

## MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVES RELATIVE TO SOUTH ASIA IN GLASGOW UNIVERSITY

by David Weston

In 1709 Queen Anne established a Chair of Oriental languages at Glasgow. In reality, however, from the 18th century to the present time, Oriental has almost invariably meant Semitic, with pride of place being accorded those languages important to Biblical exegesis, Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac. Certain graduates of the Divinity Faculty in the nineteenth century did distinguish themselves, subsequently, while missionaries, in Indological studies - Robert Mather, editor of the *Hindustani Reference Bible*, Robert Kilgour, joint author of a *Nepali dictionary*, and Nicol MacNicol, who wrote *Indian theism: psalms of Marathi saints*, but unfortunately none of their papers are in our possession (1).

Nonetheless, the University has, over the years, attracted several bequests and donations containing material which deserve brief mention in the context of this paper. To begin with I intend to survey the manuscript holdings of the Special Collections Department of the Library; towards the end I shall also make reference to the resources of the University Archives.

Most of the ninety or so manuscript items with South Asian associations in the care of the Special Collections Department derive from the libraries of three benefactors, namely, William Hunter (1718-1783), anatomist, obstetrician and Physician extraordinary to Queen Charlotte, who amassed an immense collection of books and manuscripts, in addition to relia such as coins, paintings, geological and anatomical specimens, all housed in his house-cum-museum in London, and subsequently inherited by his alma mater at Glasgow in 1807; James Crawford of Thornwood, who was educated at Glasgow University, entered the Indian Civil Service in

1866 and was from 1885 until his retirement District and Sessions judge in Bengal. In 1919 the Library received from his library 541 volumes on Indian history and literature, including eight manuscript volumes all in Persian; and Henry George Farmer, the distinguished scholar of Arabian musicology, amongst whose papers were four manuscripts of Indian provenance.

The Hunterian items were noted in the Oriental section of the Hunterian printed catalogue of 1908 compiled by John Young and P. Henderson Aitken (2), while several of the other volumes were described in James Robson's catalogue of the non-Hunterian oriental manuscripts published in 1945 (3). The information contained in these catalogues was recorded briefly in J.D. Pearson's useful survey of Oriental manuscripts in Europe and North America (1971).

Commencing with the Muslim cultural milieu, and with its central text, the Qur'ān, we have the only Arabic manuscript which is relevant to this survey. A large copy, written in a clear Naskhi script, it comes from the celebrated library of Sulṭān Faṭḥ 'Alī, better known as Tipu Sultan. After his fatal defeat in 1799, most of his library of some 2,000 volumes was transferred in 1800 to the newly founded Fort William College. This volume was withdrawn in 1805, and according to an inscription on one of the end-papers, was presented to Glasgow University "by the honble(sic) the court of the Directors of the East India Company. [signed] Chas. Wilkins, Librarian, Library East India House, 15th August 1806". There is a wide, floreated border in green, brown and gold, framing both the Sūrat al-fātiḥa and the beginning of the Sūrat al-baqara; the beginning of each surah is also surmounted by its own

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unwān. The binding, a typical centre and corner design has, unfortunately, had its central embossed medallion defaced by the superimposition of the University's stamp. Around the edge of both covers and on the spine are cartouches with the usual Qur'anic warning from Sūrah 56, "Let none touch but they who are clean". Because of its early departure from Fort William, it escaped mention in Charles Stewart's catalogue of the library, published in 1809 (4).

In all there are seventeen Persian manuscripts with Indian associations. Of the five from Hunter's library, the oldest is a 17th century copy of Zartusht-i Bahrām's verse biography of Zoroaster, the Zartusht nāmah. The colophon is dated "the day of endless light (30th) Ardvaḥisht 1046 (ie 1677 C.E.). It was written by a certain Khorshed son of Isfiyander, an inhabitant of Navsarī, a town on the Gujerat coast which in the 15th century became the centre of Parsi religious life. Hunter acquired this volume from Joseph Letherland (1699-1764) a fellow London Physician. Biographical writing is also represented in the Farmer and Crawford manuscripts respectively by a copy of the *Jahāngīr nāmah* written in the late eighteenth century and the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*, which precedes the text of the *Zafar nāmah* in a volume with a colophon dated 1090 A.H. (1679) C.E.)

Farmer also possessed a nineteenth century copy of the *Qiṣṣah Ḥātim ṭā'ī*, an account in Persian of the pre-Islamic Arabian chieftain, famed for his philanthropy. This copy was previously owned by a certain Govind Rao of Poonah.

More anecdotes and curious narratives of celebrated men can be found in *Nigāristān* of Aḥmad ibn al-Ghaffarī al-Qazwīnī who died in 975 AH (1567/8 CE). Our copy, was completed, according to the colophon, at the royal palace of Allahabad on the 10th Rajab 1022/1613 by the scribe Muḥammad Rīzā.

There is a history of the Marathas down to their decisive defeat at the third battle of Pankpat in 1761 among the Hunter's Persian volumes. A note in his hand indicates that this is the original manuscript from which Mr Kerr (ie Captain James Kerr) made his translation into English. It was published in London in 1782 as a *Short historical narrative of the rise and rapid advancement of the Mahrattah State ...* Capt Kerr informs us in the preface that the history was composed to aid his linguistic instruction by his munshi, but he fails to mention the latter's name.

Persian poetry in India is represented by the *Tadhkirah-i Sarkhwūsh*, also known as the *Kalimāt al-shu'arā'* (words of the poets), a work dealing with some 200 poets who flourished (almost all in India) during the reigns of Jahangir, Shah-Jahan and Aurangzeb. This was composed by Mirzā Muḥammad Afḍal (b.1050/1640-1). Our copy is is dated 1198/1783. Other poetic collections in Persian having an Indian provenance are the *Tadhkirah-i Ḥusainī* by Ḥusain Dost, the *Kullīyāt-i Anwarī* of Aḥmad al-Dīn Anwarī, and the *Intikhāb-i dīwān-i Shaukat*, a selection from the poetic corpus of Shaukat-i Bukhārī, an attractive little volume of ghazals and rubā'īs from various authors costing according to a contemporary note, '12 sicca rupees'.

An interesting Afghan association is revealed in another small volume of the *Dīwān* of Aḥmad-i Jām. On the verso of the first leaf is the name Shāh Shujā' Amīr-i Qābul, who was Amīr at Kabul from 1839 until 1842, when he was assassinated.

Urdu manuscripts, of which we have only three, are all to be found in the Farmer collection. A copy of what is perhaps the best of the translation literature to emerge from the College of Fort william; the *Bāgh-o*

*Bahār* by Mīr Amman is written on paper with a watermark date of 1827. There is also an abstract of Judicial proceedings relating to the Appeal Court of the District of Azimabad, dated 1212/1797. The third, and undoubtedly most visually appealing, is a copy of the poem *Daryā-i 'ishq* by Mīr Taqī (1724-1810).

Passing to non-Islamic manuscripts, we only have one item in Hindi, a translation of the Sanskrit *Simhasana dvatrimśat*, written in the Kaithī script, one in Sanskrit, a collection of *Sasranamas*, but written in the script of the Dravidian language Telugu, and five in Singhalese.

The Dravidian languages are themselves better represented, there being eleven Tamil palm leaf books, including the famous *Kural* of Tiruvalluvar and the *Yutta Kandam*, the Tamil version of the *Rāmāyana*, two in Telugu, one *Kadatam*, or prepared cloth, folding account book from the Mysore region written in Kannada, and a seventeenth century grammar and vocabulary of Malayalam in Portuguese, the *Arte e grammatica da lingua Malavar ou maleame*, which does not appear to have been published. It was donated to the Library in 1702 by a certain Andrew Bell.

Seven of the Tamil manuscripts come from the Mission in the small Danish colony at Tranquebar, established by Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plutschau in 1706. Altogether eleven palm leaf manuscripts have been identified, so far, as having been sent from the Mission during the 1720's and 30's to the German Orientalist Theophilus Siegfried Bayer, who since 1726 had been a professor at the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. They subsequently came into the hands of Walther Gerdes, Pastor at the Lutheran Church in Trinity Lane, London, from 1722 until his death in 1742, coming finally to rest in Hunter's Library.

Included amongst them are the two cosmological works, the *Pūvanaccakkaram* and the *Tirikālaccakkaram*, forming a single *pōthī*; the verse ethical work, the *Nitivenpa*; and a Kalendarium for 1730, with text in Tamil and headings in Latin. Similar to the last item in its employment of European writing on palm leaves is a list of Tamil chronological terms. This list was printed at the Mission press, and copy was sent to Bayer appended to a short treatise entitled *Doctrina temporum Indica* written in the hand of Christopher Walther, one of the missionaries (5).

Benjamin Schultze, the leader of the mission at Tranquebar from 1720-26, and subsequently active at Madras, was one of the first to make a thorough study of the Telugu language. Present among this small group of manuscripts are his translation into Telugu of the *Book of Genesis* and a copy of his unpublished *Grammatica Telugica*, dated Madras, 1728. All of these palm leaf books have inscriptions in Latin on their upper covers. On one, a *Liber Peguanus* (a Burmese book) we are informed that it was given to Schultze at Madras in 1726 by the Burmese ambassador.

Of the additional 26 palm leaf books and fragments in Burmese script in the Library, at least two have been identified as being written in the Burmese language, the *Ana da win* dated 1239 BE/1877 relates the story of King A Za Ta That, and a part of the *Wee nee* text dated 1227 BE/1865. The remaining 24 are in need of further examination, but some are Buddhist texts written in Pali.

Moving northwards, but remaining within the Buddhist cultural context, I should like to say something regarding our Tibetan material. Apart

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from the various notes on the Tibetan syllabary amongst Bayer's papers, we possess five items in Tibetan. One block printed in mandala form, a single leaf, (numbered '10') from a religious manuscript, and a painting, possibly part of a Thang kas depicting the Mahayana deity Candamaharosana (6). On the verso are inscriptions in Tibetan and, opposite, Bayer's explanatory notes. This item and probably the previous two were given to Bayer by Johann Renatus, a Swedish soldier, who after the Battle of Poltava lived for several years in exile amongst the Kalmucks who practised Tibetan Buddhism. The fourth is a superb copy of the *Ses rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa brgyad ston pa*, or the *Perfection of Wisdom*, which forms part of the *Kanjur* dealing with philosophical and doctrinal matters. No provenance details can be determined, except that in 1983 it was transferred from the Hunterian Museum to the care of the Library. It is written on a thick blue laurel bark paper with gold lettering, and is protected by two stout, carved wooden boards covered by a pink, silk cloth.

The last item is a modern manuscript in two volumes entitled *Manuscript material for identifying the images of Indian Buddhism: Tibetan Buddhist pantheon*, compiled from Tibetan sources and classified by Lama Chhō-phel of the Dalai Lama's Chapel Royal, Lhasa and done into English with illustrations by L.A. Waddell, Darjeeling, 1892. This is an invaluable work, clearly intended for publication. Unfortunately, the projected English translation promised on the title page was not provided. Many of the descriptions of deities have been illustrated with pictures taken from printed sources. Waddell, who spent many years in the Indian Medical service and joined the Younghusband expedition to Tibet in 1904, was made an LL.D of Glasgow University, and in 1939 bequeathed some 711 printed volumes dealing in the main with the Assyrian and

Sumerian languages with which he was to occupy his later years.

Other manuscripts of relevance, written in European languages, included the diary of John Murdoch, covering the period March 1844 - October 1849. Born in Glasgow in 1819, Murdoch, who has been dubbed 'the 19th century Apostle Paul of India' worked for the Christian Literature Society and the Vernacular Society, which latter had as its objectives the training of Indian schoolmasters and the production of Christian literature in the chief languages of India.

A small group of letters and contracts between Messrs John Hopkins & Co. and their agents Phipson & Co in Bombay from the 1920s bears witness to spiritual succour of a different order being exported to India - that of 'Old Mull' whiskey.

This leads me naturally to the final section of my survey, moving away from individual manuscript books, to groups of correspondence, records, etc., reflecting the daily affairs and management of business and institutions. At Glasgow University this sort of material is considered the province of our University Archives Department, which is managed as a branch of the central University administration (7). Its principal function is the care and organisation of the pre-current administrative records of the University, but many other documents of historical interest can be found there, and sometimes the precise demarcation line between what should be in the Archives and what should be in the Special Collections Department becomes blurred. For instance, amongst the Macfie family papers there are several interesting diaries and notebooks, one, kept by Alexander Oswald Brodie (1787-1856), a district magistrate in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) has entries for the period 1850-1851, mostly made at Anūrādhapūra. Even such raw administrative stuff as student

records can prove valuable research material, and at present one person is examining the incidence of students at Glasgow emanating from the Indian Sub-continent in connection with a history of the South Asian communities in the city.

In addition to the main University Archives, a considerable business archive has been built up over the last twenty years, relating principally to the West of Scotland. Not surprisingly, heavy industry and, in particular, shipbuilding figure prominently, with almost every major shipbuilding firm being represented. Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, Scotts of Greenock, Lithgows, William Denny & Brothers, Alexander Stephen & Sons, all produced ships for the Indian and Burmese market. Denny, especially, supplied steamers for the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. Glasgow also earned its name as the 'workshop of the Empire' by becoming, at the turn of the century, the largest centre of locomotive production in Europe. The North British Locomotive Company Ltd supplied most of the regional railway systems of India with locomotives and the plans for these, together with order books, cost books and many photographs are preserved for the period 1903-1966.

This sort of rich, documentary resource material can be duplicated for each of the twenty or so collections that can be identified as having relevance for South Asian studies. One firm which has already been the subject of a substantial monograph, that of James Finlay and Co. Ltd is of particular interest as it grew to its peak of productivity during the period of the industrial revolution, and from the middle of the nineteenth century began expansion of its activities into India. After Kirkman Finlay, the founder's son, had acquired the Catrine textile works from the philanthropist David Dale in 1802, and the mills at Ballindaloch in 1808, the firm became leaders in textile, and in particular, cotton manufacture, employing as many as

2,000 hand-loom weavers at Catrine alone. In India they extended their interests to include jute mills in the North East of the country and in what is today Pakistan, and the management of numerous tea plantations. Our records cover the period 1789-1972.

Much of the foregoing information regarding our holdings of South Asian Manuscripts has recently been intimated to the various surveys of cultural property at present being undertaken by official Indian agencies such as INTACH, the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, or to smaller surveys of particular language materials. Thanks to such projects, and to meetings of interested professionals as this, it is unlikely that, in future, significant resources will remain either unknown or unstudied.

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#### Notes

1. *Fortuna Domus: a series of lectures delivered in the University of Glasgow in commemoration of the fifth centenary of its foundation.* Glasgow: Published by the University, 1952. 133-155, esp. 152.
2. Young, John and P Henderson Aitken. *A catalogue of the manuscripts in the Library of the Hunterian Museum in the University of Glasgow.* Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1908.
3. Robson, James. *Catalogue of the Oriental MSS in the Library of the University of Glasgow.* *Studia Semitica et Orientalia.* 11 (1945) 116-137.
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4. Stewart, Charles. *A descriptive catalogue of the Oriental library of the late Tippoo Sultan of Mysore ...* Cambridge: Printed at the University Press, 1809.

5. Walther's treatise was published by Bayer as an addendum to his *Historia regni Bactriani* at St Petersburg in 1738.

6. I am indebted to Craig Jamieson, Keeper of Sanskrit Manuscripts at Cambridge University Library, for his assistance in the correct identification of this deity.

7. Enquiries relating to material in the care of the University Archives should be addressed to Michael Moss, University Archivist, University of Glasgow, University Avenue, Glasgow G12 8QQ.