There was an appetite at last for peace. The East India Company felt obliged to formally annex the Punjab, arousing little protest. General Gough's book on *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars* (1987) makes

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sense of these events.

In 1849 the Governor-General appointed a trio of individuals to administer the Punjab headed by Henry Lawrence. Duleep Singh was sent to exile in Britain (with the Koh-i-Noor diamond!) where he became a friend of Queen Victoria. Also in the trio was Henry's younger brother John Lawrence, who had earned a good reputation working his way up through the Civil Service. He was different to Henry but an equally strong character, tending to support Indian farmers rather than elites. The third member, often having to keep peace between the other two, was Sir Robert Montgomery, who had been at the same modest school in Ireland as all the Lawrence brothers. He was the grandfather of Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, hero of World War II. Protestants from the north of Ireland played a major role in the empire story.

When I was British High Commissioner in Islamabad I was occasionally invited to be the guest of honour at speech days of prominent private schools. One of the most impressive schools that I visited was Lawrence College in the hills north of Rawalpindi. It was made clear to me there that the school was named after Sir Henry Lawrence.

Dost Mohammed Khan, who had returned to the Kabul throne after his period of self-imposed exile, had little sympathy with the Sikhs with whom he was still contesting influence in the Peshawar area. He made it clear that he would prefer to deal with an orderly India controlled by the British. After Henry Lawrence had been given a diplomatic break at Kathmandu and was then appointed British Resident in Lucknow, John Lawrence became Chief Commissioner in the Punjab where he accepted an invitation to meet the Afghans in the border beyond Peshawar to sign



Portrait of Dost Mohamed Khan, from A Personal Narrative of a Visit to Ghuzni, Kabul, and Afghanistan, and of a Residence at the Court of Dost Mohamed: with notices of Runjit Sing, Khiva, and the Russian expedition. With illustrations, from drawings made by the author on the spot by Godfrey Thomas Vigne, London: Whittaker & Co., 1840.

a treaty of peace and friendship in 1854. Lawrence had always been opposed to any further interference in Afghanistan. My handsome two-volume biography of Lord Lawrence, as he became in 1883, makes it clear that he enjoyed contacts with his excessively portly but highly intelligent Afghan interlocutor, the Dost's heir apparent Ghulam Hyder Khan (I have an early print portrait of him in his slimmer youth). The Afghans presented no problems when the East India Company was confronted with dangerous tensions leading to the Indian War of Independence, also called the Mutiny, in 1857. Having respect for the British despite their recent battles, the majority of the Sikhs, rather surprisingly perhaps, supported the East India Company as opposed to 'rebellious' Hindus in that war.

John Lawrence played a major role in promptly disarming native regiments and mobilising loyal forces in that conflict, leading to the crucial British victory at Delhi. British rule in India had been seriously threatened. Henry Lawrence found himself isolated in Lucknow, killed by a shell and deeply mourned. George Lawrence ended up doing good work as Resident in the large state of Rajputana during the conflict. A book on the family given to me by my friend Sir John Lawrence (great-grandson of Henry) dated 1990, makes clear through a comprehensive family tree that George ended Sir George and a Lt General, but doesn't say where he is buried. John Lawrence, who later became Governor-General and first Viceroy Lord Lawrence, is commemorated by a statue in Waterloo Place, near the Athenaeum.

The departure of the East India Company and direct takeover by London does not feature strongly in any of my books. The top man simply became the Viceroy rather than the Governor-General. People on the ground continued to believe that those at home in London didn't really understand Indian problems.

Nicholas Barrington is former British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Honorary Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, and a trustee of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

The image of Ganesha

James Cormick

Visitors to the Trust's house at 23 Brooklands Avenue cannot have failed to notice the splendid wooden carving of the Hindu god Ganesha as they come through the door, in a tropical setting, with his elephant head, broken tusk, four arms, symbolic regalia and attendant mouse. As he is considered to be 'the remover of obstacles' and 'the bringer of success', he is traditionally placed near the entrance to a house, I remember being told by the Allchins when he was first brought to the Trust in the 1990s. In fact, I helped bring him here. Bridget Allchin and I drove all the way to the Cargo Terminal at Heathrow, filled in all the requisite forms, waited the required amount of time and rescued him from HM Revenue and Customs bureaucracy with surprising ease, no doubt helped by Lord Ganesha's special skills.

The statue was bought by the Allchins on one of their annual trips to India. They used to go to India and Pakistan regularly, not only to keep their hands in socially and archaeologically but also, latterly, to interview candidates for the Charles Wallace India Trust Visiting Fellowship. The Ancient India and Iran Trust was asked to administer this fellowship for nearly 20 years from 1985 to 2003, as a result of which we hosted 23 Indian academics, finding them accommodation and arranging access to research facilities for them in Cambridge, either here or at the university.

The Charles Wallace India Trust is still going strong and appears to have an association with the British Council now. It has a [website](#) on which its present aims are explained:



'The Charles Wallace India Trust gives grants to Indians in the early or middle stages of their careers who are living in India and working or studying in the arts, heritage conservation or the humanities.

The grants enable successful applicants to achieve their artistic, academic or professional ambitions

through spending time in the United Kingdom.'

It was one of these Indian scholarly recipients of the grant who told me that the Trust's image of Ganesha had to be consecrated to be made effective. Unfortunately, I have forgotten his name, but he was a Brahmin and claimed he had the power to perform this rite. However, I have recently read the 2019 article by our trustee Julius Lipner, 'The Hindu Sacred Image and its Iconography', in which one section deals with the question 'What makes an image sacred?'. I am now not sure that our ceremony fulfilled all the requirements. According to Lipner, 'it [the image] must be consecrated by the priest through a ritual called the *prāṇa pratiṣṭhā*, "the investing of life".' Even if it didn't, however, and the statue only acquired the status of being 'blessed', the ceremony was performed with a good deal of authenticity, to my eyes at any rate.

To create the correct tropical atmosphere, our Brahmin scholar went into the garden and decapitated some beautiful lilies I had been struggling to grow – an act of floricide I have not repeated since then, I must confess. In the hope that Lord Ganesha will not mind his offerings transitioning from organic to inorganic, I prefer to place smooth round stones of different colours in front of his image.

James Cormick is the Custodian of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

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Front Cover image: Plaster/stucco head of a woman from
Kunduz (3–4 century CE), Kabul Museum, 1951,
Bridget Allchin

Back cover image: Douglas Robar
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