

Asia in 18th-century Edinburgh institutions: seen or unseen?

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ABSTRACT

The paper is intended to show how Asian material and its display influenced perceptions of Asia, and vice versa, and to what degree involvement in Asia was considered to be a part of Scots' self perception in the late 18th century. In Part 1 Asian material donated to Edinburgh institutions (the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Advocates' Library) is compared and discussed in the context of owners and donors (including private collectors), acquisition and value, display and learning, and organization. Gifts and prices are listed in two tables. Part 2 is divided into several sections: (i) communications on Asia delivered to the institutions are contextualized; (ii) 18th-century perceptions of ancient Egypt and China are discussed as these were crucial in contemporary discourses of antiquity; (iii) the university and scholarship are examined to show J Robertson's attitude towards the teaching of oriental languages; (iv) the reading of manuscripts and the translation of texts from Asia are discussed to show the impact they had in Scotland; (v) the impact of orientalist William Jones and the Asiatic Society is assessed.

To P R S Moorey, in celebration of 'curiosity'

INTRODUCTION

In his address to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland on 14 November 1787, Lord Buchan had the pleasure to acquaint members that:

the spirit of industry and inquiry into the history and antiquities of antient Nations, continues to make great progress both at home and abroad. The venerable, learned and virtuous Sir William Jones, with his associates, in the great Country of Indostan continues to explore the history and antiquities of that immense continent which seems to have been the cradle of the human species, and the similarities of language, manners, and ceremonies, as well as the most ancient monuments seem to evince the truth of the conjecture, that the oldest inhabitants of Europe were of Asiatick origin. By comparing ... the religious ceremonies and customs of the ancient Highlanders of that island [Skye] with those described by the Asiatick Society of Antiquaries, much important reflection will arise ...¹

Here Lord Buchan was demonstrating his association with some of the contemporary discourses on Asia and their relevance to Scotland. This article researches awareness and interest in Asia in late 18th-century Edinburgh institutions in two parts. Part 1 surveys material in contemporary institutional and private collections; Part 2 surveys the communications to these institutions and oriental learning at the university. Orientalism in Scottish arts and literature, a separate and substantial area of study, is not addressed in this paper.

PART 1. MATERIAL IN CONTEMPORARY INSTITUTIONAL AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

THE COLLECTIONS

The institutional collections referred to in this survey are those of the Society of Antiquaries of

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Scotland ('the Antiquaries'), of the Advocates' Library and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE); the charter of 1783 of the last-named, required that donations of natural productions be placed in the museum of the University and antiquarian objects in the Advocates' Library.² The private collections referred to are sample ones, used for comparative purposes, belonging to some of the donors to the above Societies: Dr William Hunter, who bequeathed his collections to Glasgow in 1783; John McGouan, an Edinburgh connoisseur; and the Duke of Buccleuch.³ Other Edinburgh collections (the University's, Weir's Museum) and of significant collectors (James Fraser of Reelig, Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, James Bruce of Kinnaird, the Anderson brothers) will be referred to in passing.

Despite the eclectic and sporadic nature of acquisitions and donations, Eastern material in these collections, which in this survey includes Egyptian antiquities, belongs to well established categories of 18th-century collecting: natural history; ethnography; scientific instruments; coins and medals; antiquities; and manuscripts. Porcelain and textiles form a separate 'domestic' group characteristic of interiors. Each of these categories, with the exception of natural history⁴ and textiles, will be addressed below in the context of the practicalities of collecting, such as the means of acquisition, prices, display and classification, with the hope of ascertaining to what extent such practicalities had an influence on attitudes to the East.

The three institutions mentioned above reveal substantial differences in the scope and content of their Eastern material (Table 1). This can be partly explained by the status, corporate interests and rivalries of the Whig-led Antiquaries and Moderate or Tory RSE and University.⁵ I shall return to this only in passing as the subject has been so well covered.

Eastern material in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries was by far the most comprehensive in terms of geographical range, content and value (Table 1). Donations are described as originating from 'Arabia', Egypt,

Armenia, Nepal, India, Sumatra, China and Tartary. Material from China and the East India Company was the most common. In contrast, Asian material in the Faculty of Advocates' collection or donated to the RSE was meagre in terms of quantity: a mummy, manuscripts and coins in the former and botanical specimens, manuscripts and in the early 19th century Hindu idols to the latter.⁶ It should also be pointed out that Asian donations to the Faculty of Advocates so far recorded date from the early to mid-18th century and are not contemporary with the later Antiquaries or RSE donations. Because so little of this material survives,⁷ the description and terms (eg 'oriental', Egyptian, Chinese, Indian) used in original lists of donations or catalogues, which may have been wrong, have been accepted as given.⁸

The donations to the Antiquaries demonstrate the range of possibilities, if not always the quality or pertinence of Eastern material in circulation. Most gifts appear to have been small and, except for an illuminated Koran, a large group of oriental coins, an Indian scimitar inlaid with silver, a Malay dagger with an ivory handle, and a scabbard covered in brass, copper and gold, of middling to little monetary value (see 'Acquisition and Value' and Table 2 below). These gifts reflect in part the broad-based and sometimes humble membership of the Antiquaries⁹ in contrast to the elitist membership of the RSE and the Advocates, and the extravagant and sometimes blatantly politically-motivated donations to these, such as the mummy given to the Advocates by Lord Morton in 1748 in order to involve and use the Library for meetings of the Edinburgh Philosophical Society.¹⁰ They also reflect the fact that even though broad-ranging donations and contacts were encouraged and pursued by the Antiquaries¹¹ the principal object of their collection was, in the words of Lord Buchan, to 'be the antient compared with the modern state of the kingdom of Scotland'.¹² It is worth noting at this point that not all antiquarians or collectors would have necessarily incorporated Eastern

artefacts in their collections. Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, for example, whose collection centred on Roman and other local antiquities because they expressed both his patriotic sentiments and his idea of 'virtuoso' scholarship,¹³ appears to have possessed only one small Egyptian statuette.¹⁴ Whether involvement in the East was considered to be a part of the Scots' perception of themselves in the late 18th century is one of the points addressed in the conclusion.

OWNERS & DONORS

A correlation between donations to an institutional collection and a person's private collection and interests was neither predictable nor evident. Valuable items belonging to domestic interiors, such as porcelain, screens and textiles, and which were not necessarily acquired for a collection, but later may have become part of one, are usually missing from institutional collections, as are paintings. Thus an important private oriental collection, such as that of the Duke of Buccleuch, is not even hinted at in his donations to the Societies (see below). The Duke's late (1796) and prudent gift of a few coins and medals to the Antiquaries¹⁵ also perhaps conveyed his contempt, as President of the RSE, of Lord Buchan and his antiquarian institution. Donations also could be part of a large group of varied gifts, which themselves constitute a small collection, representative of the fashionable collecting habits of the wealthy. Thus Francis Charteris gave coins and medals, antique bronzes, items of American Indian dress, the head of a pelican and an iguana, amongst other things.¹⁶ Important collectors such as William Hunter and John McGouan gave gifts that reflected not only their status as collectors but that were pertinent to the institutions to which they were given. The former gave a large collection of Scots coins to the Antiquaries,¹⁷ the latter specimens of natural history to the RSE.¹⁸ Both men had extensive Eastern material in their private collections. Other gifts, such as the valuable Koran given to the Antiquaries (1787)

by William Glasford Esq.,¹⁹ may have aimed to compete with the Advocates' collection.

Certain types of gifts, such as 'hookars' from India, ladies' shoes from China or weapons from the south-east Asian archipelago, were repeatedly collected or given, and thus were almost transformed into symbols of their country. I shall return to this symbolism in the conclusion. Some valuable gifts were given in the hope that the Antiquaries would be responsible, in the words of the 1783 Memorial sent to the Lord Advocate, for the 'perpetual preservation of the numerous donations with which they have been entrusted'.²⁰ The reasons for Colonel MacLeod's gift (1792) of Koran and Sanskrit manuscripts to the RSE, for example, deserve to be quoted:

When employed in India in the service of my Country, I heard with infinite satisfaction of the Institution of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and I immediately conceived a wish to add to the valuable literary collections ... The folio volume is an Arabic Copy of the Koran, beautifully written and highly emblazoned ... The three rolls are Shanscrit manuscripts elegantly written and adorned with paintings ... I purchased them at Delhi, trusting to the knowledge of Sir William Jones to ascertain their contents and value. The labels round them specifying their names are in the handwriting of this illustrious scholar; and therefore may be more revered by the Antiquarians of some future Age than the MSS. themselves.²¹ (see Part 2 for William Jones).

Yet other gifts, often given at the time of admission, were probably duplicates, second-best or even rejects from a personal collection.

Several donors had direct professional, mercantile and to a far lesser extent, scholarly, links with the East. Thus, for example, the RSE received a chest of plants from Bengal and the Indian peninsula from Dr William Roxburgh, the East India Company's 'botanist in the Carnatic';²² Persian and Arabic manuscripts from Mr Somerville Wilson, surgeon to the *Winterton* East Indiaman²³ and the Koran and manuscripts from Colonel McLeod mentioned

above.²⁴ The Antiquaries received a copy of John Richardson's *Persian Dictionary* of 1777 from the author himself (1785);²⁵ and the several Chinese artefacts from Alexander Seton of Preston²⁶ probably reflected Seton's association with a Stockholm merchant.²⁷ Charles Logie, British consul in Algiers from 1772 until his sudden expulsion in 1780,²⁸ on the other hand, donated a gentleman's gifts of coins, medals, impressions of gems that did not reflect his travels in the East.²⁹ The pertinence of some of these gifts for their time, their value, both cultural and monetary, and their prestige will be discussed below and in the conclusion.

ACQUISITION & VALUE

The list of donations to the Societies gives examples of how Asian material might be acquired through travel, commerce or contacts in the East. Thus for example, Mr R Boswell donated to the Antiquaries an oriental idol, 'found in a temple at the plundering of Mandalore in East India, which was sent home to Dr J Boswell by his son Mr Bruce Boswell',³⁰ and an 'antient lamp of ivory covered in carvings', thought to be Egyptian given by Miss C Gardner and brought from Italy by the late Captain Gardner.³¹ A 1755 inventory of the household goods of the East India Company employee and author of *Nadir Shah* (1742), James Fraser of Reelig, shows a collection which included Chinese paintings, blue and white porcelain, 'Indian' paper, Persian scimitars, a dagger³² but most significantly a large and very valuable collection of Arab, Persian and Sanscrit manuscripts:

collected from the year 1730–40, and purchased with no small labour and expense, at Surat, Cambray and Ahmedabad in the East Indies; excepting a few which I bought at Mocha in Arabia, from some Persians, who passed that way on their pilgrimage to Mecca.³³

The roup of Fraser's household furniture shows that a significant amount of the Eastern material was sent to London to be sold (see below).³⁴ The

manuscripts were bought from his widow by the Radcliffe Trustees in 1758 for £500.³⁵ Equally, James Bruce bought Arabic manuscripts in Cairo, commenting that his reputation for love of study and books and knowledge of Arabic opened for him 'a channel for purchasing many Arabic manuscripts ... free from the load of trash that is generally imposed upon Christian purchasers', and his Ethiopic manuscripts in Abyssinia.³⁶

Other artefacts, such as small Chinese or Indian 'curiosities' could be widely picked up with 'India' furniture, paper, porcelain, carpets, textiles, ginger, soya, preserved mango and tea in Edinburgh from the early/mid to late 18th century³⁷ through local merchants or agents with direct links with the East India Company travelling from London and leasing premises.³⁸ Such material could also be obtained at rousps³⁹ and customs and exchequer sales of goods confiscated for avoidance of duty.⁴⁰ Goods could also be obtained directly at the docks, as shown by the cash books of Francis Charteris, later the Earl of Wemyss, who in 1757 and in 1762 purchased Chinese jars, a China tea set, striped cotton and silk handkerchiefs from East India ships.⁴¹ As most of the direct trade with the East was conducted though the port of Glasgow, the appearance in 1748 at Leith of six East India ships en route to London caused great excitement:

The six East India ships that lay in the Firth for some days past, are now sailed for London ... The captains and principal lieutenants were entertained by the magistrates in a Tavern and presented with the Freedom of the City ... During their stay, the ships were crowded with company buying China etc from the sailors, a great deal of which was afterwards made seizure of by the officers of the customs ...⁴²

Such was the excitement that 'several ladies we are told were carried off in one of them ... no boat being at hand to carry them on shore'.

The constant presence of East India merchandise in late 18th-century Edinburgh

shows that there was still a strong market for such goods, although the vogue for Chinese porcelain and artefacts was on the wane, and the quantity of Chinese material donated to the Antiquaries may reflect declining interest rather than popularity. Élite items such as Eastern antiquities and manuscripts, for which there appears to have been no market in Edinburgh, were more commonly obtained at the London auction houses and through private agents in the Netherlands, France or Italy. The main source of manuscripts, as indicated above, remained travel in the East. Household inventories, sale catalogues and, in the case of William Hunter, a description of the contents of his collection displayed in a purpose-built museum in Glasgow in 1807⁴³ show the diversity and quality of material that was available to the non-travelling collector as long as there was wealth. In 1703–5 the Earl of Dalkeith was already buying ‘Indian imaged’ pictures, Indian baskets, an ‘Indian’ screen, Chinese Blue and White porcelain as well as tea from a Jan van Colmar.⁴⁴ By 1736 Dalkeith Palace could boast many items of Indian furniture (a couch bed, cabinets, chests, ‘India’ screens, an ‘Indian’ closet, numerous China jars and a closet filled with Chinese porcelain).⁴⁵ This porcelain presumably became part of the Buccleuch oriental collection, items of which were loaned to the Exhibition of Oriental Art in Glasgow in 1881.⁴⁶ Hunter’s collection was also vast. It included anatomy, natural history, minerals and coins, as well as a large number of high-quality western and Eastern manuscripts.⁴⁷ McGouan’s interest lay more in art and antiquities: beside his extensive collection of drawings, coins and medals, he bought Egyptian, Roman and Etruscan pieces, Chinese, Indian and Persian figures, ceramics and various ethnographic items.⁴⁸ McGouan’s correspondence mentions his importation of Roman and Etruscan antiquities from Italy, but no mention is made of his direct or indirect acquisition of Asian pieces or of Egyptian antiquities.⁴⁹

The provenance of some Egyptian antiquities, such as the onyx seal found in the

ruins of Thebes donated to the Antiquaries by Colonel James Callander of Craigforth⁵⁰ and two of William Hunter’s papyrus from the catacombs of Saqqara, is occasionally given, although the accuracy of such references remain unknown. Such references follow the pattern for the attribution of classical pieces found in catalogues and were considered to enhance the authenticity and value of the piece.

The examples taken from sales catalogues in Table 2 show the range of Eastern items and prices available to collectors. They also show that some items from various categories (eg coins, manuscripts etc) were accessible not only to the wealthy and middling classes, but potentially to some of the working classes as well.⁵¹ I shall return to this in my conclusion.

DISPLAY & LEARNING

Access to the institutional collections mentioned above was, for different reasons, both limited and selective. The ‘public’ referred to in the debate between the institutions over the granting the Antiquaries their charter⁵² effectively meant members of the Societies, colleagues, friends and acquaintances or people with an introduction. It did not mean the masses. The University’s defence of the Advocates stated the case: their repositories were surely not to be opened, ‘indiscriminately, like Sir Ashton Lever’s ... for the amusement of every idle or ignorant inquirer ...’.⁵³ The broad-ranging membership of the Antiquaries, however, implied a potential wide public.

The Antiquaries, whose eloquent private and public claims to create an accessible and ‘proper museum’ for their collection, with curators and inventories were so hampered by housing and financial difficulties, and the scale of donations, that their crowded effects became unmanageable.⁵⁴ Kincaid’s *A History of Edinburgh* of 1787 mentions the Antiquaries’ collection, deposited in the Hall in the Cowgate, and shown to ‘strangers’ by the secretary Mr James Cummyng.⁵⁵ Here the aim

of the Antiquaries' collection (to 'compare the ancient with the modern state of Scotland')⁵⁶ is given rather than a description of the collection.⁵⁷ The Antiquaries' difficulties prevailed and it appears that the whole collection was never fully displayed.⁵⁸

In the early years of the Society, when donations reached their peak and when members' attendance at meetings was high, a discussion of donations and communications had been integral to the Society's role.⁵⁹ Members were urged by William Smellie to concentrate on the matter at hand, to the reading of communications and to:

avoid frivolous discussion and ... queries ... [the Society] was never intended to be a School of Oratory, or a Theatre of Wrangling. On the contrary it is ... dedicated to Philosophy and deep research.⁶⁰

Presentations to the RSE were equally laid out and discussed before members.⁶¹ By the early 1790s the meagre records of the Antiquaries mention few communications and imply little or no discussion of donations, which by this time had lessened considerably. In 1800 it was suggested that the practice of examining curiosities be revived.⁶²

Access to the Faculty of Advocates' Library and its collection of coins, Roman and other antiquities, including the mummy, was restricted not by disorganization but by the selectivity of the institution. Despite the Advocates' assertions of interest in the 'Publick'⁶³ evidence exists of obstruction to the use of the Library by ordinary people with legitimate, professional claims.⁶⁴ Care was taken with some of the material donated to the collection, such as the making of a special case for the 'safekeeping of the curious item' (the Tamil gospels donated by Mr J Forbes in 1753)⁶⁵ or the buying of a proper cabinet for coins.⁶⁶ The Advocates considered their Library to be the only bona fide national repository for manuscripts and monuments illustrating the history and arts of Scotland, but their attitude to antiquities other than coins was ambivalent.⁶⁷

This attitude was felt at the time⁶⁸ and is illustrated by the dismissive manner in which their mummy was to be 'disposed into a proper place in the Library'.⁶⁹ Discussions of donations or purchases at the Advocates' Library appear to have been of a practical rather than of a scholarly or antiquarian nature.⁷⁰ Pennant in his 1772 and 1790 *Tour of Scotland* mentions the Advocates' famous collection of books and manuscripts, and singles out St Jerome's Bible, a Malabar book, a Turkish manuscript and a few other important works on display. He adds, 'there are besides great numbers of antiquities, not commonly shewn, except enquired after'.⁷¹ The *New Guide to the City of Edinburgh* (1793) mentions books and manuscripts, medals and coins, and 'an entire mummy in its original cabinet presented to the Faculty (at the expense of £300) by the Earl of Morton'.⁷² Here the expense of the mummy was part of its interest. Kincaid does not mention antiquities, presumably to stress his support for the Antiquaries, who judged the Advocates a 'private' and 'exclusive' society,⁷³ and was curt in his appraisal of the Library, 'The books are lent out to members of the faculty only, so that the institution proves of very little service to the public at large'.⁷⁴

The loss and neglect of the Balfour and Sibbald collection at the University was a subject of shame and recrimination at the time⁷⁵ but new collections of natural history were assembled by J Walker, the Professor of Natural History from 1779–1803⁷⁶ and a new Repository was to be included in the New College building.⁷⁷ Pennant had mentioned the neglect of the university 'Musaeum' in his *Tour* of 1772 but stated that, 'by assiduity of the present Professor of Natural History, [the Museum] bids fair to become a most instructive repository of the naturalia of these kingdoms'. This optimism was also expressed by Kincaid.⁷⁸ By the time of Pennant's 1790 edition the statement regarding the 'most instructive repository of the naturalia of these kingdoms' had been omitted and by 1793 the collection was still considered 'unfit for the Public eye' by Walker

himself.⁷⁹ The new building remained unbuilt. Both Kincaid and the *New Guide* mention the University Library collection, which beside ‘splendid’ books contained curiosities, such as a couple of skulls, some ‘valuable Coins and Medals, and Oriental and other manuscripts’.⁸⁰ Miscellaneous Oriental manuscripts had been donated to the University since the 17th century, but proper collections only began to be donated in the 19th century.⁸¹ (For the University’s record in teaching Oriental languages, see Part 2.) In 1797 McGouan had intended to bequeath his collections to the University, and his reasons deserve to be quoted:

I have been upwards of fifty years in collecting, which would give me much pain to think they were to be scattered over the world after my death, or to go to my relations who have no more idea of these things, than a Herd of Black Cattle, for which reason I think it most prudent and best to bequeath all to the publick – I mean the University at which I was bred to produce and improve a taste for belles Lettres which is at present much wanted ...⁸²

In the event McGouan died intestate and with debts in 1803.⁸³

The performance of the institutions with regards to their collections and their display was thus at best erratic and disjointed. Their rivalry ensured that a motion for the unification of the collections such as that put forward by Charles McKinnon at the Antiquaries in 1785,⁸⁴ would never have been seriously considered.

The general public fared much better at Alexander Weir’s *Museum of Natural Curiosities* based on his second personal collection and opened in 1789, first in South Bridge Street and then Princes Street.⁸⁵ Funded by subscriptions and donations, this ‘public’ museum had the support of patrons such as Henry Erskine, the University, the Advocates and the Royal College of Physicians.⁸⁶ Even William Smellie, the Secretary of the Antiquaries, acknowledged and solicited Weir’s skill in animal preservation.⁸⁷ Daily admittance in 1789 was 1s or 10s 6d for six months and, by 1792, 2s per day or one

guinea yearly subscription.⁸⁸ Instruction on how to preserve fish was also a possibility if enough people applied.⁸⁹ Here the presentation of a museum as both a place of entertainment and of instruction was fully exploited (cf also Ashton Lever’s museum below). It is possible that the existence and popularity of Weir’s museum inadvertently contributed to the neglect and selectivity of institutional collections in Edinburgh, by taking pressure away from them to open their collections and make them suitable for viewing.

The reliance on private collections for instruction and diversion was another contributory factor in the proprietorial attitude of the institutions. Private collections could be visited at the discretion of the owner. William Hunter’s museum at his home at Great Windmill Street, London, for example, was opened to a Rev Michael Tyson, a stranger, on one Monday, when ‘every door of the museum was opened to my leisure’⁹⁰ and William Jones mentions his examination of the inscriptions of a rare collection of Persian coins in the same museum.⁹¹ The McGouan collection was mentioned in Pennant 1772, and some of its items (none Eastern) illustrated.⁹² Offering such visits was part of the prestigious duties of owning a collection, and the vital role of private collections in instruction at this period will be returned to in Part 2.

ORGANIZATION

Had the Antiquaries had managed to create their ideal ‘museum’, how would it have been arranged? There are few references in the records to actual or intended display. Lord Buchan’s recommendations for the furnishing of the Antiquaries Hall concentrate on ventilation, the President’s Chair, Armorial bearings, and changing the size of the windows.⁹³ In 1782 the overworked Secretary, James Cummyng had been thanked for his efforts in ‘inventoring and arranging the effects of the Society’ but encouraged to ‘make a more compleat

arrangement beginning with the manuscripts then the Books, then the medals ...'.⁹⁴ In 1783 A Cardonnel gave similar advice on how to arrange coins (separate English, Scottish, Roman and placed according to reign), and on books and manuscripts (according to date and subject), 'the remains of antiquity of Arms and likewise classed, and every species of natural history kept distinct', with portfolios for prints.⁹⁵ Given the Society's central aims, elaborately listed by Lord Buchan to include ancient and modern sources showing the geography, natural productions, dress, music, languages, weights and measures, weapons, the court, the church and the arts of Scotland⁹⁶ might the 'museum' have broken new ground by displaying their Scottish material in this thematic manner or, might the museum have been no different from another mixed antiquarian repository of the time?

Descriptions of contemporary museums or collections of the period, such as Sir Ashton Lever's⁹⁷ show groupings of objects still broadly based on the principles of the 'cabinet of curiosities': by subject, material, function and sometimes shape as well as by hierarchical ('great chain of being') criteria.⁹⁸ These different criteria for arrangement⁹⁹ were not surprising given that collections of the day were so broad and inclusive. Collections could also be bought entire, and thus systems of arrangement inherited. At the British Museum, three departments had been set up in 1758 to deal with the Sloane and other collections, where everything that was not printed books and manuscripts was included in 'Natural and Artificial Productions',¹⁰⁰ and it is in the realm of 'artificial' productions that the 'curiosity' mentality prevailed. In the later 18th century exceptions were made for material that was topical, sensational, and driven by personalities and voyages, such as those of Cook and even of 'Abyssinian Bruce'. Thus in 1791 Alexander Weir advertised in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* that he had added to the museum 'an uncommon collection of Natural Curiosities from Abyssinia'.¹⁰¹ Artefacts from

Cook's voyages were displayed together in, for example, the Leverian and Hunterian museums. At the former, much of the Cook material was displayed in the sides of an arched passage leading from the Hall to the Sandwich Room and in the Sandwich Room, where 'on entering the apartment the first thing that meets the eye is the following inscription 'To the Immortal Memory of Captain Cook'.¹⁰² Such a dramatic statement was part of the theatre of Lever's museum, in whose Entrance Hall were two giant pillars inscribed 'Giants' Causey'.¹⁰³ In Hunter's museum of 1807 South Sea 'curiosities' were grouped together in an apartment with Natural History, Antiquities and Miscellanies.¹⁰⁴ It thus is likely that the South Sea curiosities¹⁰⁵ and pieces of American Indian dress donated to the Antiquaries¹⁰⁶ would also have been displayed together rather than split up into typological categories.¹⁰⁷

The display of Eastern objects, however, known from cabinets of curiosities and western collections since the 16th century and before that from medieval treasuries, largely remained in a non-contextual tradition until the 19th century.¹⁰⁸ Thus in Sloane's 1748 private museum at Chelsea ethnographic materials such as ornaments used in the 'habits of men' from Siberia to the Cape of Good Hope, from Japan to Peru had been shown together, classified as jewels, and shoes of different kinds of people with shells and skins.¹⁰⁹ In Ashton Lever's museum Persian and Chinese guns were displayed with guns having belonged to Edward Wortley-Montagu, Persian daggers and Chinese beaters with African bladed weapons and Moorish horseshoes from Tangiers with those of a Tuscan mule.¹¹⁰ In the Hunterian museum such ethnographic material was included in 'curiosities' or 'miscellania'.¹¹¹ Related objects from one area such as some 'antique' earthenware basins, probably from Japan, which were shown together as a group on a mahogany cabinet in the Hunterian museum,¹¹² recall the display of oriental porcelain in the cabinets of private houses during the 18th century. In sale catalogues

the pattern is similar. Differences can be seen between the catalogues of some collections, such as Dr Richard Mead's, where typological classifications are followed more strictly than others. For example, Chinese vessels are listed with Etruscan and other vessels¹¹³ and Chinese instruments with 'mathematical and other curiosities'.¹¹⁴ Chinese instruments, although sometimes listed with others appear to have been considered as curiosities within the group and not as functional. The reasons for this will become apparent in Part 2, below. Elsewhere, however, ethnographical items such as Chinese shoes can be listed with the bark of a tree and a parcel of flowers¹¹⁵ or Eastern slippers with an Egyptian lamp, two Indian bowls, an ostrich egg and an alligator.¹¹⁶ On the basis of such evidence we cannot know whether the small collections of Chinese artefacts given to the Antiquaries by P Begbie of Castlehill or Alexander Seton of Preston and others would have been separated into types and mixed, for example, with the Indian material or displayed as an ensemble.

Egyptian antiquities were classified more as miscellaneous curiosities than as antiquities in their own context, in contrast to Roman ones, which could be displayed as a group. Hans Sloane had displayed the antiquities of Egypt, Greece, Rome and Britain together, but his Egyptian mummy had been displayed in a separate category, with anatomical subjects and skeletons.¹¹⁷ This disjunction was still present in the Hunterian museum, where a copy of the Rosetta Stone was displayed, categorized as an inscription, with a Koran whereas an Isis figure, two penates, two small fragments of Pompeii's pillar, and the bone of an ibis head were distributed in various apartments with an Egyptian mummy on top of the stair leading from the Hall of Anatomy to the Hall of the Elephant, or basement, and three further mummies of the White Ibis nearby in the window.¹¹⁸ The 'suitable' place given to the Advocates' mummy remains unknown. The varied placement of mummies, can, it is argued here, reflect perplexity (see Part 2, below) as

much as a manner of coping with their awkward size, a desire for effect or particular cultural resonance for the collector. An example of the latter would have been seen, for instance, in the display of one of Captain Lethieullier's mummies at Fetternear House, where the inventory (1742) places the mummy with prints of Poussin, which may have contained visual references to ancient Egypt. The classification of mummies, with varied associations in sales catalogues of the early to mid-18th century, similarly reflects this uncertainty. Thus in the Charles Smyth sale of 1746 a mummy was listed with miscellaneous curiosities, after a coin cabinet;¹¹⁹ in Dr Richard Mead's English sale catalogue (1755) his mummy was included after urns, busts of famous people and before a walnut-tree cabinet¹²⁰ separate from other Egyptian antiquities, whereas in the illustrated Latin sale catalogue of his antiquities *Musei Meadiani* (1755), which was printed as a tribute to the collector and his collection, all Egyptian antiquities are grouped together and presented as valuable, collectable items.¹²¹ In the Ebenezer Mussell sale (1765), the catalogue of which reads like the inventory of a private museum, one mummy was listed with Egyptian antiquities and another¹²² at the end of a miscellaneous group of curiosities after Indian arms and fans, but in a large lot which included English, Roman, Etruscan antiquities and Eastern artefacts.¹²³ McGouan's sale catalogue (1804), focused on antiquities, and listed Egyptian antiquities (with no mummy) together in one group lot, sold on the sixth day with Roman, Etruscan, Chinese and Indian pieces.¹²⁴ References to Montfaucon¹²⁵ and Caylus¹²⁶ in the Mead and McGouan catalogues respectively when listing Egyptian antiquities shows a familiarity with the Plates of these classics of collecting, but how far the collectors themselves espoused Montfaucon and Caylus's ideas remains to be debated. I shall return to these authors in Part 2, below.

The display of Eastern coins and manuscripts was not quite as ambivalent as that of other

'artificial' productions. Modern Eastern coins (ie post-Byzantine-Sassanian to the modern period) generally formed a neglected sub-group within coin typologies. At the Advocates', whose medals and classical and Scottish coin collection was essential to its image as a civilized institution¹²⁷ 'oriental' coins had been in the collection since the purchase of the Sutherland coins in 1705 but were kept in drawers with Russian and Dutch pieces.¹²⁸ At the Antiquaries Eastern coins were in a minority, and the records do not indicate where they were kept in the coin cabinets. In sale catalogues Eastern coins could be mixed with other types, depending on quality, or grouped together as 'oriental' or classified by material (copper, silver, gold).¹²⁹ Because these required specialist knowledge descriptions were usually very vague.¹³⁰ Private catalogues could however reflect the professional background of a collector, such as William Hunter's coin catalogue, which attempted to apply taxonomic principles to organize the material.¹³¹ Manuscripts were usually kept with books, but sometimes singled out for their beauty or 'curiosity'. James Fraser's manuscripts, for example, were displayed and kept in his Book Room with other pieces of his oriental collection.¹³² The Advocates' display of select manuscripts, including gospels 'written on leaves of trees in the Talmudian language and the Malabar style',¹³³ has already been mentioned, and one of William Hunter's Korans was exhibited, separate from his other extensive collection of manuscripts, in the ante-room of the Museum.¹³⁴ In contrast, the display and fate of an illuminated Koran given to the Antiquaries and whose beauty had been especially noted by Lord Buchan,¹³⁵ is unknown. Specialist collectors, such as James Fraser of Reelig, were able to catalogue their manuscripts by language (Persian, Arabic and Sanscrit) and subject (eg History, Poetry, Ethics, Arts, Sciences, Dictionaries and Grammars).¹³⁶ Such knowledge, when published, as for example, in the Appendix to Fraser's *Nadir Shah*¹³⁷ served to authenticate the scholarship of the author and enhance his prestige. The treatment of manuscripts in sale catalogues varied. Persian,

Arabic and Chinese manuscripts could be mixed¹³⁸ and even be treated as curiosities.¹³⁹ When enough pieces existed, suggestive of a serious collector, there was an attempt to group by language and script. Thus, Chinese and Indian scripts were easy to separate from Persian, Arabic and Turkish.¹⁴⁰ Towards the end of the century some very sophisticated catalogues emerged, with additional prices given in Indian rupees,¹⁴¹ classified by religion, history and literature and with a number of titles and authors' names given in the original Arabic and Persian, and the occasional reference to important editions and other catalogues (eg Fraser's).¹⁴² This attention to detail not only enhanced the importance of the collector or scholar but also, as mentioned above, presented manuscripts as important commodities.

Sale catalogues and some private collections indicate that specialist interest did exist in the manner and aim of collecting and displaying other artefacts such as Indian jewellery, idols, miniatures or oriental costume but these again were very much the result of personal motivation and circumstance.¹⁴³ The catalogue of a Mr Simpson, for example, reveals his collection of 42 lots of Indian idols, assembled in India 'during a long residence ... in the Company's Service' and the whole 'forming a very complete system of Hindoo mythology'.¹⁴⁴

In 1798 the Court of Directors of the East India Company informed the government that they intended to form a 'public Repository ... for Oriental writings' at India House in London.¹⁴⁵ This repository was soon referred to as the 'Oriental Museum' and in 1799 the Sanskritist C Wilkins submitted a plan for an actual Museum, with himself as curator.¹⁴⁶ This would be the first 'institutional' Museum of its kind in England. His plan was essentially pragmatic: the Museum was to be both 'useful' and ornamental. The material was to be divided into a Cabinet of Natural Productions, Artificial Productions (all manufactures) and Miscellaneous articles ('curiosities, generally such things as cannot conveniently be classed under the above').¹⁴⁷

The Natural and Artificial productions were to illustrate their use in trade, technology and manufacture. Arts and antiquities are not mentioned per se. This pragmatic plan, designed to reflect the Company's image of itself, was actively supported by Warren Hastings at the time. It was finally approved in 1801.¹⁴⁸ Wilkins had also suggested that an Asiatic Society 'similar to the one now flourishing in Calcutta' be established in London, with the use of their collections to assist in their researches.¹⁴⁹

The role of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta in raising awareness of Eastern material culture will be discussed in Part 2 and the conclusion.

PART 2. COMMUNICATIONS

Asia is invoked in four main areas of debate in the Societies' communications: language, art, religion and science, and most are linked to some extent to the issue of common origins. Contemporary Asian matters are rarely addressed. The different aspects and emphases of the Societies' interests, as well as certain overlapping communications, will become apparent below.

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND (‘ASIA’ IN GENERAL, INDIA)

In a letter of December 1781 to James Cummyng, the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Gilbert Stuart, recommended Mr John Richardson, 'the learned and ingenious editor of ... the Persian Dictionary' for membership of the Society. On the point of departing for the East, Richardson not only promised to transmit papers on the objects of curiosity and antiquity which attracted his research and attention, but that he would be assiduous, according to Gilbert Stuart 'to diffuse the reputation of our Society in the land of the Gentoos'.¹⁵⁰ Thus Stuart was vouching for the promotion of Lord Buchan's Society even before the granting of its charter and in the midst of his own difficulties vis à vis

the University.¹⁵¹ The involvement of Asia and of the persona of William Jones (see below) in the cause of the Society of Antiquaries was trumpeted by Lord Buchan: William Jones's Preliminary Discourse on the Institution of a Society¹⁵² (the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, instituted in 1784) was read as a communication at the Antiquaries in 1785, before its publication in *Asiatic Researches* 1 (1789/90); Asia was frequently invoked in the Anniversary Discourses and featured prominently in Lord Buchan's journal, *The Bee* (see below). There are several probable reasons for this identification with the Society at Calcutta and recruitment of Asia beside the fact that both presidents were radical Whigs, trying to establish new 'democratic' Societies.¹⁵³ Lord Buchan not only needed William Jones's reputation as a scholar, close links with the scientific community in London and Europe and friendship with Warren Hastings to help legitimize his own Society, but he also expected William Jones's and the Asiatic Society's researches to contribute to the cause of Gaelic and of Scottish identity. It is telling of the insular nature of the Antiquaries' appropriation of Jones however, that he does not even seem to have been proposed as a Fellow.

The subject of Asia and Gaelic has been addressed before,¹⁵⁴ so here I shall be brief. Links between Celtic or Gaelic and Asia, ultimately derived from discourses on the story of Babel, were used to demonstrate not only the antiquity of Gaelic but its primacy. In the minds of Scottish enthusiasts this also meant the primacy of Scots as opposed to Irish Gaelic.¹⁵⁵ Buchan keenly supported theories of language and people diffusion that linked Asia to the Gaelic world. In his Anniversary Discourse of 1788 he promoted the establishment of a Gaelic Professorship and the publication of Le Brigand's work,¹⁵⁶ written to prove 'that the Celtic was the first language of mankind and the parent of all languages', giving his reasons:

The primitive language of the original inhabitants of the globe is to be found like its primitive

structure ... such as are presented to us in the languages of Arabia, Thibot, Wales, Bretagne, Ireland, Scotland ... It will appear from ... the perusal of the ... astronomical reflections of ... M Bailly, that the most ancient Eclipses preserved at Babylon ... were ... correspondent to the deserted and inhospitable regions of Scythia, from whence were obvious, even without tradition, that the great emigration of Mankind have come forth ...¹⁵⁷

Deliberations on the Celtic language are also found in some of the Antiquaries' unpublished communications, by members such as Cuthbert Gordon (as Philomai), J Callander of Craigforth and the Rev D Mackintosh,¹⁵⁸ who championed the link between Hebrew and Gaelic. To these men, Hebrew, the language of Noah, was the one and true tongue dispersed from the plains of Shinar to countries first peopled after Babel. The debate about the origin of Celtic and its link with Biblical studies had a long history but its link with East Asia or China first took hold in the early 18th century¹⁵⁹ and with India with the first Sanskritists, such as Nathaniel Halhed and William Jones. For Callander, who advocated the use of etymology in a communication of 1789, traces of this language could even be found in China.¹⁶⁰ In *The Origin and Progress of Language* Lord Monboddo had speculated that both Indians and Greeks had originated from the same parent country, which for him could only be Egypt (see below).¹⁶¹ In his Anniversary Discourses of 1786 (*On the Hindus*)¹⁶² and 1792 (*On the Origin and Families of Nations*)¹⁶³ Jones had warned against the dangers of the use of 'conjectural' etymology in historical research. In the Third Discourse (1786) he had grouped together what came to be known as some of the Indo-European group of languages by endorsing the affinity between Greek and Sanskrit and stating that, 'the Gothic and the Celtic, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit'.¹⁶⁴ In his *Ninth Discourse* (1792) Jones added Persian to the group, distinguishing it from the Semitic (Arabic and Hebrew) and Tartar groups. These

three 'branches' of languages (and peoples) had sprung from one stem, the country of origin probably being Iran or Persia.¹⁶⁵ By 1789 and certainly 1798, Jones's speculations on language and the 'origin of the families of Nations' would have been known, but because of his suggestion that the Vedas stood in antiquity next to the Book of Moses¹⁶⁶ they would have made the strict Celtic-Biblical faction uneasy.

A shared tradition with western Asia or Phoenicia and the classical world was also used to affirm Celtic origins. 'The worship of the Druids and the remains of it in Scotland and other Hyperborean nations agrees perfectly with the primitive religion of Asia' asserted Lord Buchan in his Discourse of 1788. He continued:

Apollo was a principal object of worship among the Heathens of our northern nations in Europe, and it is actually, not long since the remains of his worship, as well as that of Anait, was to be found in the Isle of Skye, and other western isles of Scotland, where his temples and altars, after the manner of Egypt, and of Asia, were rude obelisks, and their temple of the Sun, like Stonehenge, resembles the famous temple of Bacchus at Pozzuoli ...¹⁶⁷

Lord Buchan then mentioned the work of Dr Donald McQueen, minister at Kilmuir in Skye, whose communication in 1784 had been an 'Inquiry into the Nature of the Worship of Anaitis or Anait, whose Temples are numerous in the Isle of Skye, and vicinity'.¹⁶⁸ This communication does not survive among the Antiquaries' papers, but the identification of classical with Phoenician deities (Apollo/Bel/Belus/Baal and Astarte or Anait, or the Sun and Moon) was already well established by the time McQueen was writing, and is found, for example in Toland and Martin Martin's *A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland*.¹⁶⁹ The rites referred to consisted of offering libations on the stones, circling round the stones, and lighting a fire to celebrate the return of the sun or 'la beltein'.¹⁷⁰ The history of the links between Phoenicia and the Celts belongs to a long tradition which came

to the fore in the 16th century with S Bochart's *Geographica Sacra* (1646)¹⁷¹ and Sammes' *Brittania Antiqua Illustrata* (1676). It centred on the notion that Phoenicians searching for tin had colonized ancient Britain and had brought the true patriarchal religion with them. Thus the Druids had been members of this true religion before it had been corrupted. The various ramifications of the subject in the context of antiquarianism has been extensively covered.¹⁷² In the late 18th century, for example, R Burrow and T Maurice (1796) were still stressing the link between Brahmins and Druids, and it appears that the notion of Phoenicians being the 'Britons of remote antiquity'¹⁷³ had renewed cachet at this period not only in the context of Celtomania (eg J Smith *Galic Antiquities* 1780) but because of the large increase in the trade of tin between Cornwall, the East Indies and China.¹⁷⁴

On 10 and 24 January 1786 the Rev T Blacklock communicated an 'Account of the Caves of Kennerey, Ambola and Elephanta', written by Hector MacNeil in 1783, also read at the Society of Antiquaries of London and published in *Archaeologia*, 8 (1787) and in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, 6 (1787). The 'excavations' at Elephanta, as they were then referred to, had been known and wondered at since early travellers' reports from the early 16th century, first in the context of paganism, and from the mid-18th century onwards also in the context of art, architecture and of systematic recording or 'archaeology'.¹⁷⁵ These were celebrated tourist destinations, whose origins and real antiquity were unknown, but which had the reputation of being among the oldest monuments in the world. A number of communications on these 'excavations' had been published in *Archaeologia* from the 1780s–90s.¹⁷⁶ At the Royal Society in Edinburgh a communication on the caves at Elephanta by Dr F Buchanan (Hamilton) was given in 1789 as a substitute for another paper, but only partially read and not published.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps the subject was considered *déjà vu* at the Royal Society, and

I shall return below to a potential appeal of this type of communication for the Antiquaries.

From the beginning of MacNeil's communication it is clear that the author engages with earlier 18th-century discourses on the sublime and is at variance with, for example, Winkelmann's view that Indian art was the victim of its own degenerate history.¹⁷⁸ The setting around the caves is 'singular and astonishing', the caves furnishing 'the most ample food for the most ravenous antiquarian'; with the sculpture at Ambola comparable to that of Michelangelo. The sculptures at the Seven Pagodas had also been compared to Gothic 'taste' in a communication by W Chambers in *Asiatic Researches* 1.¹⁷⁹ These comparisons suggest a different and lesser greatness than that of Greece and Rome, but greatness nevertheless. Again, William Robertson places the art of the caves in the context of stadial history:

It is only in states of considerable extent, and among people long habituated to subordination, and to act with concert, that the idea of such magnificent works is conceived ... [the art is] ... in a style considerably superior to ... the Egyptians, or to the figures ... of Persepolis [but] low ... if they be compared with the more elegant works of Grecian or even Etruscan artists.¹⁸⁰

MacNeil's communication is notable for being appreciative of the artistic merit of the sites. It shows no contempt for the naked statues 'their attitudes perfectly elegant and easy' and is condemnatory not only of the bigotry of the Crown of Portugal for mutilating the monuments but of the stupidity and 'Gothic barbarism' of the majority of Britons who 'make parties there, for no other purpose than to Feast, get Drunk and act ridiculously'.¹⁸¹

The date of the Elephanta caves was not properly addressed until 1819 in William Erskine's article in the *Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay* (1819).¹⁸² Prior to this Elephanta's massive and extraordinary architecture was considered to be proof of its antiquity, vying with that of the pyramids of

Egypt. For some it was a symbol of the origins of civilization. It was agreed that this type of architecture had come from the East,¹⁸³ but was it from Ethiopia, Egypt or India itself? In MacNeil's communication the caves appear to be the work of 'none but the Gentoos', not of the Egyptians or Chaldeans. The Gentoos themselves were unable to help with the dating or the iconography and the author urges further researches into the question. For Robertson, however, this type of speculation was unnecessary and irrelevant. It was enough that the 'state' that had produced this art, which was still hallowed for the Hindoos, was ancient, already had a caste system and was thus clearly Hindu.¹⁸⁴ Its exact date would no doubt emerge later. For the Antiquaries, however, the date of the caves at Elephanta would have been relevant to their preoccupation with origins.

Mitter has argued that William Jones encouraged the study of art, which included 'manufactures', in India by giving it recognition as a major field of study, together with the study of history and science.¹⁸⁵ Yet Jones referred to the remains of architecture and sculpture in India as 'mere monuments of antiquity, not as specimens of art' essentially because he saw a connection between the races of India and Ethiopia or Egypt.¹⁸⁶ The early volumes of *Asiatic Researches* had few articles on art or sculpture. This is partly because their articles were so wide-ranging, covering botany, ethnography, music, astronomy and travel, but also because a bias towards the reading of texts and inscriptions, Jones's own speciality, can be detected. Other Calcutta publications such as the *Asiatic Miscellany* and *The New Asiatic Miscellany* were also very restrained in their coverage of art and architecture, as were late 18th-century British journals such as *Archaeologia* and the East India Company's *Oriental Repertory*, edited by Alexander Dalrymple. Mitter has argued that the function of the Society of Antiquaries of London in disseminating knowledge of Indian antiquities was made redundant by the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, established in 1784.¹⁸⁷ The

limited scope of these articles however suggests that such dissemination had not been one of its priorities. Yet even though the coverage of Indian art and antiquities was limited, travellers' accounts, collections assembled in India, such as Mr Simpson's (see Part 1),¹⁸⁸ and pieces of statuary shipped back for major collectors such as Ashton Lever in England,¹⁸⁹ all contributed to the interest in this art in England. Indian sculpture features in the private Edinburgh collection of McGouan¹⁹⁰ but not significantly until the early 19th century in Edinburgh institutions (cf the RSE, Part 1). This may have been partly because of the expense and bulk of this material.

Part of the interest in Indian statuary beside its 'exotic' style, was the desire to relate to and identify its iconography. The Indian pieces in the McGouan sale are not identified, unlike some of the Egyptian pieces (cf Caylus and the identification of Egyptian deities with classical one, below). Mr Simpson's catalogue however occasionally compares some of the idols to Roman deities, for example, 'a form of Curpahnah Swaamie, a deity similar to the Roman Laverna' or Lingum-Swaamie or Priapus.¹⁹¹ These identifications were part of already established diffusionist discourses which reinforced the Biblical dispersal theory and stadial notions of development. Jones in his illustrated discourse 'On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India' (written in 1784, revised and published in 1788/9) wrote:

I am persuaded that a connection subsisted between the old idolatrous nations of Egypt, India, Greece and Italy, long before they migrated to their several settlements, and consequently before the birth of Moses; but the proof of this proposition will in no degree affect the truth and sanctity of the Mosaick history.¹⁹²

Robertson had similar views:

Without ... attempting to enumerate that infinite multitude of deities ... we may recognize a striking uniformity of features in the systems of superstition

established throughout every part of the earth ... What is supposed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune ... (etc) ... [in] the West, is ascribed in the East to the agency of Agnee ... , Varoon ...¹⁹³

Both Jones¹⁹⁴ and Robertson,¹⁹⁵ however, recognized and fully accepted that the Hindus had advanced to worship one supreme being, using this as one argument in their plea for a respectful treatment of the race.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH (TARTARY, TIBET, INDIA)

The RSE's publications regarding Asia were largely of a scientific nature. Thus, for example, botanical subjects were presented by Dr D Monro and on behalf of Dr J Anderson of Madras.¹⁹⁶ Of relevance here, however, are a letter from the Lama of Tibet to Warren Hastings¹⁹⁷ and Dr J Playfair's communications on the Astronomy and Trigonometry of the Brahmins.¹⁹⁸ A communication by Dr W Blane on 'The Origin of the Numerical characters commonly called Arabic, proving that the characters are of Indian origin', was read in 1789, but not published.¹⁹⁹ A medical communication on the Tartars²⁰⁰ will also be briefly examined because of the significance of Tartary in contemporary discourses on race and origins.

The communication by Dr J Grieve on 'An Account of making a Wine, called by the Tartars Koumiss; with observations on its use in Medicine' read in 1784 and his gift of a pair of boots from Tartary to the Society of Antiquaries²⁰¹ while practical and prosaic, are important reminders of the significance of Tartary in theories of Scottish identity and of ongoing archaeological discoveries in western or Russian Tartary reported in *Archaeologia*²⁰² and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1797.²⁰³ The ancient history of the Tartars had been addressed by the orientalist J Richardson in his *Dissertation*.²⁰⁴ The relevance of Tartary in the debate on race centred on the identification of

the Tartars with the ancient Scythians. Scythian ancestry was appropriated by both 'Gael' and 'Goth' and made notorious by the prejudice of the Goth or lowland Scot camp, notably J Pinkerton, against the Celts.²⁰⁵ The common parentage between Goths and Tartars (Europeans and Asians) was linked to discussions on the origins of feudalism, promoted by Scottish jurists and historians.²⁰⁶ Tartary was also at the centre of a debate on the origins of civilization in general. Bailly, for instance, had asserted that the Tartars or north Asian peoples, living at a latitude of c 49° had spread the *lumières des sciences* to the rest of the world.²⁰⁷ This was refuted by Jones in his Fifth Anniversary Discourse on the Tartars given in 1788.²⁰⁸

The communication on Tibet or 'Letter from the Teshoo Lama to Mr Hastings', written in 1773 or 1774²⁰⁹ and read in 1787 is one of the classics in the history of early western contacts with Tibet. The Teshoo Lama had already approached Warren Hastings with a letter of mediation on behalf of the Bhutanese,²¹⁰ and George Bogle had been appointed by Hastings as an envoy to Tibet to investigate its potential commercial²¹¹ and political links with the East India Company, India and especially China, with which direct contacts were difficult (see below). Hastings had also requested information on the history, government, religion and manners of the Tibetans.²¹² The letter published in the *Transactions* was written once Bogle had arrived in Tibet during 1774.²¹³ Bogle returned with no firm trade agreement, but with optimism about future relations.²¹⁴ Although presented to the RSE as a curiosity relating to the history of religions in Asia, the communication was given in 1787 at the time of the debates over Warren Hastings's impeachment and it is difficult not to see this publication as a gesture of solidarity towards the ex-governor and as a reminder of his pioneering efforts with regard to Tibet, and also as a response to the *Asiatic Researches*. Other communications on Tibet by Samuel Turner at the time of Hasting's impeachment and the Macartney embassy (see below) appeared in

Asiatic Researches volumes 1 and 4 and the *Oriental Repertory* volume 2 and relate to Hastings's second initiative on Tibet.²¹⁵ Bogle had died in 1781 and Samuel Turner had been sent from 1783–4²¹⁶ to try and re-open the question of trade and to pay his respects to the newly reincarnated Panchen Lama. Again, these efforts came to nothing due to combined internal strife and Chinese interference. By 1792 the Chinese controlled Tibet and a policy of exclusion towards the outside world was in place.²¹⁷

Playfair's communications are especially significant because they engage directly with the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. In his 'Remarks on the Astronomy of the Brahmins', read in 1789, Playfair was keen to investigate the date of Indian astronomy and to track down 'its most ancient tables', said to be from Benares, and he appealed to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta and to its President William Jones to rescue this 'precious fragment' (the Surya Siddhanta) from obscurity.²¹⁸ He repeated his plea in his paper of 1795 'Observations on the Trigonometrical Tables of the Brahmins'.²¹⁹ Encouraged by the advertisement for queries from the learned societies of Europe on every branch of 'Asiatic history, Natural and Civil, on the Philosophy, Mathematics, Antiquities, and Polite literature of Asia and on Eastern Arts both liberal and mechanic' prefixed to the second volume of the *Asiatic Researches* and stimulated by its contents, Playfair had submitted 'Questions and Remarks on the Astronomy of the Hindus' in 1792.²²⁰ Jones, who had been elected to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in early 1790,²²¹ thanked Playfair and responded to some of his queries in his Eleventh Anniversary Discourse, delivered in 1794.²²² In both communications Playfair displayed his knowledge of the history of mathematics and of the role of the East in it, stating that the trigonometry of the Hindoos was not borrowed from Greece or Arabia and was 'greatly preferable to that which they employed'.²²³ Age, rather than chronology and the attempt to reconcile Hindu and Biblical

chronologies, was the issue for Playfair. He concluded that the origin of sciences in Hindostan went back to c 3300 BC²²⁴ but also hinted at flexibility when he alluded to the 'very moderate' system of Indian chronology²²⁵ of William Jones, which was closely linked to the Mosaic and Newtonian systems.²²⁶ According to Playfair, 'distant eras' in Hindu astronomy, controversially referred to by Bailly in his *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*,²²⁷ appear to have been misunderstood. The author had never intended for the Hindu era of Caly Yug (the present era) to be taken as real, but merely as a 'point in the duration of the world, before which the foundations of astronomy were laid in the East'.²²⁸ Playfair hoped that a complete translation of the Surya Siddhanta ('this inestimable treasure') would shed more light on the matter.²²⁹ Robertson did not have such scruples, 'it is manifest that our information concerning Indian chronology is ... uncertain as the whole system of it is wild and fabulous' and 'the true mode of computing time, founded on the authority of the Old Testament ...' led him to conclude that the beginning of the Caly Jug was not established by observation but was the result of retrospective calculation.²³⁰

Shared communications, authors and topics between the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh and the Asiatic Society of Calcutta are significant enough to appear in a cluster from c 1789–94.²³¹ This is presumably to be attributed to the impact of the *Asiatic Researches*, the contact between William Jones and Sir Joseph Banks²³² and the Scottish members of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta.

ANCIENT EGYPT & CHINA

Ancient Egypt and China are discussed below because, even though they are not the subject of full communications, they are referred to in the context of antiquity, language and idolatry linked to a number of issues discussed above. Both also feature significantly in the collections discussed in Part 1.

Egypt

Ancient Egypt held a unique and very distinctive place in 18th-century discourses on Asia. Attitudes to Egypt were naturally coloured by a lack of knowledge of its hieroglyphs and history, and a heavy reliance on selected classical sources. The dominance of classical taste, crystallized by Winckelmann in his *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764), was also central to perceptions.

The antiquity of Egypt was generally acknowledged but this very antiquity conflicted with Mosaic chronology and the centrality and precedence of the Biblical regions in the history of civilization.²³³ Thus Egyptian civilization was brought into direct conflict with the Jewish heritage, and did not withstand comparison. Egypt was quintessentially pagan and Moses could not have adopted a single doctrine or practice from such pagans.²³⁴ In contrast, Egypt as a disseminator of all civilization (eg Kircher, Pignoria) also vied with India (and originally China) as the original nation.²³⁵ The view that Sesostris, according to classical sources (Diodorus Siculus contra Strabo), had been a great conqueror who overran the whole of Asia in the early ages of Egypt, was still potent in the late 18th century. A blander and more general view was also held (eg the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1797, and see below), whereby Egyptian claims to antiquity, like those of the Chinese, were considered excessive and that much of its history was lost in obscurity and fable. In Scotland views on Egypt ranged from enthusiastic (A Gordon) to reverential (Lord Monboddo) and from cautious (W Robertson) to excessively negative (Sir John Clerk of Penicuik).

Alexander Gordon, the author of *An Essay Towards Explaining the Hieroglyphical Figures on the Coffin of the Ancient Mummy belonging to Captain W. Lethieuller* (1737) and the unpublished *An Essay towards Illustrating the History, Chronology and Mythology of the Ancient Egyptians ...* (1741),²³⁶ reacted strongly to the Bible-centred polemics of the late 17th

and early 18th centuries, notably Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacrae* (1662; 1709). He staunchly defended Egypt's antiquity and the precedence of its civilization over the Judaic tradition:

Jews, as if envious of the great fame and glory of the ancient Egyptians ... borrowed from that great people ... almost every famous action ... 'Tis strange, the Jews are not satisfied like other nations, to mention the progress of their arts and sciences [if ever they had any among them] from slender beginnings ... or to argue and reason like other people, No! Not anything will serve them but miracle for everything.²³⁷

Gordon struggled with the chronology of Egypt and the disentangling of its history from fable and myth, apparently introduced by classical authors and Christian bigots.²³⁸ He accepted a fabulous age of gods and of deified princes of Egypt and Ethiopia, whom he equated with Greek and Roman gods. He found a synchronism between the Biblical Flood and a recorded inundation of the Nile, but did not accept that Moses was the sole author of the Pentateuch.²³⁹ The notion that the ancient Egyptians believed in the existence of an intellectual being, abstracted from matter, prior to ritual religion which led to idol worship (cf India above) was a deist view shared by Gordon²⁴⁰ and a neo-Platonic one shared by Monboddo. Bible-centred apologists, such as Bochart, for example, also believed that in the ante-deluvian world there was no such thing as idolatry. The Rev MacQueen in his *Disquisition into the Origins of Idolatry*, read posthumously at the Antiquaries in 1790,²⁴¹ argued 'all Mankind must have ... agreed in the worship of the true God'. Idolatry was practised soon after the Flood, he continued, with Egypt being considered by many the cradle of idolatry. The most ancient kind of idolatry seemed to have been the worship of the sun and moon, but Chaldea was superior to Egypt, he concluded, because its worship of heavenly bodies had turned to astronomy.²⁴²

Egypt was crucial in Monboddo's attempts to define the beginnings of the History of Man.²⁴³

I think it certain that the Egyptians were the first civilized people of whom we have any knowledge ... and therefore may in some sense be said to be the first men, as it is Arts, Civility, Education and Discipline that distinguish our species from the Brutes.²⁴⁴

For Monboddo there was, 'little difficulty in supposing that Egypt may have existed as a Nation so many thousand years, before any others we know of'.²⁴⁵ He was heavily reliant on Greek and neo-Platonic sources, but was also attracted to the mystical and exclusive aspects of Egyptian religion: a philosophical religion of priests and gods, believing in the transmigration of souls (different from the religion of the vulgar) which travelled from Egypt to Greece and India. Plato was to get some of his ideas from Egypt and the Greeks in general learnt everything they knew from Egypt, but corrupted and changed it.²⁴⁶ This was another view that Monboddo shared with Gordon. Egypt was the most religious of nations, but religion was considered as a political institution with no bad effects.²⁴⁷ Its greatest work of art was a government to which the populace submitted willingly, not through fear or compulsion, and the subject of which was man and not materials. It was therefore the most fitted to the origin and cultivation of arts and sciences.²⁴⁸ There was no foreign luxury in Egypt, it was self-sufficient and its perceived lack of commerce (cf Robertson below) was, for Monboddo, a benefit.²⁴⁹ Thus ancient Egypt was a kind of golden age, with places like Heliopolis and Thebes sacred and built by god-kings.²⁵⁰ This state had been annihilated and present Egypt was 'wonderfully changed for the worst'.²⁵¹

Links with India were earnestly worked on by Monboddo. For him, the resemblance between the customs and manners, arts, sciences and religion of India and Egypt, was such that one must have borrowed from the other.²⁵² At the time when there was only one language on earth, the Egyptian language must have been imported into India, and changed when in India to become Sanskrit, which was then known only to the

Brahmins (another priestly caste).²⁵³ The affinity between Sanskrit, Greek²⁵⁴ and possibly Celtic was proof of this contact.²⁵⁵ Thus for Monboddo India was 'the oldest civilized Nation that can be found on the face of the earth'.²⁵⁶ In other words it was to be respected not only for the evidence of its links with antiquity but for confirming cultural contacts between east and west Asia (into which Egypt was incorporated) and Europe, by-passing the Judaic tradition. For Monboddo the Jews were a 'barbarous' nation with a 'heathen religion, which indulged in sacrifices because their understanding was uncultivated'.²⁵⁷

Monboddo was still exercised by India and Egypt in the late 1780s and corresponded on the subject with William Jones.²⁵⁸ For Jones, Egypt was simply a grand source of knowledge for the western and India for the more eastern parts of the globe.²⁵⁹

Robertson's views on the antiquity of Egypt were pragmatic and, to paraphrase him, somewhere between 'credulity' and 'scepticism'.²⁶⁰ The essential context in which he mentions Egypt is trade and here he argues for the superiority of ancient Phoenician commerce, possibly abetted by his own Biblical bias, dismissing Sesostri's campaign as a myth and favouring the idea of ancient trade between India and Persia.²⁶¹ Robertson's reasons included the Egyptian aversion to seafaring and dislike of foreigners. These arguments echo ones expressed on China at this period (see below).

Assumptions derived from antiquity that Egypt was the original source of writing, and from the Renaissance that hieroglyphs were divinely inspired symbols, were carried into the 18th century.²⁶² A third, less popular, trend to demystify hieroglyphs, also emerged at this time.²⁶³ The antiquarian Caylus²⁶⁴ was exceptional in his desire to see hieroglyphs as a historical source with great potential, possibly even as a challenge to classical sources.²⁶⁵ For Gordon, hieroglyphs were sacred.²⁶⁶ For Monboddo, in contrast, they were not the sacred characters of the Egyptian priests, but

merely monosyllabic signs with an allegorical or emblematic meaning, yet the source of the alphabetical letters (ie of writing), developed by the Egyptians.²⁶⁷ Egyptian hieroglyphs were also compared to Chinese hieroglyphs, and found similar²⁶⁸ or dissimilar,²⁶⁹ again in the context of common origins and universal language. In the context of the development of writing and language as a whole, the static state of undeciphered hieroglyphs was unquestioned, and a useful stepping stone in mapping the development of writing. For Blair, for example, hieroglyphs were ‘gross and rude essays towards Writing ...’ and were employed from choice not necessity.²⁷⁰

Attitudes to the art of Egypt, on the other hand, were only occasionally extreme. Except for the occasional mummy, material available to collectors who had not been to Egypt was small and easily transportable (figurines, canopic jars, shabtis). The material was also mostly of a late period.²⁷¹ This fairly limited repertoire was then compared to pieces illustrated in Montfaucon’s *L’Antiquité Expliqué et Représentée en Figures* (1729–33) or Caylus’s *Recueil d’Antiquités ...* (1752–67) or more specialized publications such as Gordon’s *An Essay ...* (1737).²⁷² In these works the emphasis was on the identification of the piece, essentially by comparing it to classical iconography, and on technical details. Style within the Egyptian canon was rarely addressed, although for Caylus ‘le temps de la domination des Romains ...’ was ‘l’époque du mauvais gout’.²⁷³ For Caylus, Egypt was the source from which ‘les Anciens ont puisé le principe du gout’, but due to the mysteries and obfuscation of their religion, Egyptian sculpture had become stultified.²⁷⁴ Architecture, notably the pyramids, was appreciated, if only for its scale, execution and sometimes harmony.²⁷⁵ Painting was considered mediocre and the use of colour very basic.²⁷⁶ These views were widely held. Perhaps Montfaucon, writing in the early 18th century, was the most honest in his explanation ‘les divinités de l’Égypte étoient de figure trop bizarre pour les mettre à la tête des antiquitez’,²⁷⁷

thereby placing Egypt after the Greeks in his hierarchical scheme of ‘la belle antiquité’. In Scotland, even Monboddo conceded that the liberal and elegant arts, such as fine speaking, writing, poetry, statuary and painting ‘were carried to a much greater height in Greece than in Egypt’.²⁷⁸ The patriotic Romanist Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, however, was contemptuous:

Their learning at best as well as the worship of their gods was ridiculously mean and contemptible. Men who could design so ill the works of nature that were constantly in their Eyes were not fit for inquiry into her more mysterious operations²⁷⁹...[and]... their worship was stupid to the highest degree ... the Egyptian worship of frogs and mice ... will never give the least imitable lesson’.²⁸⁰

Travellers’ reports occasionally unsettled the status quo.²⁸¹ James Bruce, for example, whose treatment of Egypt was generally cavalier and whose approach to history was capricious,²⁸² describes the sight of the sepulchres of Thebes in the Valley of the Kings as ‘magnificent’ and ‘stupendous’.²⁸³ He was ‘rivetted’ by the sight of the paintings in the tomb of Ramesses III, which he set out to copy, with the help of an assistant, in the neo-Classical style.²⁸⁴ This passage evokes Bruce’s own sensationalism and his influence on the perceived aesthetics of Egypt was temporary. It was not until Denon’s official (1809) and personal (1802) accounts of Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt that Egyptology was founded as a discipline.²⁸⁵

It is not surprising, therefore, that the mummy given to the Faculty of Advocates failed to stimulate interest except as a freakish curiosity. This attitude is also in keeping with the Advocates’ disinclination to fund the publication of Gordon’s essays on Egyptology.²⁸⁶ There even appears to have been no evidence of any medical interest in the mummy in 18th-century Edinburgh.²⁸⁷ Thus both Egypt and India had legitimate claims, even if disputed, to the European heritage, and their antiquities could find a place in the hierarchy of western taste. China was different.

China

China was briefly included in communications on language at both the Antiquaries and RSE, but in very different contexts. At the Antiquaries John Callander of Craigforth included China in his speculations on dispersal and etymology:

this very ancient Nation fixed their abode in a country very far removed from the Euphrates ... For a long series of years unmixed with foreigners ... they retained much more of the true Noachic language than any other People.

China was a land that had had no ‘material alteration for 4000 years’;²⁸⁸ thus although significant for the conjectural etymologist the country was otherwise static. For Dr J Hutton at the RSE (*Dissertation on Written Language*), Chinese orthography, which was a verbal rather than an alphabetical method, was seen as inferior because the alphabetical method was definable in science and represented pure principles of speech.²⁸⁹ By the late 18th century frustration with China’s intransigence towards British commercial interests had been a major spur to a shift in attitude towards China. Other factors, such as contempt for the Jesuit missionaries’ scholarly tradition which had produced most of the information on China, and a public taste moving away from Rococo Chinoiserie towards neo-Classicism were also contributing factors.²⁹⁰ Chinese civilization, once acclaimed as wise and stable, was now increasingly regarded as despotic and backward. The position of China in the debates on origins, which had been especially argued in the 17th century²⁹¹ was also being sidelined by India. William Jones, puzzling over the possible links between China and India, argued for the primacy of India and suggested that the Chinese were a caste of Brahmins, forced to wander from India in remote antiquity.²⁹² Because Chinese antiquity was still relevant to questions of chronology and origins, but was unsupported by the western classical canon and could not be easily linked to the western Asiatic, classical worlds and India,

the position it held was, in parallel with modern China, increasingly alien.

Lack of proper access to China and above all an ignorance of the language and texts were significant to this British perception. Finding Chinese natives and interpreters in England was difficult, and William Chambers, for example, was forced to send several Chinese inscriptions to Rome for translation.²⁹³ William Jones had a limited, Confucius-centered, knowledge of Chinese texts.²⁹⁴ He was interested in Chinese law, however, and promoted the visit to India of Whang Atong, a scholar and trader, he had met in London, ‘considerable advantage to the public, as well as to letters, might be reaped from the knowledge and ingenuity of such emigrants’ he suggested, but was forced to conclude that, ‘we must wait for a time of greater national prosperity and wealth before such a measure can be ... recommended by us to our patrons ...’.²⁹⁵

As shown in Part 1 a great variety of objects from China was available to the collector. It is also clear from surviving material that much of it was representative of the warehouse rather than being genuine antiques²⁹⁶ or artefacts in a purely Chinese style. Some 18th-century catalogues occasionally identify Chinese material as antique,²⁹⁷ but the accuracy of these classifications cannot be checked. The 18th-century travel restrictions to Canton for merchants and most foreigners are well documented, but travellers in China, such as J Bell in the 1720s were exposed to material different from that of the export market. Describing his visit to the house of an imperial minister Bell writes:

We saw a noble collection of many curiosities, both natural and artificial; particularly a large quantity of old porcelain and China ware, made in China and Japan; and at present, to be found only in the cabinets of the curious. They consisted chiefly of a great number of jars of different kinds. He took much pleasure in telling when and where they were manufactured; and as far as I can remember, many of them were above two thousand years old’.²⁹⁸

Descriptions of gifts made to embassies, though, were also a source of information, but were usually vague. Staunton, writing on Lord Macartney's embassy to China in 1793 (see below) writes of silks and porcelain, the latter consisting of 'detached pieces, slightly differing in form from those which are generally exported'.²⁹⁹ The claimed age of China and its antiquities and the Chinese reverence towards their own antiquity were treated with ambivalence or dismissal³⁰⁰ in western sources and linked to the supposed Chinese ignorance in astronomy.³⁰¹ Du Halde, for example, illustrates Chinese coins but ceramics and bronzes are treated more in the context of manufacture than as being of antiquarian interest.³⁰² Old porcelain 'étant dans une grande estime depuis tant de siècles' but which was often copied and recopied, had, in contrast to coins, no distinguishing 'point d'histoire' and left the curious only with 'un gout de couleur', preferable to the modern kind.³⁰³ William Chambers mentions the 'several vases of porcelain, and little vessels of copper' adorning the tables of Chinese interiors, which are held in great esteem:

These are generally of simple and pleasing forms: the Chinese say they were made 2000 years ago . . . and as such are real antiques (for there are many counterfeits) they buy at an extravagant price, giving sometimes no less than 300 £ sterling for one of them.³⁰⁴

He includes two Plates with ceramics and bronzes.³⁰⁵ Whereas modified and sometimes original Chinese porcelain was desirable, Chinese art was far from European taste, and by the end of the 18th century was barely recognized as art. Du Halde talked of beautiful temples but bizarre and monstrous figures;³⁰⁶ Bell wrote of the 'monstrous figures of stone and plaster' adorning temples;³⁰⁷ Macartney (see below), while writing of the general good taste of the Chinese, mentions, 'the only things disagreeable to my eye are the large porcelain figures of lions, tigers, dragons, etc, and the rough-hewn steps and huge masses of rock work' introduced near

their houses and palaces.³⁰⁸ By the time Staunton was writing (see below), the term monstrous was *de rigueur* when writing on certain aspects of China. The Chinese 'are strangers to perspective'³⁰⁹ and 'are not equal to the design and composition of a picture' wrote Staunton.³¹⁰ Even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, quoting J B Grosier *La description Generale de l'Empire Chinois* (1777–84), wrote 'works of eminent Chinese painters are never brought to Canton, because they cannot find purchasers among European merchants'.³¹¹ For William Jones:

they have both national music and national poetry . . . but of painting sculpture, or architecture, as arts of imagination, they seem . . . to have no idea.³¹²

Architecture was afforded more respect, 'It has a certain proportion and beauty particular of its own' wrote the *Britannica*³¹³ in contrast to Chambers who had tried to find an affinity between Chinese architecture and that of the ancients.³¹⁴ Architecture was often treated as an element in the landscape: Bell wrote:

In the cliffs and rocks you see little scattered cottages . . . much resembling those romantick figures of landscapes . . . painted on the China ware and other manufactures of this country. They are accounted fanciful by most Europeans, but are really natural.³¹⁵

and Macartney, 'Proper edifices in proper places is the style they most admire'.³¹⁶ Given such sources it is not surprising that there was little or no connoisseurship with regards to China in the 18th century.

The absence of communications on China from British Societies in the later 18th century, in contrast to those given from the late 17th century up to the mid-18th century,³¹⁷ was a symptom of the distancing of China, but may also have been related to the failure of the Macartney embassy of 1792–4 (see further below). The *Asiatic Researches* only published two pieces on China, both by Jones.³¹⁸ In contrast, the perception of China as a market with great potential was

reflected in the *Oriental Repertory*,³¹⁹ edited by the hydrographer Alexander Dalrymple. His main commitment, originally supported by Warren Hastings,³²⁰ was to a scheme to divert the China trade from Canton to a free trade port in the Sulu Archipelago and in trade with Cochin China.³²¹ The gathering of botanical, medical and geographical knowledge was to be part of this scheme, and he saw medicine as a means of extending British observation and influence in the region.³²² The scheme came to nothing at the time, but was revived in the 19th century.³²³ The Malay dagger from Sumatra given to the Antiquaries by J Glassford of Calcutta in 1790³²⁴ was a reminder of the once great importance of this region as a pivot in the Arabian, Indian and China trade, and of the present limited and sometimes violent reception of the British Presidency at Bencoolen or Fort Marlborough on the west coast of Sumatra.³²⁵

The Macartney embassy to China negotiating a treaty of commerce³²⁶ and giving a favourable impression of Britain³²⁷ could have provided fresh opportunities for observation and enquiry, but was barely taken advantage of. The expedition was encouraged by Joseph Banks³²⁸ and accompanied by two Scottish ‘scientists’, a professional doctor Dr H Gillan³²⁹ and the ‘machinist’ Dr J Dinwiddie,³³⁰ who appear to have been barely prepared for it. Dr Gillan in particular showed ignorance and open contempt in his unpublished observations on Chinese medicine.³³¹ An extract from Dr Dinwiddie’s journal shows that language was the major problem, ‘to travel through a fine country ... without being able to ask a single question is mortifying’.³³²

This lack however did stimulate some Chinese language learning. George Thomas Staunton, Macartney’s page, and later an East India Company writer in Canton, translated *The Statutes ... of the Ching Dynasty* into English.³³³ The missed opportunities of the embassy are particularly disappointing in view of Macartney’s own fair-mindedness towards the Chinese. Even though he admitted that the Chinese character ‘seems at present inexplicable’,³³⁴ Macartney

usually qualified a negative comment by ‘at least to our eyes’.³³⁵ Even though the embassy’s aim was primarily concerned with trading concessions, the deliberate pursuit of knowledge on the expedition, despite Banks’ botanical memoranda,³³⁶ was evidently not considered equally worthwhile. Perhaps investment in the embassy had been cautious, and this prudence was proved right when Macartney returned without having achieved its objectives. Although Dr Gillan was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in London in 1795, neither he nor Dr Dinwiddie were so honoured by any Edinburgh institution.

In contrast to the institutions, the Scottish press engaged with the narratives of the Macartney expedition. *The Bee*, for example, published the extract of a letter on the Chinese language and Whang Atong (mentioned above) written in 1775, in the hope ‘that it may fall into the hands of some of the gentlemen who are to go with Lord Macartney on his embassy...’ and may ‘... suggest to them some subjects of enquiry that might otherwise escape them ...’ (September 1792). The *Scots Magazine* and the *Edinburgh Magazine* published extracts of reports on the Chinese by Captain Mackintosh,³³⁷ who had commanded the vessel *Hindustan* during the voyage of the embassy, accounts of the expedition from Anderson’s narrative of 1795³³⁸ but above all large extracts from George Leonard Staunton’s official narrative as Secretary to the embassy.³³⁹ Although occasionally puzzled and ambivalent towards China, Staunton’s account does not show the persistent negativity of the embassy’s Secretary John Barrow’s *Travels in China*. This was published in 1804 and fuelled the extreme disparagement towards the Chinese shown by a review of the book in the *Edinburgh Review* (1805). Here the reviewer proceeds from the traditional *Review*’s style of overt criticism of book and author, to a demolition of the subject of the book, China.³⁴⁰ Macartney’s own journal, which was far more vivid and inquisitive than those of his contemporaries, was kept as a manuscript until the 20th century.³⁴¹

THE UNIVERSITY, SCHOLARSHIP & MANUSCRIPTS

The university & scholarship

By the late 18th century James Robertson (1714–95), the Professor of Hebrew at Edinburgh University from 1751–92, was coming to the end of a long career. Although qualified to teach Arabic, having studied both Hebrew and Arabic under Albert Schultens in Leiden in the 1740s, Hebrew, and specifically the use and significance of vowels in its spelling, remained at the core of his interests and curriculum. Knowledge of Arabic, as Robertson outlined in his *Dissertatio de ... Linguae Arabice* (1770)³⁴² was valued essentially for sharing the same ‘blood’ and ‘root’ as Hebrew. Each nation (Hebrew and Arab) ‘draws the same language from Heber, derived from the primeval, antedeluvian language, through Phaleg [Hebrew] and his younger brother Jocktan [Arabic]’.³⁴³ In Arabic one might discern the original character, the immense richness and the highest development of the Hebrew language.³⁴⁴ This did not mean that Robertson did not praise the purity of the Arabic language as found and preserved in the Koran,³⁴⁵ but he believed Arabic had no viability without Hebrew. Incorporating the study and appreciation of Arabic with Hebrew studies was very much in the tradition of Robertson’s teacher, Schultens, who had been responsible for a revival of Arabic during the 18th century, but strictly within narrow Biblical confines.³⁴⁶ The study of Arabic at Oxford under Hunt was similarly limited.³⁴⁷ When Robertson had taken up the Edinburgh chair in 1751, the study of Hebrew itself had been severely neglected at the University, and there had been no local scholarly tradition for him to draw upon. It was then customary to send scholars abroad to learn ‘oriental’ languages.³⁴⁸ There are very few indications from Robertson’s papers as to how he taught Arabic, or what texts he used. He would have been familiar with the classics of Arabic poetry and history edited by an older

generation of Arabists.³⁴⁹ Robertson’s notes however do show an emphasis, not on history but on poetry and the comparison of Hebrew and Arabic metre, and he quotes from William Jones’s *Poesios Asiaticae*.³⁵⁰ A notebook also shows him studying John Richardson’s *Arabic Grammar*,³⁵¹ devised for ‘gentlemen whose chief views are ... directed to commerce, war and political government’³⁵² and which uses serious as well as entertaining extracts to illustrate grammatical points.³⁵³ A shift from the solid, scholarly approach to the study of Arabic, characteristic of the 17th century, and from the Bible-centered approach of most of the 18th century, had been promoted by William Jones, who favoured Arabic poetry as the best medium for illustrating the ‘genius’ of the Arabs, and used Asiatic poetry to illustrate not only historical but legal points³⁵⁴ (see below).

In his *Dissertatio*, Robertson had emphasized the purity of the Arabic language in the Koran. This was a commonly held view among Arabists, but the distinction made between the language of the Koran, and some of its high-minded contents, and its claims to being a divinely-inspired book were clearly made in the 18th century. Equally, attitudes towards Mahomet were ambivalent: although generally styled ‘impostor’, he could be admired for his achievements.³⁵⁵ Attitudes towards Mahometanism however were unequivocally negative: at best the religion was associated with violence and fanaticism, and at worst with corruption. For Kames, for example, the Mahometans were shallow thinkers, ignorant, speaking nonsense to God and having ‘a persecuting zeal’.³⁵⁶ William Robertson, even though acknowledging that once upon a time the Mahometan religion had ‘contributed greatly towards the increase of commercial intercourse’, the Mahometans had behaved with ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticism in India.³⁵⁷ This contempt was largely directed at the Turks and at the Ottoman Empire and sometimes at the Egyptians. Again, Kames wrote ‘the Egyptians

... now effeminate, treacherous, cruel and corrupted ... a nation worn out with age and disease ... There is no remedy but to let the natives die out, and to replace the country with better men'.³⁵⁸ Niebuhr, however, takes pains to distinguish between the oppressors and the oppressed in Egypt, pointing out the politeness and eloquence of the Arabs compared to that of the Turks.³⁵⁹ The distinction between freedom-loving Arabian tribes as described in the western classics, their achievements in poetry and trade, and increasingly despotic Mahometan rulers was also maintained.³⁶⁰ For others, such as Bruce, anti-Mahometanism could also be dramatized in the context of travel writing and amalgamated to encompass historical writing, Mahomet himself and the present-day situation. For him, the Egyptians were a vile people.³⁶¹

Given James Robertson's training and inclinations it is perhaps not surprising that, despite the practical necessities of learning Persian in the 18th century for those wishing to have a career in India, the study of Persian at Edinburgh University appears to have been sidestepped until Dr W Moodie's appointment to Robertson's Chair in 1793. This late start was general in Britain: the official study of Persian had been mooted by Warren Hastings helped by Henry Vansittart in their 'Proposal for establishing a Professorship of the Persian Language in the University of Oxford' in the late 1760s, but the proposal had been ignored.³⁶² The level of Robertson's knowledge of Persian is not known, although he seems to have been able to read a letter addressed to him in Persian³⁶³ and his papers show him taking notes from Jones's *Persian Grammar* (1771) and Richardson's *Specimens of Persian Poetry* (1774).³⁶⁴ Robertson's review of Jones's work in the *Monthly Review* of 1772 shows that his main focus was the influence of Arabic on Persian and on the necessity of knowing Arabic before Persian. Persian odes were considered by Robertson to be inferior to Arabic and classical ones.³⁶⁵ This bias was possibly influenced, at the institutional level at least, by the fact that this odd

(non-Semitic) language would be a challenge to the primacy of Semitic languages. Jones's thoughts on the classification of languages and his assertion that Persia might have been the true centre of diffusion have already been mentioned, but they were not broadly publicized until the late 1780s. They would most likely have jarred with Robertson's beliefs. However Robertson's familiarity and sympathy with Jones's talents, 'a prodigy in the present age' and early work is amply demonstrated by the draft of a letter, written in c 1775, to the son of a Dr Hamilton in Calcutta. The draft contains paraphrases and quotes of whole sections taken from Jones's *Dissertation ...* (1771) and *An Essay on the Poetry of Eastern Nations*, published in *Poems ...* (1772). One quotation in particular shows him agreeing with the republican spirit of Jones as well as with his choice of poets: the Persian poet:

Sadi not only loved his country but he was possessed of the spirit of a Britton, he had just sentiments of Liberty even under absolute monarchy ... he writ ... with such freedom on this subject, that in the last Century or two Centuries past an European wd have been in that period of losing his ears or tongue or perhaps his life ...³⁶⁶

Such a statement, reinforced by the an anecdote about Ferdusi's defiance towards a ruler who broke his word, again taken from Jones³⁶⁷ and written at the time when the American War of Independence was brewing, shows Jones's effect on James Robertson at the time. Other examples of Jones's impact on Edinburgh will be dealt with below.

In 1793 Dr Moodie was appointed to teach Hebrew and 'other oriental languages'. A testimony of Dr Scot of Corstophine, himself an oriental scholar, says that Moodie's privately acquired knowledge of Persian was extensive.³⁶⁸ This again highlights the gulf between private knowledge and institutional teaching. There is no evidence that the University, Dr Robertson or Dr Moodie showed any interest in teaching Sanskrit.

Manuscripts and translations

We do not know whether Robertson used the few oriental manuscripts in the University library or other collections for personal or teaching purposes, nor is there evidence that he wished to acquire manuscripts for the library, which relied on donations. It is probable that he had his own collection, although again there is no evidence of this. The manuscript collections of David and James Anderson, made in India under the patronage of Warren Hastings, show the wide range of Persian and Arabic manuscripts available in India.³⁶⁹ These seem to have been donated to the library in the 19th century,³⁷⁰ and were the first to make the University a potentially significant centre for Persian and Arabic studies. In 1771 Jones had named the ‘Publick Libraries at Oxford, the Royal Library at Paris, the British Museum at London and the Collections of Private Men’ as containing the most valuable books in the Persian language,³⁷¹ and when James Fraser’s widow had sold her husband’s manuscripts to the Radcliffe Trustees in 1758, it was unlikely that Edinburgh University or the Advocates’ Library had even been considered as potential buyers. I will deal below with other Scottish orientalisks such as John Gilchrist and Alexander Hamilton, who were members of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta from its inception.

William Jones had been eloquent in his appeal for patronage and printing presses for oriental languages, lamenting the neglect of oriental tongues³⁷² and the fact that so many ‘manuscripts are preserved in the different museums and libraries of Europe, where they are shown more as objects of curiosity than as sources of information; and are admired, like the characters of a Chinese screen, more for their gay colours than for their meaning’.³⁷³ He had also stressed the importance of relying on primary sources for a proper understanding of history.³⁷⁴ Jones’s protégé, John Richardson, had also made a strong plea for the use of oriental sources in lieu of the customary reliance on classical ones (see below).³⁷⁵ The impetus given

by Warren Hastings³⁷⁶ on the practical beginnings of translations in India of Persian and Sanskrit texts from the Persian, is ground that has been well covered.³⁷⁷ By the 1780s major texts such as *A Code of Gentoo Laws*,³⁷⁸ historical works (see below) and extracts from the *Bhagavad Gita*³⁷⁹ as well as commentaries on Hanafi law in India, had been translated. The Calcutta Press, established in c 1777 was also responsible for the dissemination in dual-language of a wide variety of works or extracts from works on history, language, literature, law and religion.³⁸⁰ Besides the canonical texts listed by Jones in the Catalogue of the *Persian Grammar*,³⁸¹ new types of historical manuscripts became widespread in the 18th century. These were in essence the fruits of the Moghul emperors’ patronage and included not only histories of India or biographies of the emperors, but contemporary histories.³⁸² Extracts from such texts also appeared in journals such as the *Asiatic Miscellany* and *The New Asiatic Miscellany*.³⁸³ Such translated texts fuelled debates on benign and non-benign despotism³⁸⁴ and validated the conquest of Bengal by the British. Warren Hastings, for example, was portrayed as a patron and administrator equal to Akbar.³⁸⁵ Jones and the historian Robertson used these histories to caution against the excesses of the ‘European masters’ in India (see below).

In his *Questions and Remarks on the Astronomy of the Hindus*, written in 1792 and submitted to *Asiatic Researches*, John Playfair had been very straightforward in his request for a full translation of the Surya Siddhanta, as mentioned above, and in his suggestion for a search for books on Hindu geometry and mathematics and a catalogue and short account of Sanskrit books on astronomy.³⁸⁶ W Robertson was more circumspect. While advocating the solidity of his ‘authors of antiquity’, he was also acutely aware of new sources, ‘it is of late only, that by studying the languages now and formerly spoken in India, and by consulting and translating their most eminent authors, [the moderns] have begun to enter into that path of enquiry which leads with certainty to a thorough

knowledge of the state of arts cultivated in that country'.³⁸⁷ Combining authors of antiquity with other modern respectable authorities, written and verbal, had been essential to him when 'undertaking to describe countries of which I had no local knowledge'.³⁸⁸ Yet Robertson, while waiting for new sources, and trusting of many, rejected others. Indian chronology, as mentioned above, was for him always extravagant.³⁸⁹ It was perhaps the novelty of these sources and their ambivalent potential that were partly responsible for the 'allusiveness' and 'unfinished' quality of the *Disquisition*, referred to by Phillipson.³⁹⁰ Writing a history of modern India would not have satisfied Robertson's aim to show India's long history of commerce as evidence of its civilization, but he might also have found the idea inappropriate and not viable, like the reviewer of Thomas Maurice's *The Modern History of Hindostan* ... (1802).³⁹¹ This review stresses, in almost Jonesian terms, the need for the use of original sources in their original language and their lack impeding the making of a complete and finished history of Hindostan,³⁹² 'It is the business of the learned to collect MSS., form grammars and dictionaries, write dissertations, publish historical researches and records' and wait patiently for the appearance of another Hume or Robertson, the reviewer concludes.³⁹³ Here, however, such criticism was used as much as an excuse to pan a book on India, referring, for example, to the 'inferiority of Asiatic chronicles' and a 'history locked up in obscure and nearly forgotten languages' as much as to criticize Maurice for his style, lack of scholarship, ignorance of Asiatic languages and categorical belief in the descent of the Hindus from the Patriarchs.³⁹⁴

Ancient or more recent original sources had little scholarly impact on 'universal' historians, such as Alexander Tytler. While guarding against the 'speculative refinement, which, professing to exhibit the Philosophy or the Spirit of History, are more fitting to display the writer's ingenuity as a theorist ...'.³⁹⁵ and favouring the recording of original facts, Tytler has few references to his

sources on oriental history, perhaps assuming that his audience would be familiar both with the western classics and the latest publications.³⁹⁶ The use or non-use of recent original sources by Scottish writers on social or stadial history, such as J Millar and A Ferguson, is a matter for specialists,³⁹⁷ but which perhaps deserves more attention in the context of Asia. Here I shall merely point out Ferguson's statement in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society*:

If ever an Arab clan shall become a civilized nation ... it may be from the relations of the present times, and from the descriptions which are now given by travellers, that such a people, in after ages, may best collect the accounts of their origin'.³⁹⁸

Here Ferguson was juxtaposing western classical sources with modern ones, and favouring the latter, but both types of sources are second-hand, relying on western observation and ignoring local traditions. For Millar, information 'with regard to the state of mankind in the rude parts of the world' was to be chiefly derived from travellers.³⁹⁹ This attitude was also found elsewhere applied to the Hindus, a highly literate people. William Marsden, for example, in his paper on the 'Chronology of the Hindus', writes:

the Hindoos, like many other nations of the world, may hereafter be indebted to strangers, more enlightened by philosophy than themselves, for a rational history of their country.⁴⁰⁰

Another example from Millar is the third, updated, edition of the *Origin and Distinction of Ranks* (1781) which does not mention, even in a note or appendix, Halhed's 1776 *A Code of Gentoo Laws*, in the context of Indostan. It is possible that new original sources were considered as irrelevant details with little to contribute to histories that in some parts of the world, like China and India, were considered to be static or repetitive.⁴⁰¹

The limiting impact of philosophical or stadial history on Edinburgh orientalist mostly

active in the early 19th century has already been analysed by J Randall,⁴⁰² and will only be briefly returned to below.

WILLIAM JONES & EDINBURGH

Jones's complex relationship with Edinburgh needs far deeper analysis than can be attempted in this survey. Here I shall only suggest that the ambivalence leading towards outright criticism of Jones, by, for example James Mill, James Mackintosh and Dugald Stewart in the early 19th century, which had emerged in an increasingly anti-Brahmin post-Hastings India, may have been fermenting in the changing intellectual and political climate of late 18th-century Edinburgh.

In Edinburgh Jones appears to have been caught up in the polarization between the radical Whiggism of Lord Buchan and the Antiquaries and the moderate Whig and Tory institutions of the University and the RSE. Jones himself was considered a radical Whig because of his republican views (see below) and his support for the American and French Revolutions. These not only ran counter to the beliefs of the Edinburgh Moderates but were untenable openly in the oppressive climate of the sedition trials of late 18th-century Edinburgh. Lord Buchan's appropriation of Jones has already been mentioned. In its short life his journal *The Bee* (1791–3) was far more personally engaged with Asia and Jones than either the *Scots* or *Edinburgh Magazines*. Enquiry had been feeble in Asia, before the 'arrival of Sir William Jones ... who no sooner had set foot in Asia than he excited a general spirit of enquiry there ...'.⁴⁰³ Had the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* survived it would have been telling to see how far its partisanship for Jones would have gone. As it was, the *Asiatic Researches* had been poorly covered by the *Scots* and *Edinburgh Magazines*,⁴⁰⁴ in contrast to London journals, such as the *Monthly Review*.⁴⁰⁵ The *Scots Magazine* only began to engage, but not directly, with the *Asiatic Researches* after Jones's death in 1794.⁴⁰⁶ What Jones meant to radical Whigs

of a younger generation, such as F Jeffrey is yet to be investigated.

The caution or ambivalence shown towards Jones by the University and the RSE was subtle. James Robertson's thoughts on Jones's late work are unknown. William Robertson regularly quotes from Jones in his *Disquisition*, as a source among others, but praises him rarely and soberly as, 'a person to whom oriental literature ... has been greatly indebted'.⁴⁰⁷ Jones's election to the RSE came late (1790) and essentially because of his exchange with Playfair over astronomy. His membership had been proposed not by leading RSE members, but by a Mr McConochie, and only seconded by Playfair and Dr Gregory.⁴⁰⁸ The RSE would also have been aware and more comfortable with the anti-antiquarian, 'statistical' and 'scientific' approach to investigation and knowledge advanced by the East India Company, and some of its servants, such as the hydrographer A Dalrymple and the doctor-botanist, F Buchanan.⁴⁰⁹ Other factors which may have contributed to the ambivalence towards Jones was his cosmopolitanism and his association with controversial figures, such as the Irish antiquarian Colonel Vallancey⁴¹⁰ and Lord Monboddo. Lord Buchan was not the only person to appropriate Jones. He was widely quoted by admirer and enemy alike. Thomas Maurice (mentioned above), whose scholarship was eccentric, did not fail to invoke Jones's name in a response (*A Vindication of the Modern History of Hindostan*, 1805) to the severely critical *Edinburgh Review* article on his book. Similarly, the pro-missionary Indophobe Charles Grant, the author of *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* (written 1792–6, published 1813), who disliked Warren Hastings and Jones⁴¹¹ and attacked Robertson.⁴¹² When the text was published he had added footnotes. Here he lamented the loss of William Jones, expressed 'a very high degree of respect' for the other members of the Asiatic Society, and stated that the development of Hindoo history, literature, mythology, and science 'has been a great

desideratum', while the modern Hindus were referred to as depraved, inferior racially, and if left to themselves, beyond redemption.⁴¹³ Jones was also invoked in many of his arguments against the Hindus.⁴¹⁴ John Shore gave a further example of the appropriation of Jones by the Evangelicals in his *Memoirs of the life, writings, and correspondence of Sir William Jones*.⁴¹⁵ That Jones was aware of the threat and narrowness of the missionary movement in the 1790s is clear from his Eleventh Discourse (1794):

If the conversion . . . of the Pandits and Maulavis in this country shall ever be attempted by Protestant missionaries, they must beware of asserting, while they teach the gospel of truth, what those Pandits and Maulavis would know to be false.⁴¹⁶

In other words, doctrines of Christianity are intrinsic to Confucius, the Greeks, Sanskrit writings and Persian poets and not borrowed from it.⁴¹⁷ The late 18th-century established literati of Edinburgh may not have been in favour of the missionaries, but they could be unsettled by the tone of Jones's late publications and Discourses. Jones was always aware of his audience; in his *Institutes of Hindu Law or the Ordinances of Menu* (1794), for example, he was careful to balance his commentary:

the work contains an abundance of curious matter extremely interesting both to speculative lawyers and antiquaries . . . It is a system of despotism and priestcraft . . . nevertheless, a spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures pervades the whole work.⁴¹⁸

Yet strong hints on the dangers of European despotism paralleling the Asiatic in India are also found:

In these Indian territories, which Providence has thrown into the arms of Britain for their protection and welfare . . . their [Indian] histories may possibly suggest hints for their prosperity.⁴¹⁹

For Jones, and to a lesser extent Robertson, India was a source not only of ancient knowledge, but

of knowledge that could be applied fruitfully to the present. In his Eleventh Discourse (1794) Jones sought to demonstrate points that united his 'family of nations'. In religious terms this meant a universal belief in the 'supremacy of an all creating and all pervading spirit', not only by the Hindus, but by one of the *bête-noires* of the 18th century, the 'Mussulmans'. The common origin and pre-Mosaic radiating idea of history,⁴²⁰ set-backs by despotism and oligarchies and with gaps that still needed to be filled by untranslated and undiscovered Asiatic texts,⁴²¹ left 18th-century theories of social progress, improvement and Western supremacy, too open-ended for comfort. In her analysis of Edinburgh orientalist between 1800–30, J Randall has shown the pervasive influence of their common Scottish background of philosophical history and philology, and their call for a wider conjectural perspective of India, not the 'antiquarian' one exemplified by the Asiatic Society.⁴²² Thus the translation of texts was considered a significant but incomplete endeavour, whereas for Hastings and Jones this had been at the very centre of their work. Jones's perspective was not the study of language within stages of society or as a branch of philosophy of mind, but a philology based on actual knowledge of languages, from which comparative philology would emerge. In his last writings it appears that for Jones, perhaps influenced by Hindu philosophy, history was not a question of scale and differentiation but rather of points in common and even unity. Jones's influence, in terms of the emphasis on language and translation, was clear on some of his Scottish contemporaries, such as J Richardson, J B Gilchrist, J Anderson and W Kirkpatrick. Gilchrist and Kirkpatrick published with the Calcutta Press,⁴²³ J Anderson and Kirkpatrick with the *Asiatic* and *The New Asiatic Miscellany*.⁴²⁴ The Sanskritist A Hamilton, one of the scholars discussed by J Randall, had been a member of the Asiatic Society in Jones's time, and published in the *Asiatic Miscellany*. This early work also shows a text-based approach.⁴²⁵ Later on, Hamilton was to

pay tribute to Jones,⁴²⁶ while maintaining that the only approach to language was conjectural, merging the development of language (from the first rude cries to a polished idiom) with its diffusion. As implied above no real traces of Jonesian influence can be detected in the teaching of oriental languages at the University in the late 18th century. Little is known about J Robertson's successor, Moodie. His successor in 1812, J Murray appears to have had sporadic knowledge of oriental languages. While mentioning Jones and considering his views⁴²⁷ he was very much of the speculative, historical school of philology.⁴²⁸ His interest can be considered to be wide-ranging comparative ethnology:

The history of mankind will not be complete, until first the affinities of the Asiatic nations, and afterwards the connection of the African and American races, be ascertained through the medium of language.⁴²⁹

The following shows his divergence from Jones, 'I fear the oldest and best Sanskrit books are still left to moulder in the recesses of the decayed seats of Indian learning ... The Bramins are ignorant, suspicious and idle' he wrote in a letter of 1811 to Dr Baird.⁴³⁰ It is for others to unravel whether Murray was influenced by the utilitarian and missionary movements and whether Dugald Stewart's criticism of Jones⁴³¹ which had been, had an earlier genesis or not.

It is perhaps fitting to conclude this section with a reminder of other kinds of literary stimulus provided by Asia to Jones and others. In the Antiquaries' papers is the copy of a letter of a response by William Jones to a communication from John Corse⁴³² entitled 'Account of the copulation of two tame elephants and the means that were employed to bring about so desirable an event.' Jones thanks Corse for 'his very curious paper' and suggests that if 'you have any poetical friends in Calcutta, you might supply them with materials for a poem ... which would as far surpass all the works of European genius as an Elephant is larger than a shepherd

or a hero'. He encloses the opening of such a poem but feels 'unequal to the magnitude of the full task'. The poem, Pelion and Assa, promises 'what Bruce never saw, and Sparmaan sighted to see' with the lovers eventually needing 'a croud of Doctors, All heads of Colleges and both Proctors'.

CONCLUSION

Attitudes to Asia signalled through the material in the institutional collections, communications and university teaching discussed above were uneven, idiosyncratic and dis-associated. This was due essentially to the bias of each institution: the Antiquaries', whose interest was Scotland within its borders and Celtic origins; the Advocates' with its elitist emphasis on Scotland and the classical world; the RSE's pursuit of its 'physical' rather than its 'literary' class of enquiry,⁴³³ and the University's concentration on natural-history collecting and its conservatism with regards to oriental learning.

The Asian component of the institutional collections, although lacking the coherence, quantity and sometimes quality of the Scottish or natural history donations and of private collections, was nevertheless broadly representative of different aspects of Asian material culture, from ethnographical artefacts, to antiquities and manuscripts. At the institutional level there was an unavoidable gulf between the personal involvement of a donor, whose motivation for giving a gift could be very charged, and the treatment of this material by the recipient. In several cases, even for valuable gifts such as the Koran given to the Antiquaries, the Sanskrit manuscripts to the RSE or the Egyptian mummy to the Advocates, the interest of the institutions did not appear to last beyond the immediate reception of the donation. This is demonstrated by the neglect or loss of these objects. Such cavalier treatment of this material belied not only its intrinsic value but its pertinence to the time. The Sanskrit manuscripts

given to the RSE, for example, could not have been a more genuine testimony of the progress of oriental studies at the time, yet this apparently failed to motivate scholarly enquiry locally. Natural-history donations appear to have fared marginally better than others because of the tradition of science studies in Edinburgh. Thus even though actual material in these collections was a strong testimony of the Scots' involvement in Asia, its display and preservation was piecemeal and projected no sense of national engagement or achievement in Asia.

The context of the displays, ascertained on the basis of contemporary collections, would have been predominantly typological, with an object being a specimen among others of its kind, and suited to comparative assessment, rather than to the evaluation of an object within its cultural context. This type of assessment, shown for example by Pennant's comparison of a classical whip in the McGouan collection with a whip from Bengal,⁴³⁴ reinforced stadial rather than relativist perspectives. Chinese instruments, for example, when compared to western ones were found to have more in common with ancient instruments than modern ones, and thus the notion of Chinese backwardness in science was reinforced. Even though some of this material would have resonated from travel accounts, for individuals who had not been to the East this type of display did nothing to conjure up the world the objects came from, rather it promoted distance. The Asia represented in prints and drawings or described by travellers may have been recreated privately, or in 'museums' in India,⁴³⁵ but not institutionally in Britain at the time. Clearly artefacts had different significance for different viewers: scholars of oriental languages, for example, could make use of coins or manuscripts, but for others commonplace perceptions of the East were the only means of judgement. Thus an illustrated Koran displayed in a collection might not only have been a symbol of something semi-sacred and beautiful, but also of something false and

dangerous. Equally, Chinese ladies' shoes could be a symbol of delicacy and exoticism but also of alienation and cruelty; an Indian 'hookar' a symbol of wealth and luxury, but also of decadence, and a dagger from Sumatra a symbol of craftsmanship but also of the violence for which Malaysia was infamous.⁴³⁶

The price of Asian objects varied greatly but barring exceptional pieces, was affordable not only to the middling but to some of the working classes as well. Much of this material, except for antiquities and manuscripts, could also be obtained locally. This affordability and availability, which made the material highly visible, also commodified the East, splitting even further the material from its true cultural context. Thus the Asian component of collections carried with it mixed messages, which were not conducive to an appraisal of Asia per se.

Links between communications on Asia and Asian donations, such as Dr Grieve's gift of boots from Tartary to the Antiquaries and his communication on 'koumiss' to the RSE, Colonel MacLeod's gift of manuscripts approximately at the time of the contact between the RSE and the Asiatic society, or the gift of F Simpson's Indian idols and their description in a paper in the early 19th century, existed but were rare. Paradoxically, the Institution that pronounced the most on Asia and had the most Asian material in its collections (the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland) had only one paper on Asia itself. This communication on Elephanta, published in *Archaeologia* and in the Scottish press, was a reflection of the author's (Hector MacNeil) Scottish identity but was also part of a series of papers on the same topic published in *Archaeologia* and the *Asiatic Researches*. The few communications given at the RSE, on the other hand, were both shared with other institutions but also, by two exceptional examples, show direct engagement with the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. This was the result of Playfair's pursuit of his own subject and a response to William Jones's plea in the *Asiatic Researches* 2 for queries

on Asia from learned Societies in Europe. The general response in Britain to this plea was not as fruitful as Jones had hoped, and Playfair's direct engagement was thus very significant, but isolated. Nevertheless, in contrast to the public non-showing of the collections, the few communications at the Societies do expose Scottish engagement with Asia: from Bogle and William Hastings in Tibet, to Hector Macneil's visit to Elephanta, to John Playfair's link with the Asiatic Society and to Grieve's work in Tartary.

The printing by institutions of papers on specific topics only, such as Tibet or Elephanta, which also filtered down to magazines, was a significant factor in limiting the presentation of Asia. The Calcutta publications, although showing little coherence except where texts were concerned, covered a wide range of subjects. Yet the reporting of the history, languages and arts of Asia, which was the natural domain of the Scottish Antiquaries, remained limited at the Society of Antiquaries of London and appropriated to serve its own ends by the Edinburgh Society. The potential for scholarship on Asia in the late 18th century was great, but because of the strong divide between private and institutional knowledge, interest in or study of Asia, except for a few individuals, remained narrow and disconnected rather than comprehensive, or was disregarded to conform to models of historical or social development. Lack of knowledge facilitated the transition of attitudes, such as from adulation to derision where China was concerned,⁴³⁷ yet increasing knowledge, as with India, could also be detrimental. India's ancient civilization was inspirational to some, but used as a weapon by others to belittle contemporary Hindus. Thus aspects of Asia were claimed to suit specific purposes. Yet despite these allegiances, the work of certain Scots who were party to Edinburgh institutions, such as William Robertson, John Playfair and John Richardson, ensured that aspects of Asia were seen in the clear light of their day.

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NOTES

- 1 Minutes, 2.
- 2 *Transactions* 1, 1783–5, 9–10; Waterson 1997.

- 3 This survey is based on a limited sample of catalogued or otherwise well-documented collections. A comprehensive survey has not been possible due to lack of time and accessibility of sources. Many of the donors to the institutional collections mentioned here aspired to having a personal collection of some kind. The letters of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland amply demonstrate this.
- 4 Natural history has been omitted from this survey because it constitutes a separate speciality, already much studied. See for example Withers 1992; 1993; Waterson 1997, with bibliographies.
- 5 Shapin 1974; Brown 1980a; Sher 1985; Withers 1992; 1993; Waterson 1997.
- 6 Details of idols given to the Royal Society of Edinburgh by Francis Simpson via W A Cadell in 1819, were only published in vol 9 of the *Transactions* (1823). The idols were brought over from India by F Simpson in 1800.
- 7 See Table 2. For the Advocates' mummy see Brown, 2002.
- 8 During the 18th century the term 'India goods' could be applied to any material traded by the East India Company, such as Chinese wallpaper made for the European market. The identification given to eastern artefacts in sale catalogues must have been very uneven, depending as it sometimes must have done only on the auctioneers' expertise rather than on collectors' inventories or personal catalogues.
- 9 For example: Mr J Scott, Bookbinder; Mr A Jobson, Merchant; Mr A Gardner, Goldsmith. Smellie 1782, 33–41.
- 10 Brown 2002.
- 11 For example, Letters: 13 October 1781, from James Cummyng to Mr Adam Graham, 'Our collection of natural objects is increasing apace and I hope the time is not far distant when some of our members will by a comparative view of the productions of other countries in our Collection with those of our own be able occasionally to furnish the most rational and profitable entertainment at our meetings'. Much of the Antiquaries' pursuit of prestige lay in its contacts with foreign academies, diplomats, scholars and men of letters: see for example Smellie 1784, List of Members including Honorary and Correspondent (AS, 1, xxv–xxx).
12 Buchan *Discourse* 1778; Smellie 1784.
13 Brown 1980b.
14 NAS/GD/18/1810.
- 15 AS, 3, Appendix, 83.
- 16 Smellie 1782, no 244.
- 17 Smellie 1782, no 100.
- 18 *Transactions*, 1790, 79–80.
- 19 AS, 3, appendix 60.
- 20 Smellie 1784, 19.
- 21 NLS MS. Acc 10000/3, 73–4. According to the RSE Minutes of 1792, they were entrusted to Mr Playfair (p 75) The three manuscripts were (1) The Gita ... a collection of maxims (2) The Sri Bhagawat, or history of the Indian Apollo (3) The Chandi from the Mavarandeya (p 74).
- 22 *Transactions*, 1794, 139.
- 23 *Transactions*, 1794, 139.
- 24 *Transactions*, 1794, 139.
- 25 AS, 3, 41.
- 26 Smellie 1783, no 596.
- 27 Stevenson 1981, 49; Gordon-Seton 1941, 583.
- 28 Belmahi 2002, quoting Rogers c 1970.
- 29 Smellie 1784, nos 581, 637 and 658. Unfortunately the origin of the Egyptian 'gem' impressions cannot be checked.
- 30 Smellie 1782, no 33.
- 31 Smellie 1782, no 9. A pencilled note beside this entry in the National Museums of Scotland Library copy of the *Account* identifies this piece as a Persian powder horn. A similar object is described in Ebenezer Mussell's sale of 1765, no 34.
- 32 NRA(S) 2696: Bundle 649 (74), Inventory; Bundle 651 (50), Roup. For a book of Moghul portraits also owned by J Fraser (amongst others) see Aufrecht 1864, 358 no 854; Macray 1984, year 1738.
- 33 Fraser 1742, preface.
- 34 NRA(S) 2696: Bundle 293 (34) goods belonging to James Fraser Esq sold on 3 Apr 1759 by J Prestage.
- 35 NRA(S) Bundle 293/31.
- 36 *Travels*, 1813 edn, vol 1, 101; vol 2, 406–16, comments by A Murray. The Bruce manuscripts were bought by the Bodleian in 1843 for £1000 (Macray 1984).
- 37 During the 1720s and 1730s advertisements concentrate on tea, silks, 'callicoes and dimitties'. The encroachment of India goods was such that on 21/22 September 1730 the *EEC* ran an advertisement that by order of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh 'with respect to the Importation of, using and wearing of India silks, Callicoes Printed or Stained ... it being ... contrary to the Laws and Acts of Parliament ... but

- prejudicial to the Trade, Interest and Manufactures of Britain and to the said Company in particular, unanimously resolved ... to give publick notice to all such as shall presume to import and buy use or wear Indian silks, Callicoes and others ... that the said Company will ... prosecute the Transgressors to the utmost Rigour ... the Penalties therein ... being 500 £ Sterl. to the Importer, and 200 £ Sterl. to the Resetter, User or Wearer of such goods'. In England such an act had been passed in 1700 (Berg 1998, 410).
- 38 eg *EEC* 26 Nov 1746, 'Just arrived from the East India Company warehouse in London ... to be sold by John Gibson at his shop in the Newland opposite the Crosswell'. The most frequently mentioned merchants are: Patrick Henderson (*EEC* 2 Feb 1747; Aug–Nov 1748; *EEC* 30 Dec 1756); Mssrs Fidler and Wild (auctioneers from London, *EEC* 7 Dec 14, 1778, Apr 1779); Mssrs Fidler and Sellway (*EEC* Apr 17 1782); Mr T Fidler (*EEC* 2 Jul 1779, 1 Apr 1780, 15 Jan 1785, 11 Jan 1787); Mr Anderson at the India Warehouse, St Ninian's St, 2 Mar, 1782; Mrs M Anderson (*EEC* 30 Dec 1778, 10 Feb 1779, 5 Jun 1779, 18 Mar 1782); Stephenson's East India Repository from London, Canongate (*EEC* 22 Mar; 24 Apr 1779; 10 Jan; 5 Feb; 12 Apr 1780).
- 39 Examples of rousps including India goods and curiosities: 29 Jul 1778 Capt Gardiner's paintings and curiosities, sold by Young and Trotter at their Great Rooms, Prince's St; 15 Feb 1787 Property of Capt A Stuart, Dalgleish and Sons auctioneers, next to the Umbrella Warehouse, Bridge St.; 23 Apr 1787 in the house of John Mill, Alison Sq, auctioneer Mrs Bowie. Examples of the sale of ships' contents: 25 Sept, 1782, of the *Grevende Shemilman* from Copenhagen; 4 Dec 1784 stores of the *Montague*, East Indiaman.
- 40 Examples of customs sales, by inch of candle, of confiscated India goods for home consumption: *EEC* 6 Jul; 6 Aug 1747; 12 Nov 1748; 19 Jul 1780; for home consumption and for exportation, 30 Jul 1783.
- 41 NRA(S) 0208: Cash Book, Ledger for 1756ff.
- 42 *EEC*, 18 Jul 1748. The contents of the ships (raw silk, sago, tea, China ware, gold, taffeties, sattins, pepper, tea, smaller parcels) are given in the *EEC* 9 August, 1748. The goods purchased by the public would have been part of the private cargo of merchants and sailors. See Berg 1999 for an economic review of the East India Co trade in the context of luxury and European responses.
- 43 Laskey 1813.
- 44 NAS/GD/224/307/5/3 (56).
- 45 NAS/GD/224/1040 (44). Most of these items also feature in the 1756 inventory: GD 224/1083.
- 46 NAS/GD/224/1001/21.
- 47 Weir 1899; Hingston-Fox 1901; Aitken 1908; Brock 1994.
- 48 Philipe 1804. McGouan's correspondence mentions his natural history, prints and paintings collections: NLS 14263 ff98–103, 116–17 (letters to Andrew Lumisden 1780; 1783); NLS 14254 ff90–1 (letter to Lady Strange 1797).
- 49 NLS 14263 f165 (letter to Andrew Lumisden, 1790).
- 50 Smellie 1782, no 252.
- 51 Prices listed in Table 2 do not exceed £50. The top range of £20–45 represents items such as painted albums of Indian or Chinese scenes, painted screens, 'India' paper and 'India' cabinets. These prices are moderate compared to the estimated value of £500 of an Indian 'hookar' with precious stones (cf A Duncan's gift to the Antiquaries, Smellie 1782, no 224), or Lord Morton's mummy given to the Advocates' collection, which was said to have cost £300. This may have been an exaggeration as the price of other mummies at the time was c £13 13s. The £20–50 range is also lower than that given to some classical antiquities: eg £136 10s 10d for a head of Homer or £26 9s for Diana of the Ephesians (cf to £26 10s 6d for two statues of Isis) (Mead 1755). The widest choice of goods was available within the £5–20 range: illuminated manuscripts (although these could be higher, cf a Koran on vellum, illuminated throughout, in the Hunter collection with the note 'for every page you would get in Persia ten guineas' (Aitken 1908, no 479, again a probable exaggeration); Asian idols, Egyptian antiquities, coin lots, carpets, architectural models, ceramics or China ware. The next price range from c £1–5 constitutes another large group: manuscripts (not illuminated), China figures, instruments, weapons (plain), coin lots, vessels, sets of baskets. Below £1 are small Egyptian antiquities (eg scarabs), small manuscripts, coins, small instruments, ethnographic jewellery. Prices at local rousps or sales from cargoes would be cheaper than those of the London auction houses. Thus a determined workman, such as a mason on 26s per diem in 1789–90, or even a manservant on £20 per annum in 1783–91 in Edinburgh (*Statistical Account* 1793, 6) would have been able to buy himself an

- exotic coin or scarab or a fragmentary manuscript. Whether this was an aspiration of the working classes in the mid-late 18th century is a question for social historians (cf Berg 1999).
- 52 Smellie, 1784, 3–29.
- 53 Smellie, 1784, 26.
- 54 Stevenson 1981 and n 59 below.
- 55 References to viewing in the early years of the society were variable. eg 3 Mar 1781 (*Minutes* 1) ‘Reading Room ... open every Monday and Friday from 12–13 ... when such Books or papers as the Members chused to peruse would be given to them for that effect’; Jul 23 1782 (*Minutes* 1) ‘until this arrangement (of the medals) is finished the Society should not allow any of the medals to be shown to the publick ...’.
- 56 Article VII in Buchan’s *Discourse* (1778, 28–31) but no X in the Statutes (Smellie 1782, 128).
- 57 Kincaid 1787, 117–19.
- 58 There are numerous references in the Letters and Minutes of the Society to the hypothetical ‘museum’ or repository. For example: proposal in March 1781 to advertise for ‘the purchase of a Repository to contain the Books, Papers, Coins and Medals and other remains of former times’. Also *Letters*, 5 Apr 1781; 29 December 1781; *Minutes*, 23 Jan 1787. As early as 1782 a variety of articles were being spoiled by exposure to the air in the utility room (*Minutes*, 23 Jul 1782) and by 1793 many effects had been sealed up and coins and medals removed for security (*Minutes*, 24 Jan 1793). In 1795 there was a renewed resolve that ‘as soon as the effects of the Society were properly arranged, the Museum should be opened for three hours a week ...’ (*Minutes* 1, 4 Jul 1785) and by 1796 D Deuchar was writing to W Smellie ‘not a few of the donations are wanting ... It is our duty to have them so described, what remains’. (*Letters*, 1785–1825). For the curators see *AS*, 3 ‘Office bearers of the Society’, 199–200. Curators were regularly expected to make a survey of the donations, for example, *Minutes* 2, 24 Feb, 10 Mar 1789. The Bye-Laws of the Statutes (5 Jun 1781) stated that a proper descriptive catalogue of the Donations made to the Museum would be published occasionally (Smellie 1782, 129). Smellie’s *Account* (1782; 1784), which lists donations and donors, was in effect a substitute catalogue. Publishing these lists was suspended until 1831 (*AS*, 3, 1831), which covers the years 1784–1830.
- 59 A description of a meeting is as follows ‘The Society met on Tuesday last. Twenty were present. Six different presents were made of Coins, Petrifications an ancient Roman Inscription on white marble, extraordinary animal and vegetable productions, and a Discourse was read by Mr Clerck on the History of the ancient Gaelic language ...’ *Communications* 1, Letter from James Cummyng to Lord Buchan, 19 Mar 1781.
- 60 *Minutes*, 15 Jul 1782.
- 61 *Transactions*, 1, 1788, 36.
- 62 *Minutes* 2, 17 Jun 1800.
- 63 *FM*, 3, 345.
- 64 *FM*, 3, 1751–83, xxiv–xxv.
- 65 *FM*, 3, 22–3 n 43.
- 66 *FM*, 3, n 476.
- 67 Brown 1989, 163–9.
- 68 *ibid*, 169–70.
- 69 *FM*, 2, 222, and Part 2.
- 70 The focus appears to have been on the cost, placement and acknowledgement of artefacts. For example *FM*, 3, 303–4, 322.
- 71 Pennant 1772, 51.
- 72 *New Guide to the City of Edinburgh* 1792, 53.
- 73 Smellie 1782, 26.
- 74 Kincaid 1787, 117.
- 75 Shapin 1974; Withers 1993; Waterson 1997, 13–15.
- 76 Withers 1993; Waterson 1997.
- 77 Waterson 1997, 39–40.
- 78 *New Guide to the City of Edinburgh* 1792, 53; Kincaid 1787, 145–6.
- 79 Withers 1993, letter to the Lord Advocate.
- 80 Kincaid 1772.
- 81 17th-century donors: R Ramsay 1628 (Chengtze’s Essay on the Yi King or Book of Changes, China 1440, first Chinese accession, Press Catalogue 1762); Sir John Chessley 1650 (Dictionary of Arabic with explanations in Latin, Press Catalogue 1695–7); George Saundry, merchant 1690 (Arabic, Treatment of the Four Evangelists, Press Catalogue 1695–7); Mr John Goodall 1698 (Arabic, small 8vo leaves, Press Catalogue under Theologici Morales); mid 18th-century donor: Sir Hector Munro of Novar (d 1764): Hukk and Ethè 1925, nos 149, 150 (2 Korans, Arabic), 408 (History of Timur, Persian); 409 (Padishahnama, Persian). For substantial 19th-century donations (David & James Anderson, J Baillie of Leys) see Part 2.
- 82 NLS MS. 14254 ff90–1 (Letter to Lady Strange, 1797).

- 83 NAS CC.8.8. vol 134 fol 192.
 84 *Minutes* 1, 9 August 1785.
 85 Taylor 1992; Waterson 1997.
 86 Taylor 1992.
 87 Taylor 1992, 159.
 88 *ibid*, 156–7.
 89 *ibid*, 156.
 90 Hingston-Fox 1901, 39 n 1.
 91 *AR*, 2, 45.
 92 Pennant 1998 edn, 589, pl xxx.
 93 *Letters*, 1781–2, 25 Dec.
 94 ‘Greek, Roman and other antient medals, Scots medals, English medals, then those of other countries, the whole distinguished into Copper, Silver and Gold arranged under the different reigns’, *Minutes* 1, 23 Jul 1782.
 95 *Minutes*, 1 Mar 3, 1783.
 96 Buchan 1778, 28–31. This list reads like an antiquarian manifesto. Compare for example Joseph Addison’s resumé in *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals, especially in Relation to the Greek and Latin Poets* (1746), in which medals supply a ‘body of history’ of antiquarian interest: faces, sartorial habits, furniture, musical instruments, mathematics and mechanics, ancient customs and ceremonies, architecture, sculpture, civil law, geography and poetry (Jenkins 1994, 167, quoting from Addison 1746).
 97 *A Companion ...* 1790.
 98 Jenkins 1994, 171.
 99 Kell 1996.
 100 Caygill 1994, 54.
 101 Taylor 1992, 158, n 19.
 102 *A Companion ...* 1790, 5–24.
 103 *A Companion ...* 1790, 1–2.
 104 Laskey 1813, 19.
 105 Donation by Sir John Pringle, Bart, of a collection of the ‘productions of Otaheite, the Sandwich Island and the West Coast of North America’ (*Account*, 1781, no 59).
 106 Donation by Francis Charteris including ‘several pieces of Indian dress’ (*Account*, 1782, no 244).
 107 Natural-history material was always slotted into typological categories (eg in the Hunterian Museum, Laskey 1813, 37, parts of quadrupeds).
 108 Coherent groups of similar artefacts such as oriental ceramics and for example see ‘An Account of a China Cabinet filled with several [medical] Instruments used in China’ by Mr Buckley and Mr H Sloane in *Philosophical Transactions*, 26 (1708–9) representing a speciality could be grouped together typologically.
- 109 McGregor 1994a, 35.
 110 *A Companion ...*, 1790, 2–3.
 111 Laskey 1813, eg 73.
 112 *ibid*, 73.
 113 Mead 1755, 11.
 114 Mead 1755, 13; Letherland 1765, 24; Wales 1799, 1.
 115 West 1773, 6.
 116 Lady Germain 1770, 11.
 117 MacGregor 1994a, 34.
 118 Laskey 1813, 31, 45, 70, 71.
 119 Smyth 1746, no 119.
 120 Mead 1755, 4–5.
 121 *ibid*, 214–17.
 122 It is unclear whether these mummies were human or animal.
 123 Mussell 1765, 4, 7. In the James West (President of the Royal Society, London) sale of 1773, Egyptian figures and idols in bronze were separated amongst miscellaneous ‘curiosities’ (6–7).
 124 Philippe 1804, 49–54.
 125 Montfaucon 1722, 1724.
 126 Caylus 1752–67.
 127 Brown 1989.
 128 In Drawer 2, referred to in a MSS. (Register Contents of the Cabinet of Coins and Medals belonging to the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh 1856, by one of the curators of the Faculty and Mr Sim) in the Department of History and Applied Art of the National Museums of Scotland.
 129 eg Southgate 1795, 9, 18.
 130 A short report on the oriental coins of the Society of Antiquaries, by an assistant curator, W H Scott, only appeared in 1855, *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 1, 134–6.
 131 Kell 1986, 166–7.
 132 NRA (S) 2696 Bundle 649 (74). Other oriental pieces in the Book Room were his Persian scimitars, a dagger, Indian flower pieces, a Persian smoking pipe of gold enamelled, a book of prints showing the different habits of Eastern nations.
 133 *FM*, 3, 22.
 134 Laskey 1813, 22.
 135 *Minutes*, 14 Nov 1787.
 136 Fraser 1742.
 137 Fraser 1742.
 138 Letherland 1765, nos 3542–3557.

- 139 West 1773, 6–7.
- 140 eg Sharpe 1771, 52–5.
- 141 Askew 1785.
- 142 Hindley 1793, 8th Day’s sale.
- 143 For example, the ‘Oriental Dresses in the Possession of the Right Hon. Earl of Baltimore’ the engraved plates of which were sold at Mr John Sturges’ sale (1770), 7. See also eg Feest 1993; Lunsingh-Scheurleer 1996; De Bruijin 1999.
- 144 Simpson 1792. The catalogue notes, probably by the collector himself, give the family relationships, principal characteristics and powers of the deities, the material of the pieces and how they were acquired. It has not been possible for me to establish whether there was a connection between the Simpson who sold his collection in London in 1792, and the Francis Simpson who donated Indian idols to the Royal Society in Edinburgh in the early 19th century.
- 145 Desmond 1982, 4–5.
- 146 *ibid*, 6–9.
- 147 *ibid*, 8–10.
- 148 The acquisitions of this Museum at the turn of the century included the ‘Babylonian’ stone, which described the building works of Nebuchednezzar II, and several inscribed bricks from Babylon. The ruins at the site of Hillah had been noted by Hartford Jones, the Company’s Resident in Baghdad. In 1797 Sir Hugh Inglis, Chairman of The East India Company instructed the Resident at Bassorah to procure bricks ‘apparently ... in character totally different from any now made use of in the East ...’ to be conveyed to the Bombay Presidency and thence to London (Desmond 1982, 15–17).
- 149 Desmond 1982, 10.
- 150 *Letters*, vol 1.
- 151 Zachs 1992, 110–12.
- 152 Full title: ‘A Discourse on the Institution of a Society for Inquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences and Literature of Asia’, *AR*, 1, vii–xi (Reprint 1979).
- 153 Jones saw the contribution to the Society that could be made by native members: ‘whether you will enroll as members any number of learned natives, you will hereafter decide ...’, Jones (1789a) *Preliminary Discourse*, delivered 1784, published in *AR*, 1 (1789), xi.
- 154 Kidd 1993; 1999; Ferguson 1998.
- 155 For the Irish antiquarian C Vallancey see, eg Ferguson 1998, 267–8.
- 156 This was a pamphlet entitled *Observations fondamentales sur les Langues anciennes et modernes, ou prospectus de l’ouvrage intitulé La langue primitive conservée*, Paris 1787.
- 157 *Minutes*, 2.
- 158 Cuthbert Gordon: ‘Idea of the Gaelic language with an escordion to record it’, read 1784, *Communications* 1; J Callander of Craigforth ‘Of the Advantages of the Study of Etymology for the Historian, the Chronologer and Geographer’, read 1789, *Communications* 2; Rev D Mackintosh ‘Upon Ossian’s Poems’, read 1798, *Communications* 3.
- 159 For example, D Malcom, Minister of Duddingston, ?–1748.
- 160 *Communications*, 2.
- 161 vols 2 & 4 *passim*.
- 162 *AR*, 1, 343–4.
- 163 *AR*, 4, 489.
- 164 *AR*, 1, 349.
- 165 *AR*, 4, 482, 487.
- 166 Jones 1789b, 199–200.
- 167 *Minutes*, 2.
- 168 *Minutes*, 2.
- 169 Toland 1718 (1814), eg 138, 201, 207; Martin 1716, 105, 151, 365.
- 170 See ‘Of the Gruagich’ by the Rev McQueen in Pennant’s *A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides 1772*, edn Edinburgh 1998, 757–9. Pennant refers to McQueen on p 313. Cf also *The Bee*, 5 (1791), 16ff: Lord Buchan’s translation of Quintus to Marcus Tullius Cicero on the temples of the Britons and their goddess Andtè or Anaitè.
- 171 Bochart was the author most frequently quoted by T Maurice (1796), see text below. See also below for Mc Queen and Bochart.
- 172 Piggott 1989; Boyd-Haycock 2002, with bibliography.
- 173 *AR*, 2, 488; Maurice 1796, 257.
- 174 *EB*, vol 18, 1797.
- 175 Descriptions often included plans, elevations, measurements and illustrations of antiquities eg Captain Pyke (ed A Dalrymple), *Archaeologia*, 7 (1785), 324, pls xxi–xxiv; A Blackadder *Archaeologia*, 10 (1792), 449ff and see below.
- 176 For example: W Hunter, Captain Pyke (ed A Dalrymple) and an extract by the late S Lethieullier from the papers of C Boon in *Archaeologia*, 7 (1785); Hector MacNeil in vol 8 (1787); A Blackadder in vol 10 (1792).

- 177 Acc 10,000/2 (Minutes); *Philosophical Transactions* (1794), 7. An account of this paper including a plan, is in the Royal Society's papers (Acc 10,000/282, Buchanan/Hamilton). The account is a straightforward description, with minimal artistic or value judgements. Buchanan also makes comparisons between native Hindu dress and that found on the sculptures.
- 178 Wincklemann 1764; Mitter 1992, 192.
- 179 AR, 1, 134.
- 180 Robertson 1794, 258, 259
- 181 *Communications*, 2.
- 182 Mitter 1992, 154–9.
- 183 Pyke and Dalrymple in editing Pyke's account of the pagoda near Bombay give outlines of visitors' accounts to the site and their theories about its origin (*Archaeologia*, 7 (1785), 323ff).
- 184 Robertson 1794, 259–61.
- 185 Mitter 1992, 146–9.
- 186 Jones 1789a, 352.
- 187 Mitter 1992, 146.
- 188 There is an inventory of a private museum of a 'gentleman living in Trichonolopy' India sent to Monbodo amongst his papers (NLS MS. 24527 f123). It starts with 'a compleat collection of the idols or swamies of the Brahmins of Indostan – upwards of 120 of the real idols which were worshipped by them, made in Copper, Brass and Ivory'. It continues with a moveable model of a Swamie Tehrup temple, books of paintings and drawings of India, by natives; a book of Chinese paintings; Persian books; books 'upon the Cadjan Leaf'; portions of the sacred books of the Brahmins in Sanskrit; a large collection of Indian warlike weapons, and a variety of other curious articles from Indostan and China. Communications such as these show how seriously Monbodo took his ethnology, and the nature of some private museums in India.
- 189 Drawings of sculptures from Salsetta in Sir Ashton Lever's collection are reproduced by A Dalrymple in *Archaeologia*, 7 (1785), pls xxv–xxvii.
- 190 Philipe 1804, 53–4.
- 191 Simpson, Christies 1792, 4; *ibid*, 4, 9.
- 192 Jones 1789b, 232.
- 193 Robertson 1794, 306–8.
- 194 Jones 1789b, 233, 243.
- 195 Robertson 1794, 324.
- 196 *Transactions*, 2, 1790, Dr Monro on the preparation of the 'Otter of Roses' in the East Indies (cf AR, 1 paper by Lt Col Polier); *Transactions*, 3, 1794 J Anderson on the Oldelandia Umbellata.
- 197 *Transactions*, 2, 1790.
- 198 *Transactions*, 2, 1790; vol 4, 1798.
- 199 *Transactions*, 3, 1794.
- 200 *Transactions*, 1, 1788.
- 201 *Account*, 1783, 114 no 622.
- 202 eg *Archaeologia*, vols 2 (1773) and 7 (1775) (two articles in the latter).
- 203 vol 18, 313–14. The contemporary nature of the Kalmuck Tartars had been addressed by Bell in *Travels from St Petersburg in Russia to various parts of Asia* (1763) and Cook in *Voyages and Travels through the Russian Empire, Tartary, and part of the Kingdom of Persia* (1770).
- 204 Richardson 1777a, 122ff, 135ff
- 205 Ferguson 1998, 250ff; Kidd 1993, 1999.
- 206 Kidd 1993, 111ff; see also Richardson 1777a, 128–40.
- 207 Bailly 1777, viii, 245.
- 208 AR, 2, 'Tartars', 18–34.
- 209 The letter in the *Transactions* 2, 19–22 is dated 1773, yet it was written at the time when George Bogle was already on his mission in Tibet. All sources agree that Bogle was appointed to the mission in 1774 (Markham 1971).
- 210 The Bhutanese had invaded Cooch Behar in Bengal in 1772 and the British went to its defence, slaughtering the Bhutanese and chasing them back into their own territories. The Bhutanese appealed to the Teshi Lama in Tibet asking him to intervene with the British and warning of growing British encroachment in the area (Markham 1971, 1, n).
- 211 The modest gifts sent by the Teshoo Lama to Warren Hastings and listed in the *Transactions* (8 pieces of China satin, 1 silver talent of China, 1 Pelong handkerchief) were in effect samples of the China and India trade. (George Bogle had been given a far more intimate Tibetan gift by the Lama: a charmed necklace of carnelian, glass and chalcedony beads: Markham 1971, cxliii). The trade anticipated by Bogle and Hastings was to include China goods (brocades, silks etc, some China ware, cinnabar, dried fruit, musical instruments and furs); from Tibet itself, gold dust, must, tincal; from Bengal to Tibet: broadcloth, coral beads, spices, precious stones, tobacco (Markham 1971, 7, 124–9, 203–4). See also Turner's report to W Hastings written in 1784 (Turner 1800, 361).
- 212 Markham 1971, 8–13.

- 213 The Lama acknowledged Hastings's mediations of peace and requested somewhere by the sea in a land (India) where he had been incarnated, to establish a shrine or temple. The letter was also an indirect appeal for support against growing Chinese encroachment and for his internal disputes with the Lama, who 'is patron of the Emperor of China' (*Transactions*, 2, 20–1).
- 214 Bogle's Report in Markham 1971, 191–210. The use of Tibet as a pawn in the China trade was always part of the British agenda. As Lord McCartney wrote in his journal of 1794 'if the Chinese were provoked to interdict us commerce ... we certainly have the means of revenging ourselves ... we might be able from Bengal to excite the most serious disturbances on their Tibet frontier' (Cranmer-Byng 1962, 211).
- 215 AR, 1 'An interview with the Teshoo Lama' (1784) and 'A Journey to Tibet' (1786) by S Turner; AR, 4 'Description of the Yak of Tibet,' by S Turner. (See also *Philosophical Transactions* (London) 79 (1789), an article on the produce of Bhutan and Tibet, by R Saunders.) *Oriental Repertory*, 1, 'Narrative of the Teshoo Lama's journey to Peking and his death there in 1779–80', by Poroon Geer-Goosain; *Oriental Repertory*, 2, 'Translation of a letter from the Emperor of China to the Dalai Lama at Lhasa'.
- 216 In contrast to Bogle's account, not published in full until 1971 (ed Markham). Turner's *Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Teshoo Lama in Tibet: containing a Narrative of a journey through Bootan and part of Tibet* was published in 1800.
- 217 Singh 1988, 7.
- 218 *Transactions*, 2, 188.
- 219 *Transactions*, 4, 106.
- 220 Published in AR, 4, 151–4.
- 221 *Transactions*, 3, Appendix.
- 222 AR, 4, 171; Cannon 1990, 328.
- 223 *Transactions*, 4, 101.
- 224 *Transactions*, 4, 105.
- 225 *Transactions*, 4, 102.
- 226 AR, 2, 'Chronology of the Hindus', 88–114, 303–14.
- 227 Bailly 1787.
- 228 *Transactions*, 4, 105–6.
- 229 *Transactions*, 2, 106. William Marsden in a communication to the Royal Society in London on the chronology of the Hindoos refers to the 'factitious periods of the Hindoo computation' (*Philosophical Transactions*, 80, 562). The Kalee Yoog was the fourth era, succeeding three others, which according to Marsden had little reference to practical chronology.
- 230 Robertson 1794, 437.
- 231 Papers on Elephanta, Tibet and astronomy have been mentioned above. Other communications on astronomy, for example, appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions*, 83 (1793) by Lloyd Williams; in *Asiatic Researches*, 4 by W Hunter and R H Colebrooke. On chronology in *Philosophical Transactions*, 78 (1788) W Marsden (Mahometan); *Philosophical Transactions*, 80 (1790), W Marsden (Hindu), *Philosophical Transactions*, 81 (1791), H Cavendish (Hindu). On the lac insect and spikenaard: *Philosophical Transactions*, 80 (1790) G Blanc; *Philosophical Transactions*, 81 (1791) W Roxburgh; *Philosophical Transactions*, 84 (1794) Dr Anderson, G Person; *Asiatic Researches*, 2, 4 W Roxburgh, W Jones. On Sumatra: *Philosophical Transactions*, 86 (1796) J Macdonald, also in *Asiatic Researches*, 4. On the desert routes between Aleppo and Bussora: *Philosophical Transactions*, 81 (1791), J Rennel; *Asiatic Researches*, 4, communicated by Sir W Dunkin.
- 232 William Jones had modelled aspects of his Society on the Royal Society of London (1789a), but the scope of the Asiatic Society was much broader. For J Banks and W Jones see Cannon 1970, *Letters* nos 479, 482, 495, 523, 533, 564, 568, 571.
- 233 eg Rossi 1984; Assman 1997.
- 234 Woodward 1777 ('Mosaic institution vindicated' in *Archaeologia*, 4 (1777) communicated by M Lort in 1775), passim contra Sir John Marsham and Spencer, and see below). Woodward was also the author of *The Natural History of the Earth, Illustrated, Enlarged and Defended*, London 1726.
- 235 Kircher 1667; Pignoria 1669; Mitter 1992, 56, 115, 191ff.
- 236 cf Toland 1704; 'from the Earliest Ages on record till the dissolution of their Empire near the times of Alexander' BM Add MSS. 8834.
- 237 BM Add MSS. 8834, 18.
- 238 *ibid*, 26ff, 31ff.
- 239 *ibid*, 107.
- 240 Gordon 1741, 45, 48.
- 241 *Communications*, 2.
- 242 McQueen's main sources are Bochart, Vossius and the Abbé Pluche.

- 243 *Metaphysics*, 2, 1795, preface, ch 3; Garland 1968, Letters to Jones pages 559–61.
- 244 NLS MS. M24531, ff12 (*Of Antient Egypt* 1769). Monboddo's essential views on Egypt did not change throughout his working life.
- 245 NLS MS. 24531, 69.
- 246 Monboddo 1773, 442ff.
- 247 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, chs 7, 10.
- 248 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, chs 4, 12.
- 249 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, ch 11.
- 250 NLS MS. 24531 f. 26ff; *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, ch 7.
- 251 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, ch 12.
- 252 NLS MS. 24531 (1779), 80; *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, chs 2–4.
- 253 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, ch 5. Links between India and Egypt were not only in the minds of Europeans. See Leask 2002, 120, n 2 on some Brahmins' reactions to the temple of Denderah in Egypt in 1801.
- 254 The idea of an affinity between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin goes back to the 16th century (F Sasseti) and the earlier 18th century (Fr Coeurdoux 1767/8). Halhed in his *Grammar of the Bengal Language* (1778) also hints at Sanskrit being the parent tongue of Greek and Latin (Cannon 1990, 243–4; Trautmann 1997, 54).
- 255 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, ch 5.
- 256 NLS MS. 24535, 80.
- 257 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, ch 5 & 6.
- 258 Cannon 1968, 559–62.
- 259 *AR*, 1, 'On the Gods', 239.
- 260 Robertson 1794, 335, n 1.
- 261 *ibid*, 6–10, 335–9.
- 262 eg Dawson 1932; Boyd-Haycock 2002, 209.
- 263 Warburton contra Kircher, Stuckeley; Boyd-Haycock 2002, 209.
- 264 Caylus 1752–67.
- 265 'Quel bonheur si leur écriture devenoit intelligible! Cette découverte repandroit le plus grand jour sur l'Histoire des Egyptiens; leurs inscriptions démentiroient peut-être même des Auteurs anciens qui ont osés les expliquer.' Caylus, 1767, 3. Montfaucon (see below) thought hieroglyphs were inconsequential symbols (1719, vol 2, 350). For Egypt, mysticism and freemasonry see eg E Hornung *Das esoterische Ägypten*, 1999; for Stuckeley and Egyptology see Boyd-Haycock 2002.
- 266 Gordon 1741, 1.
- 267 *Origin*, 2, 1774, 242ff, 253n; *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, ch 5.
- 268 eg T Needham 1761.
- 269 Jones *AR*, 2, 291.
- 270 Blair 1825, 80.
- 271 My thanks to Helen Whitehouse for confirming this. (See also eg M L Bierbrier, *The Sloane Collection of Egyptian Antiquities*, in *Aegyptus museis rediviva... in honorem... de Meulenaare*, 1993; A Mac Gregor *Egyptian Antiquities*, in Sir Hans Sloane, 1994). Some early material did reach western collections, see H Whitehouse, 'An Early Dynastic dish from Thomas Shaw's travels', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 88, 2002, 237–42, pl xix.
- 272 Gordon 1737 has plates (i–xxv) illustrating Egyptian objects from some of the best-known collections of the time (eg H Sloane, Dr Mead, S Lethieullier, Baron de Foley, Alexander Stuart (the queen's doctor) etc). Other illustrated collections were those of J Kemp (ed R Ainsworth) and R Worsley *Monumenta vetustatis Kempiana* (1720); *Museo Worsleianum* (1798). The Mensa Isiaca, of the Roman period, from an Isiac shrine or similar, possibly from Rome, was a major source for antiquarian studies in the 18th century.
- 273 Caylus 1752, vol I, 2.
- 274 *ibid*, 1–2.
- 275 *ibid*, 3–4.
- 276 *ibid*, 4–6.
- 277 Montfaucon 1719, vol 1, ix. Loosely translated 'The gods of Egypt were too bizarre of aspect to be given first place in [the hierarchy of] antiquites'.
- 278 Monboddo 1776 (*On the Origin...*), vol 3, 436.
- 279 NAS GD 18/5031/5 Letter to Roger Gayle.
- 280 NAS GD 18/5031/6 Letter to Thomas Blackwell. Key travel publications on Egypt of the time see: Thomas Shaw *Travels, or Observations relating to several parts of Barbary and the Levant*, Oxford 1738; Rev R Pococke *A Description of the East and some other countries*, London 1743–5; F L Norden *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie*, Copenhagen 1755 (Tr 1757); C Niehbur *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und Andern umligenden Ländern*, Copenhagen 1778 (Tr R Heron as *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, Edinburgh 1792); De Volney, *Voyage en Égypte et Syrie*, Paris 1787.
- 282 The publication became more scholarly thanks to A Murray's editorship of the *Travels* in 1805 and 1813.

- 283 Bruce 1813 edn, vol 2, 33.
 284 *ibid* vol 8, pls 6 & 7.
 285 the official *Description de l’Egypte* (1809), and the personal *Voyage dans la Basse et Haute Egypte* (1802).
 286 Brown 1989, 168.
 287 Brown 2002. For the study of mummies at the period see, for example, Letter to W Heberden from J Hadley, ‘An Account of a Mummy, inspected at London’, *Philosophical Transactions*, 54 (1764) and J F Blumenbach ‘Some Egyptian Mummies opened in London’, *Philosophical Transactions* 84 (1794). An abridged version of this paper appeared in the *Scots Magazine*, 57 (1785), 11ff.
 288 *Communications*, vol 2.
 289 *Transactions*, 1790, 15.
 290 Marshall 1993, 11ff.
 291 See for example Kircher’s *Antiquities of China*, Appendix, in Nieuhoff’s *An Embassy from the East India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Chan Emperor of China*, London 1669; J Webb *An Historical Essay Endeavoring a Probability that the Language of the Empire of China is the Primitive Language*, London 1669.
 292 Jones 1790d, 291; Fan 1946, 311–12; Cannon 1990, 318.
 293 Chambers 1757, 8, n.
 294 See Fan 1946, 304–14; for Jones’s Chinese manuscripts see *CW*, 6, 452, nos 60–8. See also Cannon 1970, nos 32, 454.
 295 *AR*, 2, 155.
 296 The extent to which non-export Chinese ceramics were brought into Britain during the 18th century despite Chinese trade restrictions has not been comprehensively addressed.
 297 cf Philipe 1804, no 110.
 298 Bell 1763, 23.
 299 Staunton 1798, 119.
 300 A Kircher’s *Antiquities of China*, in Nieuhoff 1669, focuses on the first finds of Sino-Christian remains in China, not on actual Chinese antiquities.
 301 For example, Macartney in Cranmer-Byng 1962, 264.
 302 du Halde 1735, vol 2, 168, 177.
 303 *ibid*, 261, 202.
 304 Chambers 1757, 9.
 305 *ibid*, pls xv, xvi.
 306 du Halde 1735, vol 3, 23.
 307 Bell 1763, 343.
 308 Cranmer-Byng 1962, 272.
 309 Macartney in Cranmer-Byng 1962, 262.
 310 Staunton 1798, 122.
 311 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1797, China, 691.
 312 *AR*, 2, 291.
 313 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1797, China, 692.
 314 Chambers 1757, preface.
 315 Bell 1763, 334.
 316 Macartney in Cranmer-Byng 1962, 271.
 317 For example *Philosophical Transactions* vol 16 (1686–92), vol 20 (1698) on a China cabinet; on Travel and Geography and Botany; vol 23 (1702–3); vol 37 (1729–30), vol 44 (1739–41) on Chronology; vol 48 (1753–4) on Natural and Artificial produce; vol 59 (1769) on Chinese characters.
 318 Jones 1790c; 1790d.
 319 The *Oriental Repertory* vol 2/2 (1794) includes not only the Emperor of China’s letter to the Dalai Lama and notes on the Emperor’s customs, but notes on China paper manufacture, remarks on trade at Canton and notes regarding the trade to China, of Amoy and Shanghai.
 320 Fry 1970, 168–9, 228.
 321 *ibid*, 21ff, 36ff, 82, 73, 168–9, 228.
 322 *ibid*, 178.
 323 *ibid*, 92–3.
 324 *AS*, 3, 76.
 325 cf Marsden 1784. Dalrymple reminded the East India Company how uncharted the west coast of Sumatra was at the time (1787, 43ff). Marsden’s works (*The History of Sumatra*, London 1783, his *Catalogue of Dictionaries, Vocabularies, Grammars and Alphabets*, 1796 and his *Dictionary of the Malayan language, to which is prefixed a Grammar ...* 1812) were seminal to the study of the culture and languages of Malaya in Britain. See also Marsden ‘On the traces of the Hindu language and literature extant among the Malays’, *AR*, 4, 217ff.
 326 For a list of the objectives of the Embassy see Cranmer-Byng 1962, 30.
 327 Cranmer-Byng 1962.
 328 *ibid*, 56.
 329 *ibid*, 311–13.
 330 *ibid*, 310–11.
 331 *ibid*, 279 and nn 124–46.
 332 *ibid*, 347.
 333 *ibid*, 311–12.
 334 *ibid*, 98.
 335 *ibid*, 224.
 336 *ibid*, 318 and n 57.

- 337 Mackintosh had been a trader in Canton since 1784. During the embassy he wanted to trade directly in Peking, causing friction with Lord Macartney (Cranmer-Byng 1962, 311–12).
- 338 *Narrative of the British Embassy to China, in the Years 1792, 1793 and 1794*, London; Anderson was Macartney's personal servant (Cranmer-Byng 1962, 343–4).
- 339 Staunton 1798. *Scots Magazine* 1795, vol 57, 367ff, 560; 1797, vol 59, 826ff, 866ff; 1798, vol 60, 235ff, 380ff, 448ff, 542ff, 599ff, 677ff; *Edinburgh Magazine* 1794, vol 4, 124, 264; 1795, vol 5, 373ff, 411ff; 1795, vol 6, 10ff; 1797, vol 10, 362ff, 438ff, 445, 448; 1798, vol 11, 11ff, 108ff.
- 340 *Edinburgh Review*, vol 5, 1805, 259–88. The reviewer catalogues Chinese faults: submission to despotism; ignorance of exact sciences; infanticide; unnatural vices; stupid formalities of social intercourse; imperfection of the language; the 'stupid' degradation of the women (271). Even gardens and silks are despised, the latter accused of having 'monstrous patterns' (270–1).
- 341 A full edited version, by Cranmer-Byng, only appeared in print in 1962.
- 342 Robertson's *Dissertatio* deserves a complete translation and edition. Robertson was against Hutchinson's contention that a knowledge of oriental dialects, especially Arabic, was of no use to Hebrew studies (J Hutchinson, *The Philosophical and Theological Works*, London 1749).
- 343 Robertson 1770, 8–9, 11–22.
- 344 In the MSS. version of this text EUL SC, Gen. Box 173.
- 345 Robertson 1770, 25n, 26–8).
- 346 Toomer 1996, 313.
- 347 *ibid*, 306.
- 348 The Faculty of Advocates, for example, had funded a George Gordon to go to 'Leipzig' to study oriental languages in 1694/5. *FM*, vol 1, 134, 149, 153.
- 349 The Arabists most often mentioned in Robertson's *Dissertatio* are: A Schultens; P Golius; T Hunt; E Pockocke; J Greaves; Cl Epernius. The main Arabic sources mentioned directly are: Abul Fharagius (Abu'l-Faraj); Alfragan (al-Farghani; Alsaphadus (a'-Safadi); Al-Harathius(?); Al-zauharius(?) cited by Pockocke ; Mohammed Ben Hescham (Ibn Hicham?); Ebn-Chalda (Ibn Khaldun); Ebn Chalican (Ibn Khallikan).
- 350 EUL SC Gen Box 173.
- 351 EUL SC Gen Box 172.
- 352 Richardson 1776, ix.
- 353 'I have pursued [Jones's] method of illustrating the different rules by authorities from various writers; ... a method which softens drudgery ...' (1776, ix). Extracts from the 1001 Nights, the life of Saladin, the History of the Crusades, the History of Tamerlane, quotes from Mahomet, the Koran, the History of Animals etc are included.
- 354 For example, writing on Mahometan Law in the *Essay on the Law of Bailments* (1781), Jones draws attention to a case related by the Persian poet Sadi in his *Gulistan* (*CW* 1807, vol 7, 430). See also Jones 1771a, 474.
- 355 See Hourani in *Islam in European Thought* (1991, 12) on Joseph White, Professor of Arabic at Oxford after Hunt, who thought that Mohammed 'was an extraordinary character of splendid talents and profound artifice'. See *ibid* for Gibbon on Mohammed (re *Decline and Fall*, vol 5). See also B Lewis, 'Gibbon on Muhammed', in *Daedalus* 1976, vol 105/3, 89–101.
- 356 Kames 1774, 372–3, 409.
- 357 Robertson 1794, 186, 235.
- 358 Kames 1774, 338.
- 359 Niehbur 1792 eg 241–68.
- 360 Hourani 1991.
- 361 Bruce 1813 edn, vol 1, 101, ch 8, vol 7 and *passim*.
- 362 Marshall 1973, 245.
- 363 'I received your kind letter written in the Persic style' writes Robertson in the draft of a letter of c 1775 (see text below). EUL SC Gen Box 173 (letter to Hamilton).
- 364 Both in notebooks in EUL SC Gen Box 172 (Analysis of Mr Richardson's Arabick Grammar and Analysis of Persian Words in Jones's Persian Grammar (1771b)).
- 365 *MR*, 44, 1771, 429–30 and *passim*.
- 366 EUL SC Box 173 (Letter to Hamilton). cf Jones (1772) *Essay on the Poetry of Eastern Nations*, *CW*, 1807, 352–4). Jones writing on the moral message (the people are the root and the king is the tree that grows from it) in one of Sadi's passages: 'Do these [sentiments] not convey a fine lesson for a young king? Yet Sadi's poems are highly esteemed at Constantinople and at Isphahan; though a century or two ago, they would have been suppressed in Europe, for spreading with too strong a glare the light of liberty and reason' (1772, 354).

- 367 cf Jones 1771a, 427ff.
- 368 Bower 1830, 293–4. I was unable to find further documentation on Moodie despite the help of Peter Freshwater and the Special Collection staff at the University.
- 369 See M A Hukk, H Ethé & R Robertson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in Edinburgh University*, Edinburgh 1925. The substantial Baillie collection came to the library in 1876.
- 370 James Anderson's Manuscripts came to the library in 1844. Despite P Freshwater's help I have been unable to find out when David Anderson's [d 1826] manuscripts were donated.
- 371 Jones 1771b, 135.
- 372 Jones 1771b, 48ff.
- 373 *Persian Grammar* Preface, ii.
- 374 eg Jones 1794 passim; Cannon 1970, letter 764.
- 375 Jones 1771a, eg 63–5, 100–3.
- 376 For Hastings's manuscript collection see Marshall 1973, 244–5.
- 377 Marshall 1970, 1973; Brockington 1989.
- 378 Halhed, 1776.
- 379 Wilkins, 1785.
- 380 Shaw 1981.
- 381 Jones 1771b, 135ff Under history, for example, he recommends *The Garden of Purity* by Mirkhond, the *Ayeen Ekbari*, the actions of Sultan Baber, the *History of Kashmir*, the *Zafar-Namah* (or Book of Victory), the *Heart of Histories* by Abdallatif. Under Persian poetry he recommends Hafiz, Sadi, Ferdusi, Rumi; under Arabic poetry the Mu'allaqat, al Hariri. He also recommends the Persian translation of the Sanskrit tales of Pilpai.
- 382 Khojeh Abdulkharrim 'a Cashmirean of distinction' had accompanied Nadir Shah on his return from Hindostan to Persia.
- 383 For example, *Asiatic Miscellany* (eds W Jones & W Chambers) 1 (1785): 'History of Asof Jan shewing [how] he acquired Territories in the Dekkan (tr H Vansittart); 'The History of Ahmed, Shah, king of the Abdallies, also called Duranees ...' (tr 'H Vansittart); 'A Short Account of the Maratta State, written in Persian by a Munshy (tr W Chambers); *Asiatic Miscellany* 2 (1786) 'Account of Malabar, and the Rise and Progress of the Mussulman Religion, from Ferishtahs' General History of Hindostan' (tr J Anderson); 'Reign of Behader Shah, contest for the Empire of Hindostan (tr from the Persian)'; *Asiatic Miscellany* 3 (1788): 'The conquest of Bengal by the Musulmans from Ferishtah (tr I H Harington)', 'Account of the Rise of the Marattoes ... from the Modern History of Hindostan' (tr J Anderson). *The New Asiatic Miscellany*, 1 (ed F Gladwin, 1789): eg 'The Institutes of Ghazan Khan, Emperor of the Moghuls' (Capt W Kirkpatrick).
- 384 Nadir Shah, for example, was portrayed ambivalently as a famous and/or tyrannical conqueror. His rise from simple tribesman to Shah of Persia and invader of India fascinated Europeans and Muslims alike, who compared him to 'Tamberlane' (cf L Lockhart *Nadir Shah, a critical study based on contemporary sources*, London, 1938). For James Fraser, writing at the height of Nadir Shah's fame, he was a hero (*The History of Nadir Shah 1742*, 70). W Jones had reluctantly accepted a commission from Christian VII of Denmark to translate the manuscript (Mahdi Khan's biography of Nadir Shah) given to the king by C Niehbur (*The History of the Life of Nadir Shah*, French 1770, English 1773). Jones disliked the text both for its content and style. Nadir Shah was 'infamously wicked ... displaying the charms of liberty by showing the odiousness of tyranny' (Jones 1773, 2; Garland 1990, 14–16).
- 385 Gladwin implies this throughout his Preface (1783); for Robertson 'the illustrious example of Akbar was imitated and surpassed by Mr Hastings ...' (1794, 250). For Robertson on Akbar in general *ibid*, 333ff Akhbar, the Moghul emperor, (1556–1605) had centralized power, and was renowned for his tolerance and patronage of the arts, commissioning several works and translations including the Mohabarat (cf Hastings and Wilkins) (Gladwin 1783, 131–3).
- 386 *AR*, 4, 151–3.
- 387 Robertson 1794, i, 237, 255, 269.
- 388 *ibid*, 1794, iv.
- 389 *ibid*, 1794, 434–7.
- 390 Phillipson 1997, 71.
- 391 *Edinburgh Review*, 1805, 288–301.
- 392 *ibid*, 289.
- 393 *ibid*, 301. The reviewer may have been A Hamilton.
- 394 *ibid*, 300, 301, and passim.
- 395 Tytler 1801.
- 396 Alexander Tytler, *Elements of General History, Ancient and Modern ...* 1801, preface, iv–v. The book had been outlined in 1782. John Logan in

- his *Elements of the Philosophy of History* (1781) and his short *Dissertation on the Government, Manners and Spirit of Asia* (1787) demonstrates how sources can be completely dispensed with and Asia reduced to generalities.
- 397 eg Berry 1997, 61ff.
- 398 Ferguson 1767, 80.
- 399 Millar 1781, 15ff.
- 400 *Philosophical Transactions*, 1790, 561.
- 401 For example: Ferguson ‘The modern description of India is a repetition of the ancient, and the present state of China is derived from a distant antiquity ...’ (1966 edn of 1767, 111); for Kames the Chinese way of writing had only achieved the second step in the progress of writing, and proved ‘an unsurmountable obstruction to knowledge’ (1774, 134–5); for Millar Asia was still at the savage state (1781, 49): polygamy in the Eastern nations rendered them incapable of contributing ... to ... useful improvements of the country (ibid, 124); the people of China ‘have an aversion to discover any sort of innovation’ (1781, 167).
- 402 Randall 1982.
- 403 *The Bee*, vol 1, 153. *The Bee* included articles on Asian languages, manners, government, manufacture, botany, agriculture, geography, warfare and literary tales: vol 1 (1791), 153–5; vol 2 (1791), 111, 149; vol 3 (1791), 25; vol 5 (1792), 292–4; vol 7 (1792), 137; vol 8 (1792), 32, 36, 38, 172, 299; vol 11 (1793), 48–52; vol 12 (1792), 71, 249; vol 13 (1793), 66; vol 14 (1793), 36, 128, 330, 312; vol 15 (1793), 70, 136; vol 18 (1793), 56ff, 68, 284, 288. The editor of *The Bee*, James Anderson, was threatened with imprisonment during the sedition trials (Meikle 1912, 114).
- 404 These limited extracts are of a travel or ‘manners’ genre. Extracts from *AR*, 1 in the *Scots Magazine*: vol 51 (1789), ‘A Conversation with ... an Abyssinian ... (W Jones, cf Bruce’s *Travels*), 646ff; vol 52 1790 ‘On the trial by ordeal ...’ (W Hastings), 165ff; both these articles also in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, 11 (1790); from *Asiatic Researches* 2: vol 53 (1791) ‘Remarks on the island of Hinzuan’ (W Jones), 469ff; 56 1794 ‘On the inhabitants of the Garrow Hills’ (J Elliot), 752ff; ‘On the Manners of the ... Mountaineers of Tipra’ k (J Rawlins), 752ff; from *AR*, 1 in the *Edinburgh Magazine*: vol 10 (1789) ‘Extract from William Jones’s Introductory Discourse’, 417ff; from *AR*, 4: *Scots Magazine* vol 57 (1795) ‘Character of Sir William Jones ...’ (Sir J Shore Bart.), 351ff; Interesting exceptions to this group are found in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, vol 3 (1786), which includes ‘A Glossary of Hindustani words’ and vol 14 (1799) ‘A catalogue ... of MSS. collected in Hindostan by S Guise Esq’, 92ff. This may have been due to the influence of J Leyden. The orientalist started contributing to the *Scots Magazine* in 1795, and for a short while became its editor in 1801. He also contributed to the *Edinburgh Magazine* (Imrie 1939, 143, 220). A Murray became editor of the *Scots Magazine* in 1802 for one year and probably influenced the inclusion of an article by S de Sacy, which lists Arabian MSS. concerning the Crusades (137ff).
- 405 For example: *Monthly Review* 1792, 1793, 1794 (coverage of *AR*, 2 and 3). See also the *Critical Review* 1790 (coverage of *AR*, 1). The travel genre was a successful and popular rival to *AR* as a source for the coverage of Asia.
- 406 The full contents of *AR*, 4 are listed in the *Scots Magazine*, 61, 1799, 768–9, but there is no proper review.
- 407 Robertson 1794, 253.
- 408 NLS MS. Acc 10,000/3, Dec 21, 1789 (Royal Society Minutes). Mr Mc Conochie read the letter from the Tishoo-Lama of Tibet to Mr Hastings in 1778, and promised to read a paper on the Hindus (1788).
- 409 Buchanan writing in 1797: ‘many of our antiquaries ... following the example of Sir William Jones have almost become Brahmins’ (Vicziány 1986, 632, n 26).
- 410 Jones privately he ridiculed some of his work: ‘Have you met with a book lately published ... A Vindication of the Antient History of Ireland? [1786] ... It is very stupid ... the ancient Irish were Persians ... I conceive all this to be visionary and am certain, that his derivations from the Persian, Arabick and Sanscrit languages, are erroneous ... Do you wish to laugh? Skim the book over. Do you wish to sleep? Read it regularly ...’ (Cannon 1970, vol 2, no 467 to the second Earl Spencer).
- 411 Embree 1962, 43ff.
- 412 Grant 1792, 58n, 82.
- 413 ibid, 38n, 31ff, 59.
- 414 ibid, 59n.
- 415 Shore 1805; Trautman 1997, 99–101.
- 416 *AR*, 4, 167.
- 417 passim, *AR*, 4, 166–8.

- 418 CW, 1807, 88–9. Contrast Buchanan-Hamilton’s views on the subject, published in 1806 in *AR*, 6, ‘the Laws attributed to Menu under the hands of the Brahmens have become the most abominable and degrading system of oppression ... etc’ (Vicziány 1986, 632, n 26.).
- 419 *AR*, 4, 10th Discourse, xxii–xxiii.
- 420 Known to anthropologists as Jones’s ethnological approach, cf Trautman 1997.
- 421 Jones 1792; 1795b.
- 422 Randall 1982, 49.
- 423 For example, J B Gilchrist: *A Dictionary, English and Hindostanee ...* 1787, 1790; *A Grammar of the Hindostanee Language ...* 1796; *The Oriental Linguist ... with an extensive vocabulary ... accompanied with some plain and useful dialogues, tales, poems etc.* 1798; W Kirkpatrick, *A Vocabulary, Persian, Arabic and English ...* 1799.
- 424 See also W Kirkpatrick ‘An Introduction to the History of the Persian Poets’, *The New Asiatic Miscellany*, vol 1, 1789.
- 425 ‘A Marhatta Letter’ and ‘Character and Customs of the Hindus from the Tuzec Timuri’, *Asiatic Miscellany*, vol 3, 1788.
- 426 Randall 1982, 53.
- 427 Murray in Bower 1823, 174–5.
- 428 cf Randall 1982, 51–2.
- 429 Murray in Bower 1823, 175.
- 430 Murray in Edinburgh University 1812, 10–1.
- 431 *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol 2, 1814, 69 n 4 (re Vallency, Wilford and Jones); 95 n 1; 96 n 3 ‘After all is it not possible that the excellencies of Sanscrit may be somewhat overrated by Sir William Jones, from the same bias which has led him to overrate so immensely the merits of those ancient compositions, of which he has enabled the public to judge by the translations with which he has favoured us from that language?’ The note concludes (idem, 97) by implying a comparison between the (past) enthusiasm for the poems of Ossian and that of Jones for the Vedas.
- 432 Letter to Sir James Pringle from John Corse (1794) which includes the copy of Jones’s letter and part of a poem, written in 1792 (*Communications* 2).
- 433 Sher 1985, 302–3.
- 434 Pennant 1772, 589.
- 435 A note in the *Scots Magazine* of 1786, vol 48, 562 mentions the museum in Calcutta.
- 436 Marsden 1784, 240, 276.
- 437 The concentration on the more alien aspects of Chinese civilization (eg footbinding, exposure of baby girls, dirt, general cruelty), which became more pronounced in the late 18th century, could be interpreted in its early stages as a reaction to Chinoiserie as much as to the Chinese themselves.

TABLE 1
Donations

	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Present Location</i>
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland				
India, East India Company				
Bombay coin*	Sir J Halket of Pitfirran	1781	Smellie 1782, no 103	?
'Oriental' gold (17), silver (61) and copper (11) coins from India*	R Graham of Gartmore	1782	Smellie 1782, no 215	?
'Oriental' rupee*	A Brown of Glasgow	1783	Smellie 1784, no 394	?
Gold and silver sanam of East India Co	Mrs Major Charles Fraser	1783	Smellie 1784, no 465	?
One gold and one silver sanam of East India	Dr Charles Webster	1783	Smellie 1784 no 580	?
Idol from Mangalore*	Robert Boswell, Lyon-Depute	1781	Smellie 1782, no 33	?
'Oriental' hookar	Alexander Duncan of Saintford	1782	Smellie 1782, no 224	?
Gentoo smoking pipe	Dr Murray of Cringalty	1782	Smellie 1784, no 358	?
Tube of an 'oriental' hookar, with vase	A Gardner, Jeweller	1783	Smellie 1784, no 424	?
'Oriental' hookar*	Alexander Baron of Preston	1783	Smellie 1784, no 596	?
'Scymitar' of a Mahratta officer, the handle richly inlaid*	Alexander Baron of Preston	1783	Smellie 1784, no 596	Possibly RMS A 1956 593
Indian arrow of cane, painted, gilded and silvered	Mrs Hay of Mount Blairy	1785	AS 1831, 38	?
Indian pagoda	Sir James Stirling Bart	1798	AS 1831, 85	?
Royal Society of Edinburgh				
3 Sanskrit manuscripts* NLS Acc 10.000/3	Colonel MacLeod of MacLeod ?	1792	<i>Transactions</i> 3, 139	
4 Indian idols	Francis Simpson	1819	<i>Transactions</i> 14, W Cadell	RMS
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland				
Sumatra				
Malay crees or Dagger, from the island of Sumatra	J Glassford Esq, of Calcutta	1790	AS 1831, 71	Possibly in the RMS
China				
Padlock of brass, 2" long 1' wide, dragon engraved*	T Rattray, writer	1781	Smellie 1782, no 70	—
Chinese mariner's compass*	Rev J Geddes	1781	Smellie 1782, no 186	—
Chinese padlock of brass, in form of a butterfly*	R Boswell	1782	Smellie 1784, no 245	—
Chinese stillyard*	A Brown of Glasgow	1783	Smellie 1784, no 400	—
Chinese stillyard*	Joseph Edmondson, Esq	1783	Smellie 1784, no 584	—
Chinese organ*	Joseph Edmondson, Esq	1783	Smellie 1784, no 584	—
Chinese organ; Chinese etwee, containing a pair of chop-sticks, a steel forceps, and a knife; a Chinese mariner's compass; a Chinese dial; the boots and shoes of a Mandarin; a pair of Chinese lady's shoes*	Alexander Baron of Preston	1783	Smellie 1784, no 596	—

TABLE 1
Donations (*cont*)

	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Present Location</i>
Chinese lady's shoe of crimson satten, embroidered with silks and bordered with gold	John Hamilton, Esq	1782	Smellie 1782, no 186	—
Chinese cap	Dr Yule	1790	AS 1831, 77	—
Pair of Chinese chop-sticks	Adam Cardonnel	1783	Smellie 1784, no 408	—
Chinese wooden box containing several specimens of the Tea-tree	Francis Kinloch, Esq	1785	AS 1831, 37	—
3 base metal Chinese coins, perforated *	Francis Charteris	1782	Smellie 1784, no 244	—
Base metal Chinese coin, square pierced*	Alexander Brown of Glasgow	1783	Smellie 1784, no 394	—
Five bronze coins, square pierced*	Mrs Major Charles Fraser	1783	Smellie 1784, no 465	—
Bronze Chinese coin*	Rev Dr Geddes	1785	AS 1831, 31	—
Chinese bronze coin, square pierced*	Mr Alexander Brown	1785	AS 1831, 49	—
Chinese bronze coin, square pierced	Jamres Charles, Hozier	1786	AS 1831, 59	—
4 Chinese coins, square pierced	James Lauder, Esq	1789	AS 1831, 73	—
8 Chinese coins of mixed metal, square pierced; 2 square seals cut in alabaster, in Chinese characters; a round Chinese speculum of mixed metal	Patrick Begbie, Esq	1789	AS 1831, 74	—
Chinese manuscript	Rev J Geddes	1781	Smellie 1782, no 186	?
An exemplification of the Manner of Writing in the Chinese Language, written in China on Chinese paper	James Lauder, Esq	1789	AS 1831, 74	?
Chinese map of the Empire of China	Mr J Gillies	1784	AS 1831, 33	?
Chinese passport for the English EICo ship <i>The Princess Royal</i> 1777	Dr W Cuming	1784	Smellie 1784, no 624	?
Tartary				
Pair of boots	Dr J Grieve	1783	Smellie 1784, no 622	?
Miscellaneous Arabic, Persian, 'oriental'				
3 coins with Arabic characters	Earl of Buchan	1781	Smellie 1782, no 115	?
Arabic silver coin	William Anderson, Writer to the Signet	1782	Smellie 1784, no 331	?
6 Arabic silver coins	Lieut Symes	1784	Smellie 1784, no 490	?
Silver medal of Sultan Mustapha, son of Hemed Chan, coined AH 1171	William Smellie	1781	Smellie 1782, no 119	?
2 Persian copper coins	Mr J Rae, Surgeon	1785	AS 1831, 49	?
Oriental copper coin, inscribed with Persic characters	Mr A Watson	1783	AS 1831, 64	?
Persian copper coin	Duke of Buccleuch	1796	AS 1831, 83	?
Small oriental copper coin	Alexander Smellie	1791	AS 1831, 78	?

TABLE 1
Donations (*cont*)

	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Present Location</i>
Advocates' Library				
'Oriental' coins, Turkish, EICo, Mughal, Chinese, Arabian, Siamese, Japanese	Purchased with the Sutherland Collection, and possible later acquisitions	1705	<i>FM</i> 1, 270, Sim and other 1856	RMS
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland				
<i>Dictionary of Persian, Arabic and English</i> , Oxford 1777	John Richardson	1785	AS 1831, 41	?
<i>Asiatic Researches</i> from Calcutta, in 6 vols	Asiatic Society, Calcutta	1801	AS 1831, 87	?
Armenian manuscript on wood	H Bell	1783	Smellie 1784, no 553	?
2 letters written in the Persian character, on paper ornamented with gold	C Balfour	1783	Smellie 1784, no 617	?
Manuscript copy of the Koran of Mahomet, beautifully written ... embellished with gold, on a roll of Indian paper	William Glasford, Esq	1787	AS 1831, 60	?
Royal Society of Edinburgh				
Illuminated Koran	Colonel MacLeod of MacLeod	1792	<i>Transactions</i> 3, 139, NLS Acc 10,000/3	?
Arabic Manuscript	Mr Somerville Wilson, Surgeon	1792	„	?
Persian Manuscript	Mr Somerville Wilson, Surgeon	1792	„	?
Advocates Library				
MSS examples				
Chinese missal	Mr D Freebairn	1702	<i>FM</i> 1, 232	?
'Oriental' manuscript	James Robertson	1707	Cunningham 1989, 125	
Malabar gospels in Tamil, on leaves	Mr J Forbes	1753	<i>FM</i> 3, 22	NLS
Elogium in Sultan Morad filium Selim filii Seliman, Turcica lingua et caractere, AH 992	?	?	FR 213 MSS. Cat 1786	NLS
Machumetes, Alcoranum Arabice	?	?	FR 216 MSS. Cat 1786	?
Society of Antiquaries				
Ancient Egypt				
Penates 3¾*	W Tytler	1781	Smellie 1782, no 32	?
Penates with Egyptian headdress*	Francis Charteris	1782	Smellie 1784, no 244	?
Onyx seal, set in gold (modern setting), from Thebes	Col James Callender of Craigforth	1782	Smellie 1784, no 252	?
Impressions, in fine red sulphur, from ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman gems, in number 1575, in three boxes, with an accurate inventory	Charles Logie, British Consul at Algiers	1784	Smellie 1784, no 658	?

TABLE 1
Donations (*cont*)

	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Present Location</i>
Decorated horn, listed as Egyptian, actually Persian	Mrs Cl Gardiner	1781	Smellie 1782, no 9	?
Advocates' Library				
Mummy	Earl of Morton	1748	FM 2 v, 222	Destroyed

* = an item that was part of a group donation; ? = lost or untraceable; — = could not be checked; RMS = Royal Museum of Scotland

TABLE 2
Prices

<i>Item (examples)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Sale</i>	<i>Price</i>
Asian figures (statues, etc)				
Japanese idol 'Quamvon'	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£2.15.0
2 China figures	1755	J Fraser	Moniack Roup	£1.5.0
4 China figures	"	"	"	£1.3.6
2 Chinese mandarins 2' high	1773	J West	Langford	£1.18.0
Large figure of a mandarin in a glass, ditto of his lady	1773	J West	Langford	£1.3.0
2 ivory pagodas and glass shades	1759	J Fraser	Prestage	£3.0.0
A large and beautiful mother of pearl pagoda, with 8 chambers, in a mahogany case	1773	J West	Langford	£4.10.0
Indian idols, groups of 3–4	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	from 7s/16s to £11.11.0
Indian models of temples	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£8.8.0–£1.2.0
Weapons				
An Indian scymitar	1759	J Fraser	Prestage	£1.17.0
An Indian scymitar and head of a spear	1759	J Fraser	Prestage	£2.4.0
A Turkish scymitar with an agate handle, and a stiletto	1773	J West	Langford	£1.1.0
A piece of armour with which elephants in India were formerly clothed in battle, also a piece of the stuff with which many of Hyder Ally's horsemen's jackets were composed	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.7.0
Miscellaneous instruments, ethnographic 'curiosities', etc				
Chinese compass	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£1.2.0
Chinese convex mirror (metal)	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£1.5.0
Chinese scales	1765	Dr J Letherland	Langford	£0.3.6
Chinese gold weight, a pair of 'India' scales	1773	J West	Langford	£0.7.0
Chinese compass	1799	W Wales	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.5.6
Chinese stone box with a figure	1765	Dr J Letherland	Langford	£0.8.0
Indian paints	1757	F Charteris	to J Scott, Edinburgh merchant	£3.3.0
Ornaments worn by Brahmin women and by Hindu women	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.6.0
	"	"	"	£0.6.0
Imitations of Indian fruits, done in ivory	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.9.0

TABLE 2
Prices

<i>Item (examples)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Sale</i>	<i>Price</i>
Coins				
Oriental, mixed lot, weight 9oz 5 (lot 25)	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£5.2.6
Bombay rupees, 1 double and 2 single sanams, coined by the E.I.Co.	1762	A Lawrence, apothecary	Langford	£2.5.0
26 Arabick and Turkish coins in copper, some very ancient	1765	Dr J Letherland	Langford	£0.10.6
East India coins, 1 gold	1795	Rev R Southgate	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.10.6,
„	„	„	„	£0.1.6
Curious ancient oriental coins found near Calcutta, gold, silver and copper	1795	Rev R Southgate	Leigh & Sotheby	£2.2.0
East Indian and foreign coins of various states	1800	J Scott-Hylton	Leigh & Sotheby	£2.16.0
Inpressions from ancient gems, in all 136	1773	J West	Langford	£2.16.0
Egyptian Antiquities				
Mummy	1746	C Smyth	Mr Cock	£13.13.0
Mummy	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£13.13.0
Canopic jar	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£2.7.6
Canopic jar	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£0.10.6
Seated Isis and Isis (2 figures)	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£21.10.6
An Egyptian figure in bronze, and 5 others on pedestals	1773	J West	Langford	£0.11.0
A curious Egyptian idol, in bronze	1773	J West	Langford	£0.13.0
A curious scarabeus, Egyptian and an antique fragment	1773	J West	Langford	£1.1.0
Manuscripts				
Illuminated (Arabic, Persian, Turkish)				
Alkoran, most beautifully and elegantly written, richly illuminated	1785	A Askew	Leigh & Sotheby	£14.14.0
A very magnificent and splendid copy of the Koran ... written in Niski ... brought from India ...	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£6.7.6
Shah Nameh by Ferdusi ... , with illustrations, cost in India 1350 rupees	1785	A Askew	Leigh & Sotheby	£7.7.0
History of the Creation, Garden of Purity, cost in India 1400 rupees, with illustrations	1785	A Askew	Leigh & Sotheby	£6.6.0
Poemata Persica, Hafiz, <i>cum</i> Fig	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£2.12.6
Poems of Nezami	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£1.17.0
The Loves of Joseph and Zuleika, in Turkish, translated from the Persian of Jami, written on fine oriental paper, the pages are sprinkled with gold and the whole is adorned with several finished pictures and illustrations	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£2.6.0
Arabic, misc. examples				
Mahometi Alcoranus, elegant	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.16.0
Koran (in the Nishki), correct copy	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.9.0
Koran, fine copy	1793	„	„	£0.10.6
History of Timur	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£0.5.0

TABLE 2
Prices (*cont*)

<i>Item (examples)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Sale</i>	<i>Price</i>
History of Timur	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.12.0
History of Tamerlane	1773	J West	Langford	£0.13.6
Commentary on the Koran, Treatise on Moral Philosophy	1761	S Lethieullier	Baker	£2.8.0
Divan al Motannabi	1765	J Letherland	Baker	£1.15.0
Compendium Medicinae, Abi Hassa Ali Ben Abi'l ... Corashita	1765	J Letherland	Baker	£10.6.0
Treatise on Medicine by Ramadan Hassan	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.10.6
Treatise on Astrology	1771	„	„	£0.4.0
Persian				
Gulistan by Sadi, elegant copy, exquisitely bound in Morocco	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£2.4.0
Gulistan by Sadi	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.13.6
Zarathustra Nama	1765	J Letherland	Baker	£1.1.0
Sha namah	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£6.8.6
The Zend of Zoroaster (in Pehlevi)	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£1.3.0
Divan ou oeuvres de Lisani, ouvrage mystique d'une belle ecriture	1766	D Mallet	Baker	£1.14.0
Ketab al-Methauni	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£2.10.0
Persian Tales, cost in India 80 rupees	1785	„	„	£0.10.6
Tootie Nameh (Tales of a Parrot)	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.10.0
First Book of the Mahubarat, translated from the Sanscrit, by Aboo Fuzzael	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.9.6
Commentaries of Sultan Baber, translated into Persian	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.7.6
General History, Ferishta	1793	„	„	£0.13.0
Ferishta's History of India, fine copy	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£1.18.0
History of Bengal	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.6.0
Ayeen Akberry or the Institutes of Akber	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.3.0
Cossim Ally Cawn's Letter to the English Governors	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.1.0
The History of the 7 Climates, fine copy	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£1.7.0
Turkish				
Annals of the Turks ...	1765	J Letherland	Baker	£1.10.0
Poesies de Nedgiabi	1766	D Mallet	Baker	£1.8.0
Cherefname, Roman Turc en Vers, c 400 pages, très belle écriture	1766	D Mallet	Baker	£1.8.0
A volume of Turkish letters in the Diwani character ... forms of address from the Vizier to different courts	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.1.9

TABLE 2
Prices (*cont*)

<i>Item (examples)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Sale</i>	<i>Price</i>
India				
Akar Nagari, in the Indian language	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.13.0
Portion of the Shastrums or sacred books of the Brahmins, found in the pagoda at Daraporam (Sanskrit?)	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.7.0
A religious book of the Brahmins, called Rauvennah, found at Daraporam (Sanskrit?)	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.4.0
Malabar system of physic, curiously bound in a gilt copper case	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£0.15.0
Malay				
The Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles in the Malay language	1771	G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.10.6
China				
5 Chinese rolls	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£1.3.0
Parcel of papers in the Chinese language	1771	„	„	£0.8.0
A parcel of Chinese MSS.	1773	J West	Langford	£1.11.6
A Chinese MSS. (folio)	1790	no name	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.3.6
A parcel of the Chinese characters used at Malabar and Gentu	1773	J West	Langford	£1.2.0
Miscellaneous				
A curious MSS. Chinese. poems of Derwalllear in Malabar, and Bel Raman in Gentues	1773	J West	Langford	£1.8.0
A very curious Armenian MSS. supposed to be the history of St Gregory	1793	Rev J Haddon-Hindley	Leigh & Sotheby	£0.10.6
Book in Arabic, written in the Maghribi or Morisco character	1771	Rev G Sharpe	Baker & Leigh	£0.19.6
A book of specimens with the names in Arabic of places in and about Jerusalem, prayers of thanksgiving in the Turkish language, abstracts of Arabic letters, curious Chinese MSS.	1773	J West	Langfords	£2.3.0
Albums				
Chinese paintings of plants, flowers, fruits and insects	1794	Earl of Bute	Leigh & Sotheby	£22.10.6
Bengal Plants and Flowers, Vol 1 (broken up)	1794	Earl of Bute	Leigh & Sotheby	£7.11.0
Vol 2	„	„	„	£16.5.0
Vol 3	„	„	„	£24.10.0
Domestic (paper, china, furniture, screens, pictures, textiles)				
India paper, roll of 12 cut pieces (28 yds)	1755	J Fraser	Moniack Roup	£2.1.6
India paper	1757	F Charteris	Paid Mrs Crofts in London	£43.10.0
Blue and White Ewer	1703	Earl of Dalkeith	J van Colmar	£0.8.0
4 Japan China Jugs	1704	„	„	£1.4.0
2 small Chinese vessels, one of earth one of metal	1755	Dr R Mead	Langford	£1.16.0
2 China jars	1757	F Charteris	Aboard EI Ship	£5.5.0

TABLE 2
Prices (*cont*)

<i>Item (examples)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Sale</i>	<i>Price</i>
Set of Tea China	1757	F Charteris	Aboard EI Ship	£5.5.0
4 Blue and White China jars	1759	J Fraser	Prestage	£2.13.0
2 large coloured China jars	..	..	..	£3.5.0
2 White Japan mango cups, with other pieces, a fine old teapot	1770	Lady Germain	Langford & Son	£2.2.0
General China, eg 12 fine old coloured Japan dishes (of the tree pattern)	1773	J West	Langford	£3.15.0
2 large Blue and White beakers of the image pattern	1773	J West	Langford	£1.16.0
A large and fine table service, Blue and White nankeen China, of the landscape pattern	..	..	..	£7.10.0
2 fine old burnt-in basons (of the wheatsheaf pattern), 2 other and teapot	..	..	..	£0.10.0
2 exceeding fine and large Blue and White jars and covers of the image pattern on mahogany stands	..	..	..	£10.15.0
Baskets and Furniture				
2 round India rattan baskets	1703	Earl of Dalkeith	J van Colmar	£0.12.0
Set of Chinese baskets	1773	J West	Langfords	£1.1.0
2 blackwood cabinets with silver mounting made at Surat	1755	J Fraser	Moniack Roup	£21.15.0
Screens				
1 India six-leaved high screen	1704	Earl of Dalkeith	J van Colmar	£28.0.0
India quill papered screen	..	..	..	£0.12.0
Black and white India quill painted screen	1704/5	..	..	£0.4.0
Pictures				
12 fine India imaged pictures	1703	Earl of Dalkeith	J van Colmar	£6.0.0
5 India paintings on glass	1759	J Fraser	Prestage	£5.10.0
11 lots of India drawings	..	..	..	from 5s to £2.3.0
20 Drawings of the Moghul emperors	..	..	..	£4.12.0
A set of paintings, exhibiting the principal casts of people in India. Also a number of military and religious characters (33 in number)	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£3.3.0
A book of paintings, exhibiting views of all the ceremonies which are performed by the Brahmins . . .	..	..	..	£16.16.0
A set of curious paintings which were collected from the ancient records and Shastrum of Pier Maal's pagoda at Madura. They bear the appearance of some antiquity . . .	..	..	..	£4.14.6
21 Indian paintings of the Moghul emperors and monarchy, finely executed and embellished	1796	R Orme	Leigh & Sotheby	£1.11.16
Textiles, carpet				
Indian silk quilt	1755	J Fraser	Moniack roup	£0.18.0
Indian coverlet (fine)	..	..	..	£1.16.0
2 pieces striped cotton	1757	F Charteris	aboard EI Co ship	£3.3.0
Persian carpet	1792	Mr Simpson	Christies	£6.16.6

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- Account* see Smellie 1792; 1794.
Asiatic Miscellany (Vol 1 1785), Calcutta.
AR – *Asiatic Researches* (Vol 1 1789/9, Vol 2 1790, Vol 3 1792, Vol 4 1795, Vol 1798), Calcutta. New Delhi reprint 1979.
AS – *Archaeologica Scotica* (Vol 1 1792), Edinburgh.
The Bee, Edinburgh.
BM – British Museum.
Communications – Communications of the Society Antiquaries, vol 1 (1780–4), vol 2 (1785–99).
CW – 1807 *The Works of Sir William Jones*, 13 Vols Eds Lady Jones, Lord Teignmouth.
EB – Encyclopaedia Britannica, 3rd edn. Edinburgh.
Edinburgh Magazine or Literary Miscellany (Vol 1 1785).
Edinburgh Review (Vol 1 1802), Edinburgh.
EEC – *Edinburgh Evening Courant*.
EUL SC – Edinburgh University Library Special Collections
FM – Faculty of Advocates Minute Book, vol 1 (1661–1712), vol 2 (1713–50), vol 3 (1751–83), ed J McPherson (The Stair Society Series vols 29 (1976), 32 (1980), 46 (1999), Edinburgh.)
Letters – Letters of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol 1 (1780–1), vol 2 (1781–2), vol 3 (1785–1825).
Minutes – Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol 1 (1780–4), vol 2 (1784–1805).
Metaphysics see Monboddo 1779–99.
MR – *Monthly Review* (Vol 1 1749) London.
JHC – Journal of the History of Collections.
NLS – National Library of Scotland.
NAS – National Archives of Scotland.
Origin see Monboddo 1773–92.
The New Asiatic Miscellany (Vol 1 1789), Calcutta.
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- BM Add. MSS. 8834 (A Gordon).
 EUL SC Gen Box 172, 173 (J Robertson).
 NAS C C 8 8 Vol 134 (McGouan will).

- NAS/GD/18/5031/5; 18/5031/6; 18/1810 (Clerk of Penicuik).
 NAS/GD/224/307/5/3 (56); 224/1040 (44); 224/1001/21.
 NLS MS. 14254; 14263 (Mc Gouan correspondence).
 NLS MS. Acc 10000/3; 10000/2; 10000/282 (Quoted by permission of the Royal Society of Edinburgh from the RSE's Minute Books held on deposit at the NLS).
 NLS MS. 24527 f123; 24531 (Monboddo).
 NMAS Coins: Contents of the Cabinet of Coins and Medals belonging to the Faculty of Advocates (a Faculty curator and Mr Sim, 1856).
 NRA (S) 2696 Bundles 293, 649, 651 (J Fraser).
 NRA (S) 0208 (Charteris).
 224/1083 (Dalkeith/Buccleugh).

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