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 …

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. 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. 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 history 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. 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. 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, 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.

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 Antiquaries 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. They also reflect the fact that even though broad-ranging donations and contacts were encouraged and pursued by the Antiquaries 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’. 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, appears to have possessed only one small Egyptian statuette. 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 Antiquaries 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. 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, the latter specimens of natural history to the RSE. 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. 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’. 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 reverenced by the Antiquarians of some future Age than the MSS. themselves. (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’, Persian and Arabic manuscripts from Mr Somerville Wilson, surgeon to the Winterton East Indiaman and the Koran and manuscripts from Colonel McLeod mentioned
above. The Antiquaries received a copy of John Richardson’s *Persian Dictionary* of 1777 from the author himself (1785); and the several Chinese artefacts from Alexander Seton of Preston probably reflected Seton’s association with a Stockholm merchant. Charles Logie, British consul in Algiers from 1772 until his sudden expulsion in 1780, on the other hand, donated a gentleman’s gifts of coins, medals, impressions of gems that did not reflect his travels in the East. 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’, 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. 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 dagger 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.

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). The manuscripts were bought from his widow by the Radcliffe Trustees in 1758 for £500. 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.

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 century through local merchants or agents with direct links with the East India Company travelling from London and leasing premises. Such material could also be obtained at roups and customs and exchequer sales of goods confiscated for avoidance of duty. 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. 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 . . .

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. Elite 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 1807 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. 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). 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. 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. 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. 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.

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 Craigforth and two of William Hunter’s penates 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. 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 ‘publick’ referred to in the debate between the institutions over the granting the Antiquaries their charter 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 . . .’. 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. 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. Here the aim
of the Antiquaries’ collection (to ‘compare the ancient with the modern state of Scotland’) is given rather than a description of the collection. The Antiquaries’ difficulties prevailed and it appears that the whole collection was never fully displayed.

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. 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.

Presentations to the RSE were equally laid out and discussed before members. 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.

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’ evidence exists of obstruction to the use of the Library by ordinary people with legitimate, professional claims.

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) or the buying of a proper cabinet for coins. 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.

This attitude was felt at the time and is illustrated by the dismissive manner in which their mummy was to be ‘disposed into a proper place in the Library’. Discussions of donations or purchases at the Advocates’ Library appear to have been of a practical rather than of a scholarly or antiquarian nature. 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’. 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’. 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, 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’. The loss and neglect of the Balfour and Sibbald collection at the University was a subject of shame and recrimination at the time but new collections of natural history were assembled by J Walker, the Professor of Natural History from 1779–1803 and a new Repository was to be included in the New College building. 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. 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. 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’. 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. (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 ... 

In the event McGouan died intestate and with debts in 1803.

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, 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. 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. Even William Smellie, the Secretary of the Antiquaries, acknowledged and solicited Weir’s skill in animal preservation. Daily admittance in 1789 was 1s or 10s 6d for six months and, by 1792, 2s per day or one guinea yearly subscription. Instruction on how to preserve fish was also a possibility if enough people applied. 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’ and William Jones mentions his examination of the inscriptions of a rare collection of Persian coins in the same museum. The McGouan collection was mentioned in Pennant 1772, and some of its items (none Eastern) illustrated. 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. 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 .... 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. 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 Scotland, 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’s 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. These different criteria for arrangement 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’, 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. 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’. Such a dramatic statement was part of the theatre of Lever’s museum, in whose Entrance Hall were two giant pillars inscribed ‘Giants’ Causey’.

In Hunter’s museum of 1807 South Sea ‘curiosities’ were grouped together in an apartment with Natural History, Antiquities and Miscellanies. It thus is likely that the South Sea curiosities and pieces of American Indian dress donated to the Antiquaries would also have been displayed together rather than split up into typological categories.

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. 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. 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. In the Hunterian museum such ethnographic material was included in ‘curiosities’ or ‘miscellanias’. 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, 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 vessels and Chinese instruments with ‘mathematical and other curiosities’. 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 flowers or Eastern slippers with an Egyptian lamp, two Indian bowls, an ostrich egg and an alligator. 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 antiques in their own context, in contrast to Roman ones, which could be displayed as a group. Hans Sloane had displayed the antiques of Egypt, Greece, Rome and Britain together, but his Egyptian mummy had been displayed in a separate category, with anatomical subjects and skeletons. 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. 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; in Dr Richard Mead’s English sale catalogue (1755) his mummy was included after urns, busts of famous people and before a walnut-tree cabinet 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.

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 another 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. McGouan’s sale catalogue (1804), focused on antiquities, and listed Egyptian antiques (with no mummy) together in one group lot, sold on the sixth day with Roman, Etruscan, Chinese and Indian pieces. References to Montfaucon and Caylus in the Mead and McGouan catalogues respectively when listing Egyptian antiques 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 (i.e., 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 institution,127 ‘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 (e.g., History, Poetry, Ethics, Arts, Sciences, Dictionaries and Grammars).136 Such knowledge, when published, as for example, in the Appendix to Fraser’s Nadir Shah137 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 (e.g., 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. 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. 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’. 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. 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 Society (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. 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, 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. 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, 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 . . .

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,\textsuperscript{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 century\textsuperscript{159} 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.\textsuperscript{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).\textsuperscript{161} In his Anniversary Discourses of 1786 (On the Hindus)\textsuperscript{162} and 1792 (On the Origin and Families of Nations)\textsuperscript{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’.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 Moses\textsuperscript{166} 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 northen 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 . . .

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’.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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’.\textsuperscript{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’ *Britannia 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 Kenneray, 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
For some it was a symbol of the origins of civilization. It was agreed that this type of architecture had come from the East, 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. 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. 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. 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. 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), and pieces of statuary shipped back for major collectors such as Ashton Lever in England, all contributed to the interest in this art in England. Indian sculpture features in the private Edinburgh collection of McGouan 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. 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.

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 . . .

Both Jones and Robertson, 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. Of relevance here, however, are a letter from the Lama of Tibet to Warren Hastings and Dr J Playfair’s communications on the Astronomy and Trigonometry of the Brahmins. 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. A medical communication on the Tartars 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 Antiquaries 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 and the Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1797. The ancient history of the Tartars had been addressed by the orientalist J Richardson in his Dissertation. 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. 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. 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. This was refuted by Jones in his Fifth Anniversary Discourse on the Tartars given in 1788.

The communication on Tibet or ‘Letter from the Teshoo Lama to Mr Hastings’, written in 1773 or 1774 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, and George Bogle had been appointed by Hastings as an envoy to Tibet to investigate its potential commercial 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. The letter published in the Transactions was written once Bogle had arrived in Tibet during 1774. Bogle returned with no firm trade agreement, but with optimism about future relations. 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. Bogle had died in 1781 and Samuel Turner had been sent from 1783–4 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.

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. He repeated his plea in his paper of 1795 ‘Observations on the Trigonometrical Tables of the Brahmins’. 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. Jones, who had been elected to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in early 1790, thanked Playfair and responded to some of his queries in his Eleventh Anniversary Discourse, delivered in 1794. 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’. 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 BC but also hinted at flexibility when he alluded to the ‘very moderate’ system of Indian chronology of William Jones, which was closely linked to the Mosaic and Newtonian systems. According to Playfair, ‘distant eras’ in Hindu astronomy, controversially referred to by Bailly in his Traité de l’Astronomie Indienne et Orientale, 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’. Playfair hoped that a complete translation of the Surya Siddhanta (‘this inestimable treasure’) would shed more light on the matter. 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 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.

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. This is presumably to be attributed to the impact of the Asiatic Researches, the contact between William Jones and Sir Joseph Banks 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. 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. In contrast, Egypt as a disseminator of all civilization (eg Kircher, Pignoria) also vied with India (and originally China) as the original nation.

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), 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.

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. 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. 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 Gordon 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, 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.

Egypt was crucial in Monboddo’s attempts to define the beginnings of the History of Man.
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.\textsuperscript{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’.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{249} Thus ancient Egypt was a kind of golden age, with places like Heliopolis and Thebes sacred and built by god-kings.\textsuperscript{250} This state had been annihilated and present Egypt was ‘wonderfully changed for the worst’.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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).\textsuperscript{253} The affinity between Sanskrit, Greek\textsuperscript{254} and possibly Celtic was proof of this contact.\textsuperscript{255} Thus for Monboddo India was ‘the oldest civilized Nation that can be found on the face of the earth’.\textsuperscript{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’.\textsuperscript{257}

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

Robertson’s views on the antiquity of Egypt were pragmatic and, to paraphrase him, somewhere between ‘credulity’ and ‘scepticism’.\textsuperscript{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 Sesostris’s campaign as a myth and favouring the idea of ancient trade between India and Persia.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{262} A third, less popular, trend to demystify hieroglyphs, also emerged at this time.\textsuperscript{263} The antiquarian Caylus\textsuperscript{264} was exceptional in his desire to see hieroglyphs as a historical source with great potential, possibly even as a challenge to classical sources.\textsuperscript{265} For Gordon, hieroglyphs were sacred.\textsuperscript{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. Egyptian hieroglyphs were also compared to Chinese hieroglyphs, and found similar or dissimilar, 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.

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. This fairly limited repertoire was then compared to pieces illustrated in Montfaucon’s L’Antiquité Expliqué et Representée en Figures (1729–33) or Caylus’s Receuil d’Antiquités ... (1752–67) or more specialized publications such as Gordon’s An Essay ... (1737). 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’.

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. Architecture, notably the pyramids, was appreciated, if only for its scale, execution and sometimes harmony. Painting was considered mediocre and the use of colour very basic. These views were widely held. Perhaps Montfaucon, writing in the early 18th century, was the most honest in his explanation ‘les divinitéz de l’Egypte étoient de figure trop bizarre pour les mettre à la tête des antiquitez’, 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’. 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 operations...[and]...their worship was stupid to the highest degree ... the Egyptian worship of frogs and mice ... will never give the least imitable lesson'.

Travellers’ reports occasionally unsettled the status quo. James Bruce, for example, whose treatment of Egypt was generally cavalier and whose approach to history was capricious, describes the sight of the sepulchres of Thebes in the Valley of the Kings as ‘magnificent’ and ‘stupendous’. 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. 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.

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. There even appears to have been no evidence of any medical interest in the mummy in 18th-century Edinburgh. 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’; 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. 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. 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 century 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. 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. William Jones had a limited, Confucius-centered, knowledge of Chinese texts. 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 ....’

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 antiques or artefacts in a purely Chinese style. Some 18th-century catalogues occasionally identify Chinese material as antique, 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.
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’. The claimed age of China and its antiquities and the Chinese reverence towards their own antiquity were treated with ambivalence or dismissal in western sources and linked to the supposed Chinese ignorance in astronomy. 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. 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’histroire’ and left the curious only with ‘un gout de couleur’, preferable to the modern kind. 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.

He includes two Plates with ceramics and bronzes. 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; Bell wrote of the ‘monstrous figures of stone and plaister’ adorning temples; 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. By the time Staunton was writing (see below), the term monstrous was de rigeur when writing on certain aspects of China. The Chinese ‘are strangers to perspective’ and ‘are not equal to the design and composition of a picture’ wrote Staunton. 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’. 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.

Architecture was afforded more respect, ‘It has a certain proportion and beauty particular of its own’ wrote the Britannica in contrast to Chambers who had tried to find an affinity between Chinese architecture and that of the ancients. 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 landskips . . . painted on the China ware and other manufactures of this country. They are accounted fanciful by most Europeans, but are really natural.

and Macartney, ‘Proper edifices in proper places is the style they most admire’. 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, 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. In contrast, the perception of China as a market with great potential was
reflected in the *Oriental Repertory*, edited by the hydrographer Alexander Dalrymple. His main commitment, originally supported by Warren Hastings, 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. 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. The scheme came to nothing at the time, but was revived in the 19th century. The Malay dagger from Sumatra given to the Antiquaries by J Glassford of Calcutta in 1790 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.

The Macartney embassy to China negotiating a treaty of commerce and giving a favourable impression of Britain could have provided fresh opportunities for observation and enquiry, but was barely taken advantage of. The expedition was encouraged by Joseph Banks and accompanied by two Scottish ‘scientists’, a professional doctor Dr H Gillan and the ‘machinist’ Dr J Dinwiddie, 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. 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.’

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. 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’, Macartney usually qualified a negative comment by ‘at least to our eyes’. Even though the embassy’s aim was primarily concerned with trading concessions, the deliberate pursuit of knowledge on the expedition, despite Banks’ botanical memoranda, 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, who had commanded the vessel *Hindostan* during the voyage of the embassy, accounts of the expedition from Anderson’s narrative of 1795 but above all large extracts from George Leonard Staunton’s official narrative as Secretary to the embassy. 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. 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.
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 1770 *Dissertatio de Linguae Arabice* 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]’.

In Arabic one might discern the original character, the immense richness and the highest development of the Hebrew language. This did not mean that Robertson did not praise the purity of the Arabic language as found and preserved in the Koran, 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. The study of Arabic at Oxford under Hunt was similarly limited. 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. 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. 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*. A notebook also shows him studying John Richardson’s *Arabic Grammar*, devised for ‘gentlemen whose chief views are . . . directed to commerce, war and political government’ and which uses serious as well as entertaining extracts to illustrate grammatical points. 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 points (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. 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’. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

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. 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 Persian and his papers show him taking notes from Jones’s *Persian Grammar* (1771) and Richardson’s *Specimens of Persian Poetry* (1774). 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. 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 Briton, 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 ...

Such a statement, reinforced by the an anecdote about Ferdusi’s defiance towards a ruler who broke his word, again taken from Jones 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. 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. These seem to have been donated to the library in the 19th century, 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, 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 orientalists 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 tongues 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. He had also stressed the importance of relying on primary sources for a proper understanding of history. 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). The impetus given by Warren Hastings on the practical beginnings of translations in India of Persian and Sanskrit texts from the Persian, is ground that has been well covered. By the 1780s major texts such as A Code of Gentoo Laws, historical works (see below) and extracts from the Bhagavad Gita 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. Besides the canonical texts listed by Jones in the Catalogue of the Persian Grammar, 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. Extracts from such texts also appeared in journals such as the Asiatic Miscellany and The New Asiatic Miscellany. Such translated texts fuelled debates on benign and non-benign despotism and validated the conquest of Bengal by the British. Warren Hastings, for example, was portrayed as a patron and administrator equal to Akbar. 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. 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 categoric belief in the descent of the Hindus from the Patriarchs. 394 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. 395

The limiting impact of philosophical or stadial history on Edinburgh orientalists mostly...
active in the early 19th century has already been analysed by J Randall, 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 …’.

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, in contrast to London journals, such as the Monthly Review. The Scots Magazine only began to engage, but not directly, with the Asiatic Researches after Jones’s death in 1794. 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’. 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. 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. 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 Vallencey 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 Jones and attacked Robertson. 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. Jones was also invoked in many of his arguments against the Hindus. 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. 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.

In other words, doctrines of Christianity are intrinsic to Confucius, the Greeks, Sanskrit writings and Persian poets and not borrowed from it. 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.

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.

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, set-backs by despotism and oligarchies and with gaps that still needed to be filled by untranslated and undiscovered Asiatic texts, left 18th-century theories of social progress, improvement and Western supremacy, too open-ended for comfort. In her analysis of Edinburgh orientalists 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. 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, J Anderson and Kirkpatrick with the Asiatic and The New Asiatic Miscellany. 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. Later on, Hamilton was to
pay tribute to Jones, 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 views he was very much of the speculative, historical school of philology. 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.

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. It is for others to unravel whether Murray was influenced by the utilitarian and missionary movements and whether Dugald Stewart’s criticism of Jones 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 Corse 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 crowd 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, 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, 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, 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.

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, 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.
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.

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.

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.

See Table 2. For the Advocates’ mummy see Brown, 2002.

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.

For example: Mr J Scott, Bookbinder; Mr A Jobson, Merchant; Mr A Gardner, Goldsmith. Smellie 1782, 33–41.


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–xxxii).

Buchan Discourse 1778; Smellie 1784.

Brown 1980b.

NAS/GD/18/1810.
Examples of roups including India goods and curiosities: 29 Jul 1778 Capt Gardiner’s paintings and curiosities, sold by Young and Trotter at their Young and Trotter’s Repository from London, Canongate (22 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).

Examples of customs sales, by inch of candle, of ships’ contents: 25 Sept, 1782, of the East Indiaman. Thus a determined sales from cargoes would be cheaper than those exaggeration); Asian idols, Egyptian antiquities, small manuscripts, coins, small instruments, ethnographic jewellery. Prices at local roups or sales from cargoes would be cheaper than those 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 £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 roups 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.
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.
76 Withers 1993; Waterson 1997.
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); Sir Hector Munro of Novar (d 1764): Hukk and Ethè 1925, nos 149, 150 (2 Korans, Arabic), 407 (History of Timur, Persian); 408 (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.
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.
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.
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 Buckly 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 Philipe 1804, 49–54.
125 Montfaucon 1722, 1724.
126 Caylus 1752–67.
127 Brown 1899.
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.
131 Kell 1886, 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.
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.

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.

Desmond 1982, 4–5.

ibid, 6–9.

ibid, 8–10.

The acquisitions of this Museum at the turn of the century included the ‘Babylonian’ stone, which described the building works of Nebuchadnezzar 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).

Desmond 1982, 10.

Letters, vol 1.


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.


For the Irish antiquarian C Vallancey see, eg Ferguson 1998, 267–8.
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.

Wincklemann 1764; Mitter 1992, 192.

*AR*, 1, 134.

Robertson 1794, 258, 259

*Communications*, 2.


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).

Robertson 1794, 258–61.


Jones 1789a, 352.

Mitter 1992, 146.

There is an inventory of a private museum of a ‘gentleman living in Trichonolopy’ India sent to Monboddo amongst his papers (NLS MS. 24527 f123). It starts with ‘a compleat collection of the idols or swamies of the Brahmns 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 Brahmns 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 Monboddo took his ethnology, and the nature of some private museums in India.

Drawings of sculptures from Salsetta in Sir Ashton Lever’s collection are reproduced by A Dalrymple in *Archaeologia*, 7 (1785), pls xxv–xxvii.

Philipe 1804, 53–4.

Simpson, Christie’s 1792, 4; ibid, 4, 9.

Jones 1789b, 232.

Robertson 1794, 306–8.

Jones 1789b, 233, 243.

Robertson 1794, 324.

*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*, 2, 1790.

*Transactions*, 2, 1790; vol 4, 1798.

*Transactions*, 3, 1794.

*Transactions*, 1, 1788.

Account, 1783, 114 no 622.

eg *Archaeologia*, vols 2 (1773) and 7 (1775) (two articles in the latter).

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).

Richardson 1777a, 122ff, 135ff


Kidd 1993, 111ff; see also Richardson 1777a, 128–40.

Bailly 1777, viii, 245.


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).

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).

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).
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).

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).

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.

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.

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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.

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Communications, 2.
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, ff 12.
246 Monboddo 1773, 442ff.
247 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, chs 4, 12.
248 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 2, ch 11.
249 NLS MS. 24531 f. 26ff; *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, ch 7.
250 NLS MS. 24531, 69.
251 *Metaphysics*, 4, 1795, Book 3, ch 11.
252 NLS MS. 24535, 80.
254 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 Letheuillier, 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.
256 Robertson 1794, 335, n 1.
257 ibid, 6–10, 335–9.
258 eg Dawson 1932; Boyd-Haycock 2002, 209.
259 Caylus 1752, vol I, 2.
260 ibid, 1–2.
261 ibid, 3–4.
262 Montfaucon 1719, vol I, ix. Loosely translated ‘The gods of Egypt were too bizarre of aspect to be given first place in [the hierarchy of] antiquites’.
263 Montfaucon 1719, vol 3, ix. Loosely translated ‘The gods of Egypt were too bizarre of aspect to be given first place in [the hierarchy of] antiquites’.
265 Caylus 1752–67.
266 ‘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 Stukeley and Egyptology see Boyd-Haycock 2002.
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.
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 Letheuillier, 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.
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’.
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’Egypte 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.
281 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).
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.
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.
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).

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).


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).

A full edited version, by Cranmer-Byng, only appeared in print in 1962.

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).

Robertson 1770, 8–9, 11–22.

In the MSS. version of this text EUL SC, Gen Box 173.

Robertson 1770, 25n, 26–8),

Toomer 1996, 313.

ibid, 306.

The Faculty of Advocates, for example, had funded a George Gordon to go to ‘Leipzick’ to study oriental languages in 1694/5. FM, vol 1, 134, 149, 153.

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; Alspadhus (a‘-Safadi); Al-Harathius(?); Al-zauharius(?) cited by Pockocke ; Mohammed Ben Heschem (Ibn Hicham’?); Ebn-Chalda (Ibn Khaludun); Ebn Chalican (Ibn Khalikian).

EUL SC Gen Box 173.

EUL SC Gen Box 172.

Richardson 1776, ix.

‘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.

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 Gulusan (CW 1807, vol 7, 430). See also Jones 1771a, 474.


Robertson 1794, 186, 235.

Kames 1774, 338.

Niehbur 1792 eg 241–68.

Hourani 1991.

Bruce 1813 edn, vol 1, 101, ch 8, vol 7 and passim.


‘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).

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)).

MR, 44, 1771, 429–30 and passim.

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
377 Halhed, 1776.
378 Wilkins, 1785.
379 Shaw 1981.
380 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.
381 Khojeh Abdulkhalharrim ‘a Cashmirean of distinc-
tion’ had accompanied Nadir Shah on his return
from Hindostan to Persia.
382 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 Ferishtah’s 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 Maratoes … 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 Akbar, 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 …’ (166 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; vol 56 1794 ‘On the inhabitants of the Garrow Hills’ (J Elliot), 752ff; ‘On the Manners of the … Mountainers of Tipra’ k (J Rawlins), 752ff; from AR, 1 in the Edinburgh Magazine: vol 10 (1789) ‘Extract from William Jones’s Indroductory 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 Brahmms’ (Vicziany 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.
416 AR, 4, 167.
417 passim, AR, 4, 166–8.
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’ (Vicziany 1986, 632, n 26.).

AR, 4, 10th Discourse, xxii–xxiii.

Known to anthropologists as Jones’s ethnological approach, cf Trautman 1997.

Jones 1792; 1795b.

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.

See also W Kirkpatrick ‘An Introduction to the History of the Persian Poets’, The New Asiatic Miscellany, vol 1, 1789.


Randall 1982, 53.

Murray in Bower 1823, 174–5.


Murray in Bower 1823, 175.

Murray in Edinburgh University 1812, 10–1.

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.

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).

Sher 1985, 302–3.

Pennant 1772, 589.


Marsden 1784, 240, 276.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Present Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Oriental’ coins, Turkish, EICo, Mughal, Chinese, Arabian, Siamese, Japanese</td>
<td>1705</td>
<td>FM 1, 270, Sim and other 1856</td>
<td>RMS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Present Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Richardson</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>AS 1831, 41</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic Society, Calcutta</td>
<td>1801</td>
<td>AS 1831, 87</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H Bell</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Smellie 1784, no 553</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Balfour</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Smellie 1784, no 617</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Glasford, Esq</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>AS 1831, 60</td>
<td>?</td>
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</table>

### Royal Society of Edinburgh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Present Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonel MacLeod of MacLeod</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Transactions 3, 139, NLS Acc 10,000/3</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Somerville Wilson, Surgeon</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>, ,</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Somerville Wilson, Surgeon</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>, ,</td>
<td>?</td>
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### Advocates Library

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<th>Present Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr D Freebairn</td>
<td>1702</td>
<td>FM 1, 232</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Roberton</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>Cunningham 1989, 125</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr J Forbes</td>
<td>1753</td>
<td>FM 3, 22</td>
<td>NLS</td>
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<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>FR 213 MSS. Cat 1786</td>
<td>NLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>FR 216 MSS. Cat 1786</td>
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</table>

### Society of Antiquaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Present Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W Tytler</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Smellie 1782, no 32</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Charteris</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Smellie 1784, no 244</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col James Callender of Craigforth</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Smellie 1784, no 252</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Logie, British Consul at Algiers</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Smellie 1784, no 658</td>
<td>?</td>
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### Table 1
Donations (cont)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Present Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decorated horn, listed as Egyptian, actually Persian</td>
<td>Mrs Cl Gardiner</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Smellie 1782, no 9</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocates’ Library</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mummy</td>
<td>Earl of Morton</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>FM 2 v, 222</td>
<td>Destroyed</td>
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</table>

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

### Table 2
Prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (examples)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sale</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asian figures (statues, etc)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese idol ‘Quamvon’</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£2.15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 China figures</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>J Fraser</td>
<td>Moniack Roup</td>
<td>£1.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 China figures</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>£1.3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chinese mandarins 2’ high</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large figure of a mandarin in a glass, ditto of his lady</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ivory pagodas and glass shades</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td>J Fraser</td>
<td>Prestage</td>
<td>£3.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A large and beautiful mother of pearl pagoda, with 8 chambers, in a mahogany case</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£4.10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian idols, groups of 3–4</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>from 7s/16s to £11.11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian models of temples</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£8.8.0–£1.2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weapons</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Indian scymitar</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td>J Fraser</td>
<td>Prestage</td>
<td>£1.17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Indian scymitar and head of a spear</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td>J Fraser</td>
<td>Prestage</td>
<td>£2.4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Turkish scymitar with an agate handle, and a stiletto</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£0.7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous instruments, ethnographic ‘curiosities’, etc</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese compass</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese convex mirror (metal)</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.5.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese scales</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>Dr J Letherland</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese gold weight, a pair of ‘India’ scales</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese compass</td>
<td>1799</td>
<td>W Wales</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese stone box with a figure</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>Dr J Letherland</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian paints</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>F Charteris</td>
<td>to J Scott, Edinburgh merchant</td>
<td>£3.3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ornaments worn by Brahmin women and by Hindu women</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£0.6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imitations of Indian fruits, done in ivory</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>£0.6.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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546 | SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND, 2004
## Table 2

### Prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (examples)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sale</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coins</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oriental, mixed lot, weight 9oz 5 (lot 25)</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£5.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay rupees, 1 double and 2 single sanams, coined by the E.I.Co.</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>A Lawrence, apothecary</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£2.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Arabick and Turkish coins in copper, some very ancient East India coins, 1 gold</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>Dr J Letherland</td>
<td>Lanford</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay rupees, 1 double and 2 single sanams, coined by the E.I.Co.</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>A Lawrence, apothecary</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£2.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Arabick and Turkish coins in copper, some very ancient East India coins, 1 gold</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>Dr J Letherland</td>
<td>Lanford</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Egyptian Antiquities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mummy</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td>C Smyth</td>
<td>Mr Cock</td>
<td>£13.13.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mummy</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£13.13.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canopic jar</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£2.7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canopic jar</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seated Isis and Isis (2 figures)</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£21.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>An Egyptian figure in bronze, and 5 others on pedestals A curious Egyptian idol, in bronze</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A curious scarabeus, Egyptian and an antique fragment</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.1.0</td>
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<td><strong>Manuscripts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Illuminated</strong> (Arabic, Persian, Turkish)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alkoran, most beautifully and elegantly written, richly illuminated</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>A Askew</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£14.14.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A very magnificent and splendid copy of the Koran … written in Niski … brought from India … Shah Nameh by Ferdusi …, with illustrations, cost in India 1350 rupees</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£6.7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of the Creation, Garden of Purity, cost in India 1400 rupees, with illustrations</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>A Askew</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£7.7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poemata Persica, Hafiz, cum Fig</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£2.12.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poems of Nezami</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£1.17.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£2.6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arabic, misc. examples</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahometi Alcoranus, elegant</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.16.0</td>
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<td>Koran (in the Nishki), correct copy</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.9.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koran, fine copy</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of Timur</td>
<td>1755</td>
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<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.5.0</td>
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<td>Item (examples)</td>
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<td>Price</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of Timur</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Tamerlane</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£0.13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commentary on the Koran, Treatise on Moral Philosophy</td>
<td>1761</td>
<td>S Lethieullier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divan al Motannabi</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>J Letherland</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.15.0</td>
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<td>Compendium Medicinae, Abi Hassa Ali Ben Abi’l ... Corashita</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>J Letherland</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£10.6.0</td>
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<td>Treatise on Medicine by Ramadan Hassan</td>
<td>1771</td>
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<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<td>Treatise on Astrology</td>
<td>1771</td>
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**Persian**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gulistan by Sadi, elegant copy, exquisitely bound in Morocco</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£2.4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gulistan by Sadi</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.13.6</td>
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<td>Zarathustra Nama</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>J Letherland</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sha namah</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£6.8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Zend of Zoroaster (in Pehlevi)</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£1.3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divan ou oeuvres de Lisani, ouvrage mystique d’une belle écriture</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>D Mallet</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.14.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ketab al-Methauni</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£2.10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persian Tales, cost in India 80 rupees</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tootie Nameh (Tales of a Parrot)</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Book of the Mahabarat, translated from the Sanscrit, by Aboo Fuzzael</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.9.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commentaries of Sultan Baber, translated into Persian</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.7.6</td>
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<td>General History, Ferishta</td>
<td>1793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferishta’s History of India, fine copy</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£1.18.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of Bengal</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
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<td>Ayeen Akberry or the Institutes of Akber</td>
<td>1796</td>
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<td>Cossim Ally Cawn’s Letter to the English Governors</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>R Orme</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>The History of the 7 Climates, fine copy</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£1.7.0</td>
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**Turkish**

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<th>Item (examples)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Owner</th>
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<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annals of the Turks ...</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>J Letherland</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poesies de Nedgiabi</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>D Mallet</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherefname, Roman Turc en Vers, c 400 pages, très belle écriture</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>D Mallet</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>£1.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A volume of Turkish letters in the Diwani character ... forms of address from the Vizier to different courts</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.1.9</td>
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<td>Item (examples)</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>India</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Akar Nagari, in the Indian language</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.13.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portion of the Shastrums or sacred books of the Brahmins, found in the pagoda at Daraporam (Sanskrit?)</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£0.7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A religious book of the Brahmins, called Rauvannah, found at Daraporam (Sanskrit?)</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£0.4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malabar system of physic, curiously bound in a gilt copper case</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
<td>Christies</td>
<td>£0.15.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Malay</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles in the Malay language</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>China</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Chinese rolls</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£1.3.0</td>
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<td>Parcel of papers in the Chinese language</td>
<td>1771</td>
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<td>£0.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A parcel of Chinese MSS.</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.11.6</td>
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<td>A Chinese MSS. (folio)</td>
<td>1790</td>
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<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.3.6</td>
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<td>A parcel of the Chinese characters used at Malabar and Gentu</td>
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<td>Langford</td>
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<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A curious MSS. Chinese, poems of Derwallear in Malabar, and Bel Raman in Gentues</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A very curious Armenian MSS. supposed to be the history of St Gregory</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Rev J Haddon-Hindley</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£0.10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book in Arabic, written in the Maghribi or Morisco character</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Rev G Sharpe</td>
<td>Baker &amp; Leigh</td>
<td>£0.19.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>J West</td>
<td>Langfords</td>
<td>£2.3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Albums</strong></td>
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<td>Chinese paintings of plants, flowers, fruits and insects</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Earl of Bute</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£22.10.6</td>
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<td>Bengal Plants and Flowers, Vol 1 (broken up)</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Earl of Bute</td>
<td>Leigh &amp; Sotheby</td>
<td>£7.11.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol 2</td>
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<td>Vol 3</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>£24.10.0</td>
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<td><strong>Domestic (paper, china, furniture, screens, pictures, textiles)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>India paper, roll of 12 cut pieces (28 yds)</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>J Fraser</td>
<td>Moniack Roup</td>
<td>£2.1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India paper</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>F Charteris</td>
<td>Paid Mrs Crofts in London</td>
<td>£43.10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue and White Ewer</td>
<td>1703</td>
<td>Earl of Dalkeith</td>
<td>J van Colmar</td>
<td>£0.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Japan China Jugs</td>
<td>1704</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>£1.4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 small Chinese vessels, one of earth one of metal</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Dr R Mead</td>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>£1.16.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 China jars</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>F Charteris</td>
<td>Aboard El Ship</td>
<td>£5.5.0</td>
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### Table 2
**Prices (cont)**

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

Account see Smellie 1792; 1794.
Asiatic Miscellany (Vol 1 1785), Calcutta.
AS – Archaeologica Scotica (Vol 1 1792), Edinburgh.
The Bee, Edinburgh.
BM – British Museum.
Edinburgh Magazine or Literary Miscellany (Vol 1 1785).
Edinburgh Review (Vol 1 1802), Edinburgh.
EUL SC – Edinburgh University Library Special Collections
Metaphysics see Monboddo 1779–99.
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 (McGouan 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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