



RAYMOND ALLCHIN

Frank Raymond Allchin

1923–2010

RAYMOND ALLCHIN, Fellow of the British Academy and Reader Emeritus in Indian Studies at Cambridge, died on 4 June 2010 at the age of 86. Successfully countering the threatened extinction of the long tradition of the British study of the archaeology of the Indian Subcontinent in the aftermath of Independence, he recruited and educated generations of the most able lecturers, field archaeologists and curators across Britain and South Asia. That South Asian archaeology forms a core part of the teaching and research portfolios at Cambridge, Durham, Leicester, Oxford and University College London (UCL) is a direct result of Raymond's success and dedication to his field.

Raymond Allchin, or Ray as he was also known, was born in Harrow on 9 July 1923, son of Frank Macdonald Allchin, a doctor, and Louise Maude, his wife. According to genealogical research conducted by Raymond's younger brother, Donald, the Allchin family had been village physicians in Kent and Sussex in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Raymond's great grandfather, Sir William Allchin, was the first of these practitioners to obtain formal training and, after a career associated with both University College London and the Royal College of Physicians, was knighted in 1907 and appointed Physician-Extraordinary to King George V. In contrast, Raymond's mother came from a family of Lancashire tailors, the Wrights, who had moved to London and become Freemen of the City of London. Although Raymond was later to describe his memories of his first home as 'a small suburban house', his father's practice was successful enough to support the four children, a nanny, gardener, cook and housemaid and, by the time Raymond was six, the family moved to a

larger home near Ealing. After kindergarten at the Haberdashers' Aske's School, Raymond was sent to Durston House Preparatory School and later recorded that he 'seemed to win a school prize every year; though whether this was because I was a star student or because the school was exceedingly liberal with its prizes I cannot now be sure'. The family moved again, this time to a villa on Ealing Common, and, after close tutoring, both Raymond and his elder brother, William, were sent to Westminster. Friendly with Michael Flanders, Tony Benn and Rudolf von Ribbentrop, Raymond and William were forced to leave the school early due to over-extended family finances accentuated by the war.

As Raymond was too young for university, he was persuaded by a friend to enrol at the Regent Street Polytechnic School of Architecture in 1940. After three years, and having passed the intermediate exam and achieving the Licentiate of the Royal Institute of British Architecture, Raymond was conscripted. Anticipating that his training in surveying and technical drawing would lead to him being attached to the Royal Engineers, he was somewhat surprised by being assigned to the Royal Corps of Signals. After initial training at Prestatyn and Catterick, Raymond was confirmed a 'Line Mechanic Class A' and found himself issued with a tropical uniform and on a troopship heading east to India. Instructed to learn Hindustani during the voyage, Raymond augmented his classes with informal coaching from Punjabi troops as well as finding their mess rather more appealing than his own. This was not without its dangers and Raymond would recall how he provided entertainment by practising some of his newly learnt Hindi phrases and only later discovered that they included the statement 'I am a donkey'. Arriving in India in early 1944, Raymond was first posted to the Indian Army Signal Corps at Mhow in Madhya Pradesh and later to Agra, Dehradun, Comilla and Chittagong. Undertaking language training as part of officer training at Mhow, Raymond quickly identified the advantages of learning Hindi, rather than Urdu, and of being able to 'communicate with local people and be increasingly involved in Indian life'. Through his tutor, or *munshi*, Raymond was also introduced to Hindi literature and first exposed to the works of sixteenth-century poet Tulsi Das.

The posting at Mhow also provided Raymond with his first taste of Indian archaeology, reawakening his interests as a schoolboy reading accounts of Ernest Mackay's excavations at Bronze Age Indus cities of Mohenjo-daro and Chanhu-daro in the *Illustrated London News*. Indeed, in later life he would also recount the impact of seeing the striking stone dome of the third century BC Buddhist *stupa* on its hilltop at Sanchi for

the first time, stating that his interest in Indian archaeology started there! From the cantonment, Raymond would also cycle to and explore the medieval mosques, palaces and fortifications of Mandu in Malwa, further fuelling his interest in the architecture and cultural heritage of the Subcontinent. Transferred to Singapore and commissioned a Lieutenant in February 1945, Raymond's interests in Indian culture continued and he was fascinated by the fire-worship and sacrificial rituals that he witnessed amongst its South Indian communities.

Back in England and demobilised in 1947, he considered his options afresh and, disliking modern designs in architecture, decided not to return to the Regent Street Polytechnic to qualify as an architect but to pursue his newly acquired interest in India through a BA in Hindi with a Sanskrit subsidiary at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). After the disciplined order of his army experience, Raymond later recorded that SOAS was something of a shock 'reverting to an undergraduate experience' and 'embarking upon a newly created and virtually unstructured course'. It was also immediately after leaving the army that Raymond abandoned shaving for the rest of his life, thus initiating his signature beard. At SOAS he particularly enjoyed the lectures by Professor A. L. Basham but, more significantly, Raymond also met Professor Kenneth de Burgh Codrington and Colonel D. H. Gordon. Earlier, as Keeper of the Indian Section at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Codrington had been credited for initiating a more archaeological approach to South Asian art and in the 1940s held the only post in Indian Archaeology at a British university, although Raymond was to remain unconvinced of his field abilities. In contrast, Jock Gordon was to be of great practical help to Raymond as one of the last of the generation of Raj military antiquarians and the author of numerous papers and books, including *The Pre-historic Background of Indian Culture* (Bombay, 1958). During long vacations, Raymond also acquired archaeological field training from Sir Mortimer Wheeler's excavations at Dorchester, Colchester and Verulamium. Raymond was awarded a First Class degree in 1951 and was immediately offered a Treasury Scholarship to start a Ph.D. on the development of early culture in Raichur District of Hyderabad in the Deccan under the supervision of Codrington. This was also a year of great significance in his personal life as he married Bridget Gordon, a fellow Ph.D. student registered at the Institute of Archaeology. Raymond's grant covered the couple's travel to India as well as the purchase of an Austin pickup with which they travelled out by ship. However, before he could start his own research, Codrington invited Raymond to accompany him on an expedition to Afghanistan.

Throughout his life, Raymond was firmly attached to fieldwork and his first introduction to South Asian fieldwork was in the Bamiyan Valley of Afghanistan in 1951. Here, under the direction of Codrington, he studied the standing remains of Shahr-e-Zohak, the fortified residence and stronghold of the semi-independent Yabghu and Shansabani rulers of Bamiyan, dating to between the sixth and thirteenth centuries AD. Codrington divided up the work with Raymond undertaking the arduous survey and Codrington the photography. Raymond recalled that the slopes of the 180-metre-high site were so precipitous that it was impossible for him to map it using a plane table but that he spent up to twelve hours a day climbing, surveying and drawing during the six-week season. Looking back, he also commented that ‘I still feel it to have been quite an achievement to survey this very complex site single-handed. We had succeeded in putting on record something quite unique.’ This initial study was much later developed with Piers Baker as a doctoral topic and resulted in a jointly published volume entitled *Shahr-i Zohak and the History of the Bamiyan Valley, Afghanistan* (Oxford, 1991). Raymond’s original sections and plans from the 1951 season feature heavily in the volume, reflecting his architecturally influenced approach to sequences and phases but also his attention to ceramic sequences. When reviewed in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1992, Dr Warrick Ball stated that the volume was ‘the first archaeological publication on Bamiyan since the pioneering works of Hackin and Carl’ in the 1930s as well as drawing attention to the ‘exhaustive detail on technical matters such as vaulting systems and squinches’—a lasting legacy of Raymond’s architectural training.

Raymond remained a close observer of Afghan archaeology, particularly as he was aware how important it was to try to link the absolute sequences of Mesopotamia with the relative ones of India and Pakistan. Indeed, in reviewing the report of the excavations at the key Bronze Age site of Mundigak by Jean-Marie Casal, which he had visited in 1951, he stated that ‘One is left with a feeling of the inadequacy of so much of the earlier work at some of the great sites of Iran which have for decades remained enigmas for those who attempt to trace the links between the sequences of Iraq and the Indus Valley.’¹ Raymond later subscribed to the newly formed Society of Afghan Studies in 1972 and joined its Council in 1979. He was a strong supporter of the Society’s excavations at Kandahar and made a number of visits to the site. Joining forces with Professor

¹F. R. Allchin, ‘Review of *Fouilles de Mundigak* by J.-M. Casal’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 26 (1963), 662.

Norman Hammond, FBA, who had been the Society's Honorary Editor and had led an expedition in Helmand in 1966, they published *The Archaeology of Afghanistan from Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (London, 1978). Hitherto, the archaeology of Afghanistan had been only the subject of a single chapter in Professor Louis Dupree's seminal work *Afghanistan* (New York, 1973), but now Hammond and Raymond set to work by bringing together an impressive series of specialists. Published in the same year as the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, and its subsequent descent into chaos, one can detect a certain poignancy in the words of Professor Walter Fairservis, who, in reviewing the volume, stated that 'Now when the time has finally arrived when, for example, ideas relative to diffusion or indigenous evolution might be tested, the opportunity to do so has vanished.'² This volume, although out of print, remains one of the core texts for the synthesis of the sequences of Afghanistan and represents what Professor Richard Frye of Harvard termed 'the most useful handbook on archaeology in Afghanistan'.³

With this work for his supervisor completed, Raymond and Bridget drove back from Kabul to Hyderabad and there Raymond started his doctoral research in Raichur District. The topic had been selected by Codrington due to his interest in the recent acquisition of materials from the late Captain Leonard Munn of the Hyderabad Geological Survey. This material from Raichur comprised cattle bones, ash, Neolithic-like stone tools and reports and photographs of a variety of sites. Raymond was also sent to the field with advice from Professor Frederick Zeuner of the Institute of Archaeology, who had analysed the ash and confirmed that it derived from cow dung. Significantly, Raymond had selected one of the areas of South Asian archaeology most poorly understood, the prehistory of Peninsular India, which had not had the same attention as either the Bronze Age Indus cities or those of the Early Historic period in the north of the Subcontinent. To an extent, the excavations by Sir Mortimer Wheeler at Arikamdu in 1945 and Brahmagiri in 1947 and those by Jean-Marie Casal at Virampatnam-Arikamedu in 1949 and B. K. Thapar at Maski in 1954 had begun to shed light on the Iron Age and Early Historic interface of the Peninsular but the Neolithic of the region was highly neglected although it was beginning to be explored by Dr B. Subbarao of Bombay University. Now working independently of Codrington,

²W. A. Fairservis, 'Review of *The Archaeology of Afghanistan from the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period*', *American Anthropologist*, 82 (1980), 421.

³R. N. Frye, 'Review of *The Archaeology of Afghanistan from the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period*', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 40 (1981), 809.

Raymond undertook a survey of sites within the District and selected Piklihal for further investigation, thus tackling the problem of the interpretation of the ash mounds of Peninsular India. These enigmatic circular mounds, or cinder camps as they were frequently termed, often survive up to 10 metres in height and were known to be formed of alternating layers of ash and vitrified materials. Their function was much disputed, with some previous investigators suggesting that they had been the sites of medieval iron-working and others, most notably Colonel Robert Bruce Foote in the 1870s, suggesting that the ash had been produced by burnt cow dung. Excavating in 1952, and again in 1957, with the assistance of the Andhra Pradesh Department of Archaeology and Museums, Raymond clearly demonstrated that the ash mound had a distinct Neolithic sequence with later evidence of Iron Age occupation above. When his 1960 excavation publication *Piklihal Excavations* (Hyderabad) was reviewed by Professor D. D. Kosambi, the great Marxist historian, Raymond was complimented for providing ‘one of the most satisfying reports available on any Indian excavations’,⁴ and Dr Anthony Christie also commented that Raymond had demonstrated that ‘these first settlers in the Deccan provided a number of the basic elements in the present-day culture of the region. This is a major contribution to the history of India.’⁵

Submitting his thesis ‘The Development of Early Culture in Raichur District of Hyderabad in the Deccan’ in 1954, Raymond was almost immediately offered a Lectureship in Indian Archaeology at SOAS and later returned to Raichur in 1957 on research leave. In order to test some of his earlier theories about Piklihal, Raymond now selected Utnur, one of the best-preserved ash mounds, to excavate, which had also been identified by Captain Munn. In a single season, he cut through metres of cinder and ash, and discovered that the mounds were contained by series of post-holes, demarking superimposed circular stockades. Thus disproving the medieval hypothesis, he again dated them far earlier to the Neolithic of south India and to the fourth millennium BC on account of the associated polished stone axes. Again, Raymond swiftly published the results of his fieldwork at Utnur with a monograph entitled *Utnur Excavations* (Hyderabad, 1961) and he interpreted the stockades as annual cattle camps, whose accumulations of dung were burnt at the end of each grazing season, thus creating a regular sequence of ash and cinder. This con-

⁴D. D. Kosambi, ‘Review of *Piklihal Excavations*’, *Man*, 64 (1964), 164.

⁵A. Christie, ‘Review of *Piklihal Excavations*’, *Bulletin of the School of African and Oriental Studies*, 28 (1965), 169.

clusion allowed him to distinguish a distinct cultural sequence for Peninsular India from its Neolithic to its Iron Age megalithic cemeteries, as well as providing him with material for the humorous opening to his synthesis of this regional research, *The Neolithic Cattle-keepers of South India* (Cambridge, 1963), with the words ‘This is a book about cow-dung, or rather the ash of cow-dung.’⁶ This later synthesis also enabled Raymond to develop a narrative which bound together Hindu ritual tradition and contemporary pastoral practice with the archaeological narrative, and suggest that the regular burning of the stockades was not a calamity or the result of raiding but part of an annual fire rite, perhaps surviving today as *Holi*, *Divali* or *Pongal*. Professor George Dales of the University of California, Berkeley, noted that this approach was a ‘courageous, often brilliant, effort conducted in the very spirit of interdisciplinary research’,⁷ and Raymond’s pioneering work became the key reference point for subsequent studies of the Deccan Neolithic with Professor K. Paddaya, Director of Deccan College, Pune, referring to Raymond’s ceramic classifications as ‘Admirable and technically sound’.⁸ Raymond’s Deccan fieldwork, on which he was accompanied by Bridget and two small children, was also to formalise two key features in his later writing, the diffusion of culture and ethnoarchaeological analogy. The former was clearly articulated in his suggestion in *Utnur Excavations* that the cattle keepers of the Deccan ‘belonged to the Neolithic of the Deccan, whose origins we have traced to north eastern Iran moving into Peninsular India in a series of waves’,⁹ and the latter by his suggestion that some *thali*-making techniques in the 1950s in Raichur District ‘may be a survival from Neolithic times’ in his 1959 paper on ‘Poor men’s *thalis*: a Deccan potter’s technique’.¹⁰

In 1959 Raymond left SOAS and moved to the Lectureship in Indian Studies at Cambridge recently vacated by Dr Johanna van Lohuizen-de Leeuw; he now turned his attention to Pakistan and worked at the site of Shaikhan Dheri between 1963 and 1964 with Professor A. H. Dani of Peshawar University. Located in North West Frontier Province (now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), the site had come to prominence following Sir Mortimer Wheeler’s excavations at the Bala Hisar of Charsadda in

⁶p. ix.

⁷G. F. Dales, ‘Review of *The Neolithic Cattle-keepers of South India*’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 84 (1964), 93.

⁸K. Paddaya, *Investigations into the Neolithic Culture of the Shorapur Doab, South India* (Leiden, 1973), p. 15.

⁹F. R. Allchin, *Utnur Excavations* (Hyderabad, 1961), p. 65.

¹⁰F. R. Allchin, ‘Poor men’s *thalis*: a Deccan potter’s technique’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 22 (1959), 250–7.

1958. The latter was one of the largest tell sites in Pakistan, reaching a height of 23 metres above the surrounding plain, and had been dated by Wheeler to between the middle of the first millennium BC and the first century AD. Whilst excavating at the site and finding putative evidence of both an Achaemenid foundation and Alexander the Great's expedition, Wheeler commissioned some aerial photographs of the site and its immediate surroundings from the Pakistani Air Force. On examination of the images, Wheeler immediately recognised a distinctive pattern of robbed-out walls on the surface of the Shaikhan Dheri, a mound some 3 kilometres away from the Bala Hisar across the Shambor Nala. From the pattern of ghost walls, it was possible to distinguish the regular grid-iron street pattern of an Indo-Greek city, complete with major *stupa* shrine. With such clear parallels with the well-studied city of Sirkap in the Taxila Valley, the site was selected for further investigation as well as offering an ideal opportunity for the training of Pakistani students. Joining the team from Peshawar University, Raymond and Bridget supervised the processing and registration of antiquities and pottery drawing during the first season. Despite having successfully raised funds from Cambridge and the British Academy, the season still represented a major chronological and geographical challenge to Raymond in terms of his existing specialism in the prehistoric archaeology of the Deccan. What was envisaged as the first of a number of seasons of collaborative fieldwork between the universities of Peshawar and Cambridge was curtailed in 1964 with Raymond later simply commenting that the relationship had been 'ill-starred'.¹¹

Raymond did, however, continue to work on his notes and later produced two papers although they did take a number of years to appear. The first was published in 1970 in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* and considered the importance of a number of small iron plates pierced with small holes around their edges, some of which had rusted together. Following his typical multidisciplinary approach with reference to Gandharan sculpture, excavation reports, textual sources and more recent Rajput examples, he suggested that they had formed part of the scale armour from the cap of a cataphract. His second paper on Shaikhan Dheri, published in *Man* in 1979, also pursued a similar methodological approach to examine a number of globular vessels. Whilst Sir John Marshall had interpreted similar examples at Sirkap for the distillation of water, Raymond again used a combination of ethnographic analogy, Vedic

¹¹F. R. Allchin, 'A piece of scale armour from Shaikhan dheri, Charsada', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 2 (1970), 113.

references and Rajput texts to reinterpret them as alcohol stills. Opening the paper by stating that ‘Considering the importance of alcohol for mankind . . . it is surprising that comparatively little is known of its early history,’¹² and concluding that ‘it may well be that the art of distillation was India’s gift to the world!’,¹³ one also catches an insight into Raymond’s somewhat mischievous sense of humour. The experience of working at Shaikhan Dheri also provided Raymond and Bridget with future links to the University of Peshawar through a number of the younger staff as well as an insight into its place within the cultural sequences of the Subcontinent. Indeed, when reviewing Sir Mortimer Wheeler’s monograph on the 1958 excavations at the Bala Hisar of Charsadda, Raymond was able to recognise its value in terms of its long cultural sequence, concluding that Wheeler’s ‘Charsadda excavations provide . . . a foundation upon which all future work in north-western Pakistan on this period must be based.’¹⁴

Whilst Raymond was expanding his field experience in the early 1960s, he was also confirming his academic reputation in Hindi and Sanskrit with the publication of a volume entitled *Tulsi Das: Kavitavali* in the Indian series of UNESCO’s Collection of Representative Works (London, 1964). Reviewed in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* by John Burton-Page, Raymond’s attention to chronology and historical context were praised as well as his ‘sympathetic understanding and flair for lucid exposition’.¹⁵ He later followed this volume with a companion translation volume, *Tulsi Das: the Petition to Ram* (London, 1966), and a shorter paper on the broader place and context of Tulsi Das in north Indian devotional tradition in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1966. Whilst continuing to exploit his knowledge of the Hindi and Sanskrit textual traditions throughout his career, his final academic contribution to this field was with a paper on the reconciliation of *Jnana* and *Bhakti* in the Tulsi Das’ *Ramacaritamanasa* in *Religious Studies* in 1976. This background provided him with what Professor Paddaya has recently called ‘a deep appreciation of the spiritual and religious heritage of India’.

After his false start in Pakistan, Raymond shifted his focus back to India and undertook an archaeological reconnaissance of the coast of

¹²F. R. Allchin, ‘India: the home of ancient distillation’, *Man*, 14 (1979), 55

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴F. R. Allchin, ‘Review of *Charsada*’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 27 (1964), 187.

¹⁵J. Burton-Page, ‘Review of *Tulsi Das: Kalitavali*’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 28 (1965), 403.

Gujarat in 1967, following this in 1968 with excavations at the site of Malvan with Bridget and Dr J. P. Joshi, of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Raymond stressed the successful nature of this collaboration and he and Joshi jointly published a preliminary report in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1970 with the full volume in the memoir series of the ASI (*Excavations at Malvan*: Cambridge, 1995). Funded by the ASI, the British Academy and the Cambridge Smuts Fund, the fieldwork was focused on investigating the presence or absence of sites associated with the Indus civilisation in western India. Such a search was timely as Sir Mortimer Wheeler had advised Indian archaeologists in 1949 after Partition that they had lost the river Indus which had provided India with her name as well as the earliest Bronze Age cities of the Subcontinent but that they now should focus on the river which had given India her faith, the Ganga. Whilst some archaeologists chose to focus on the Ganga and its early Iron Age sequences, others like Joshi were motivated by trying to find the eastern extent of those Bronze Age cities. The 1967 and 1968 expeditions were thus part of this wider campaign and focused on a small two-metre-high mound close to the mouth of the Tapti River and downstream of the old Mughal port of Surat. Whilst the wider campaign certainly succeeded, as illustrated by the discoveries of the walled city of Kalibangan in Rajasthan in 1953 and Rangpur and the port of Lothal in Gujarat in 1954, the settlement at Malvan proved to have been occupied in the post-urban Chalcolithic period. Whilst thus not formally belonging to the Indus civilisation, the site was still important as it provided evidence for the continued coastal trade of semi-precious stone as well as the presence of sufficient authority and community to excavate an 18-metre-long and 1.5-metre-wide ditch along one side of the site. The expedition also provided Raymond with valuable experience of working with Chalcolithic material as well the opportunity of collaborating with Joshi, one of India's leading archaeologists and later Director General of Archaeology between 1987 and 1990.

After a number of years, Raymond and Bridget returned to fieldwork in North West Frontier Province in the Bannu Basin, working collaboratively with their now promoted colleagues in the University of Peshawar between 1977 and 1979. Working first at Lewan and later at Tarakai Qila with Professor F. A. Durrani and Professor Farid Khan of Peshawar University, Mr Robert Knox of the British Museum, and Professor Ken Thomas of UCL, the team provided what Massimo Vidale termed 'a first step in the direction of filling a large geographical and cultural gap in the knowledge of the Early Harappan phenomenon' on the western edge of

the Indus watershed.¹⁶ Later as Joint Director of the British Archaeological Mission to Pakistan with Bridget, Raymond was to begin to focus his attention away from the Bronze Age to the Early Historic period of between c.900 BC and AD 350, and onto the site of Taxila in particular. Proud owners of a newly imported blue Toyota land cruiser which Piers Baker had driven up from the docks at Karachi to Taxila, Raymond and Bridget took a stroll around the Hathial ridge one February morning in 1980, not far from the Taxila Museum guesthouse. During their walk, they discovered numerous sherds of a distinctive, highly burnished red ware covering an area of 13 hectares along the foot of the spur and Raymond immediately recognised that these sherds belonged to the category of Burnished Red Ware associated with the Gandharan grave culture, and dated to the beginning of the first millennium BC at the end of the Chalcolithic period. Raymond was also aware of the parallel presence of such sherds in the basal levels of Wheeler's excavations at the Bala Hisar of Charsadda. The presence of such an early ceramic type at two of Gandharan's main Early Historic cities was most surprising as it challenged received wisdom at the time that suggested that such cities had been founded no earlier than the sixth century BC as the Persian Empire expanded eastwards and annexed the satrapy of Gandhara. Publishing a short paper in *Antiquity* in 1982 entitled 'How old is the city of Taxila?', Raymond directly challenged a model which had been particularly energetically favoured by Sir Mortimer Wheeler and suggested instead that the urban sequence of Taxila, and by extension South Asia, was under way long before Persian contact, possibly going back to the late Chalcolithic times. However, Raymond did not commence excavations at the site as it was now Bridget's turn to direct her own prehistoric research with fieldwork in the Great Thar Desert with Professor K. T. M. Hegde of the M.S. University of Baroda and Professor Andrew Goudie of the University of Oxford. Bridget subsequently developed links with the Pakistan Geological Survey and played a critical role in initiating collaborations which resulted in a survey of the Potwar Plateau directed by Professor Robin Dennell of the University of Sheffield and Professor Helen Rendell of the University of Sussex to search for Palaeolithic industries during the second phase of the British Archaeological Mission to Pakistan with the support of the Leverhulme Trust. The final activity of the Mission was for Raymond to negotiate the return of an archaeological team to Charsadda after a gap of thirty years but this time focused on the development of a chronometric

¹⁶M. Vidale, 'Review of *Lewan and the Bannu Basin*', *East and West*, 38 (1988), 326.

sequence for the Bala Hisar of Charsadda, jointly directed by Professor Ihsan Ali of Peshawar University and Professor Robin Coningham of Durham between 1993 and 1997, and confirming a much earlier date of *c.*1300 BC for its initial settlement.

Raymond's interest in the Early Historic period, and the emergence of its cities in particular, represented his last major academic phase of development and was largely explored through his own writing as well as through research arising from the fieldwork of a number of his later research students. For example, Dr Muhammad Usman (formerly George) Erdosy and Professor Makkhan Lal, now of the Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management, were to research Iron Age and Early Historic settlement patterns in Allahabad and Kanpur Districts, respectively. These data allowed Raymond to consider the presence, or otherwise, of the settlement hierarchies advocated by the great Early Historic minister to the Mauryans, Kautiliya, as contained within the *Arthashastra*. His formative views on the development of the cities themselves were developed through two papers in the journal *South Asian Studies*, one entitled 'City and state formation in Early Historic South Asia' (1989) and the second 'Patterns of city formation in Early Historic South Asia' (1990).

In 1989, and at the age of 67, Raymond initiated his last major field project in Sri Lanka at the Citadel of Anuradhapura in the island's North Central Province following a joint invitation from Dr Roland Silva, Director General of Archaeology, and Dr Siran Deraniyagala, one of his former students and then Archaeological Advisor to the Government of Sri Lanka. Recognising that he would need assistance with the execution of this project, Raymond invited his former undergraduate and new research student, Robin Coningham, to accept the role of Field Director. The project was of great significance as Sri Lanka had always been assumed to have adopted urbanism far later than any other area within the Subcontinent due to its peripheral position far away from both the Indus and Ganga alluvium. As a result, most scholars had assumed that its cities had been founded through contact with the Mauryan world in the middle of the third century BC or even later in the first century AD, as suggested by Sir Mortimer Wheeler based on his findings at the site of Arikamedu in Southern India. However, Raymond was far more open-minded and, indeed, had been one of the first scholars to recognise the impact of Jean-Marie Casal's later excavations at Virampatnam-Arikamedu and comment that the new sequence at Arikamedu was parallel to that of Brahmagiri, and that contact with Mediterranean world was with an already established settlement, one firmly linked to the earlier prehistoric

cultural sequences of the Deccan.¹⁷ Excavating trench Anuradhapura Salgaha Watta 2 between 1989 and 1993, Coningham and Allchin provided a ten-metre-deep cultural sequence for the city stretching from the ninth century BC to the tenth century AD and providing evidence of urbanism in the fourth century BC but also confirming Deraniyagala's early claim of evidence of the earliest Early Brahmi script anywhere in South Asia. Whilst some Sri Lankan newspapers offered headlines that suggested that 'Lankans wrote before Indians', analysis of the script demonstrated that it had been used to facilitate trade and commerce before it had later become adopted as an imperial tool by the Mauryans in the third century BC as argued in a joint paper in the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*,¹⁸ and in the discussion of the full corpus of inscriptions in the second volume on the Anuradhapura excavations.¹⁹

As well as undertaking almost forty years of field investigations, Raymond was also motivated by the need to record and protect heritage as the pressures of increasing population and modernisation took their toll on the cultural resource of the Subcontinent. Later, Raymond was to propose 'Allchin's Law for South Asia' which held that 'Economic progress and population expansion are certain to lead to the destruction of archaeological sites.' He was also moved by the fact that a number of the rock paintings which he and Bridget had recorded at Piklihal in 1957 had already been demolished as part of road widening when he revisited the site later in 1972. Largely forgotten now, Raymond was also one of the pioneers for the protection of heritage sites within their cultural landscape, as illustrated by his work for the UN with the Japanese Planner and Architect, K. Matsushita, in 1969. Raymond and Matsushita had been contracted by UNPD with the responsibility 'for inspiring and guiding the development of Lumbini', the birthplace of the Buddha.²⁰ This mission arose following the 1967 visit to the site by U-Thant, the UN Secretary General, who wished to see the site transformed from what Raymond called 'little more than a neglected field' to a site worthy of 'a collection of monuments of great importance'.²¹ Interestingly for an archaeologist with

¹⁷ F. R. Allchin, 'Review of Fouilles de Virampatnam-Arikamedu', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 19 (1957), 598–9.

¹⁸ R. A. E. Coningham, F. R. Allchin, C. M. Batt and D. Lucy, 'Passage to India? Anuradhapura and the early use of Brahmi script', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 6 (1996), 73–97.

¹⁹ R. A. E. Coningham, F. R. Allchin and O. Bopearachchi, *Anuradhapura: the British Sri-Lankan Excavations at Anuradhapura Salagha Watta 2. Volume 2 The Artefacts* (Oxford, 2006).

²⁰ F. R. Allchin and K. Matsushita, *Unpublished UNDP Report for the Lumbini Development Project* (New York, 1969), p. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

a background in architecture, Raymond was also tasked with assisting the planning of a sacred garden, pilgrim village and a buffer zone around the site. This pioneering report was later to be used by the Japanese architect, Kenso Tange, as the core for his masterplan for Lumbini, which has directed the development of Lumbini over the last thirty years and will continue to do so. Raymond's contribution to the latter's masterplan made it clear that proposed major intervention at the site should be preceded by excavating and he and Matsushita suggested that a monastic area was developed, further buffering the tourist village from the core monuments. He was also clear that the excavation should be 'of a high quality so that all categories of information may be obtained and the whole range of modern scientific techniques brought to bear'.²² As a primary document it was examined again by the current UNESCO project at Lumbini, directed by Professor Yukio Nishimura of Tokyo University, Professor Robin Coningham of Durham and Dr Constatino Merucci of Rome. Today, as in 1969, the Lumbini Development Trust and the UNESCO project continue to follow Raymond's advice that within Lumbini's context of Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists living in close proximity, it is critical that any new 'design must therefore seek to avoid any hint of narrow sectarian bias'.²³

Active in South Asia in the immediate post-Independence period, Raymond was the first of a new generation of British archaeologists who sought to work collaboratively with South Asian colleagues as a guest. Unlike the large academic communities of Near Eastern archaeologists, however, Raymond was a single isolated scholar researching South Asia within Britain but successfully pursued a programme to make South Asian archaeology accessible and mainstream through a raft of sole, joint and edited publications. Whilst the early volumes focused on the direct results and interpretation of his pioneering fieldwork in the Deccan Neolithic (1960, 1961 and 1963), his enduring contribution was through the completion of three major synthetic works, *The Birth of Indian Civilization* (London, 1968) and *The Rise of Civilisation in India and Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1982), jointly with Bridget, and *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia* (Cambridge, 1995), with Bridget and three former research students. The first of these was published by Penguin and was the direct successor to Stuart Piggott's earlier Penguin *Prehistoric India* of 1950, which had been based on the latter's experience following a posting

²² Allchin and Matsushita, *Unpublished UNDP Report for the Lumbini Development Project*, p. 8.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

in India during the war. Reflecting on his own volume twenty-five years later when it was republished by Penguin India, Raymond suggested that *The Birth* had been 'a comprehensive summary' and 'mini reference book' although noting that 'attitudes and approaches to the study of the past have changed fundamentally, and new questions are still being asked'.²⁴ In parallel with Professor H. D. Sankalia's 1962 synthesis, *The Prehistory and Protohistory of India and Pakistan, The Birth of Indian Civilization* attempted to provide a review of South Asian prehistory from the earliest period until the Iron Age. As one might anticipate, Raymond and Bridget were highly reliant on the agency of diffusion for cultural change and again Aryan influences were sought, whether at the end of the urban phase of the Bronze Age Indus cities or in the advent of megalithic construction in the Deccan. The volume was replaced in 1982 by *The Rise of Civilisation in India and Pakistan*, published by Cambridge University Press, and whilst absorbing the new phenomena of discoveries over the intervening period, remained highly detailed in terms of cultural sequences but offered less in terms of explanations for changes within those sequences. It was welcomed by former student, Professor Romila Thapar of Jawaharlal Nehru University, as 'a very useful guide to the data' but she voiced some of the concerns of others in that the successor of *The Birth* continued to cite controversial archaeological and linguistic evidence for an Aryan intrusion.²⁵

Raymond's earlier interest in the Early Historic period culminated in the publication of another Cambridge University Press volume, *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia: the Emergence of Cities and States* (1995). Edited by Raymond, it brought together a series of papers by himself, Bridget and former students, Muhammad Usman Erdosy, Robin Coningham and Dilip Chakrabarti. Raymond's contributions included a chapter entitled 'Language, culture and the concept of ethnicity' and examined their nexus and the arrival of Indo-Aryan speaking peoples into the Subcontinent. Raymond continued to make clear one-to-one identifications, for example, stating that the Gandharan Grave Culture burials of the northern valleys of northern Pakistan 'are probably the traces of a rather separate group of immigrants' but found his contribution in direct contrast with those of other contributors.²⁶ Representing one

²⁴B. Allchin and F. R. Allchin, *The Birth of Indian Civilization* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 7–8.

²⁵R. Thapar, 'Review of *The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan*', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 104 (1984), 336.

²⁶F. R. Allchin, 'Language, culture and the concept of ethnicity', in F. R. Allchin (ed.), *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 50.

of the first synthetic volumes on this period, some like Professor Kathleen Morrison of the University of Chicago found this inconsistency problematical whilst others, like Ali, were warmer in welcoming it as 'the first comprehensive attempt to redress' the major focus on the prehistory of South Asia,²⁷ Professor Richard Meadows of Harvard who called it a 'welcome overview',²⁸ and Professor Monica Smith of the University of Michigan who referred to it as 'the classic statement of his (Raymond's) academic views on the Early Historic period'.²⁹ Raymond and Bridget's final synthesis, *Origins of a Civilisation: the Prehistory and Early Archaeology of South Asia*, was published in India by Viking for a more general readership in 1997 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the independence of India and Pakistan.

The presence of Bridget as a major contributor to these four volumes confirms that she provided core academic support to Raymond's career, a situation which he himself acknowledged in his very earliest phase of research. Indeed, Bridget was to take on the responsibility for the two children, innumerable dogs and the house whilst successfully maintaining a core contribution to Raymond's research as well as undertaking research in her own right. Bridget was born in Oxford but raised on a farm in Galloway which she largely ran with her mother during the war with the assistance of German prisoners of war. Bridget then started a degree in History and Ancient History at UCL but, at the end of her first year, left for South Africa when her parents decided to emigrate. Interested in the culture of neighbouring Basutoland, Bridget persuaded her parents to let her leave the new farm and recommence her studies and she enrolled at the University of Cape Town to read African Studies, which included anthropology, archaeology and an African language. Taught by Professor Isaac Shapira and Dr A. J. H. Goodwin, Bridget developed a specialism in the South African Stone Age but decided to return to England to recommence her studies in London in 1950 in order to broaden her knowledge of the lithic industries of the Old World, studying under Professor Frederick Zeuner of the Institute of Archaeology. It was at lectures on the prehistory of India by Zeuner at the Institute that Raymond and Bridget first met as Raymond augmented his own lectures from Codrington. Bridget's

²⁷D. Ali, 'Review of *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 7 (1997), 145.

²⁸R. Meadows, 'Review of *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 56 (1997), 515.

²⁹M. L. Smith, 'Review of *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 101 (1997), 817.

willingness to quickly marry and travel out to India with Raymond was undoubtedly partly due to her knowledge of the Subcontinent, acquired from her father's experience as an officer of the Indian Army Medical Service attached to the Fifty-Eighth Frontier Force, comprising mainly Pathans from the North West Frontier Province. An independent author and researcher in her own right, she published *The Stone-Tipped Arrow: a Study of Late Stone Age Cultures of the Tropical Regions of the Old World* (London, 1966) and *The Prehistory and Palaeography of the Great Indian Desert* (with Andrew Goudie and K. T. M. Hegde: London, 1978) as well as holding the role of founding Editor of the journal *South Asian Studies* for over a decade. A Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge, Bridget also held the post of Secretary General of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists and edited a number of its proceedings as well as *Living Traditions: Studies in the Ethnoarchaeology of South Asia* (Oxford, 1994). She also held the post of Secretary and latterly Chairman of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

Aware of the fragmented nature of South Asian scholarship across Europe, and seeking a greater capacity than that available within Britain, together with a small band of colleagues from across Europe, Raymond and Bridget created a biannual platform for South Asian archaeologists, numismatists, epigraphers and historians of art and architecture to exchange information from ongoing excavations and research. Moreover, it provided an opportunity to enhance the bond of shared professional and regional interests which other 'oriental' conferences failed to provide and in the words of Sir Mortimer Wheeler 'one could not help reflecting that such a gathering would scarcely have been thinkable as recently as a generation ago. Then the archaeology of the East was still primarily a minor preserve of European expatriates, with relatively little interchange.'³⁰ Thus formed, the first meeting of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists was organised by Raymond and Bridget and met at Churchill College in Cambridge in 1971. When the Association returned again to Cambridge in 1995, Raymond noted that the divisions into numerous simultaneous sessions was indicative of the penalties of its success whilst also stressing the need felt by those active in the field for such a common meeting ground in Europe stating that 'no one can question its usefulness, popularity, nor the international status it has achieved'.³¹

³⁰R. E. M. Wheeler, 'Foreword', in N. Hammond (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1971* (London, 1973), pp. ix-x.

³¹F. R. Allchin, 'The South Asian Archaeologists' Conference after 25 years: some reflections', in F. R. Allchin and B. Allchin (eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 1995* (New Delhi, 1997), p. 7.

Certainly its biannual conference proceedings remain one of the core reference volumes as many of the sites reported have never been fully published. For example, the key pre-pottery Neolithic site of Mehrgarh is still awaiting a final monograph but core papers on different aspects of its excavations and post-excavation analysis allow students and academics early access. Raymond also firmly used the first volume to present considerations on 'Problems and perspectives in South Asian Archaeology', reflecting on the continued search for Indo-Aryan speakers as well as the neglect of the Early Historic cities of South Asia and, finally, the need for a shared terminology for the various phases of the Indus civilisation.³² Continuing to argue for greater use of research-oriented excavation, he also later took the opportunity to challenge South Asian archaeologists, concluding *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia* with the statement that 'The volume of relevant data is certainly enormous, but the quality of so much is poor. There is an almost universal need for more problem oriented research; for a more innovative approach to theoretical problems and interpretation; and for much wider applications of scientific analysis.'³³

Back in Cambridge, Raymond's contributions to his field were recognised and he was appointed a Fellow of Churchill College in 1963 and promoted to a Readership in Indian Studies in 1972. Externally, he was also recognised and made a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1953, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1957, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1974 and a Fellow of the British Academy in 1981 as well as having an Honorary D.Litt. conferred by Deccan College, Pune in 2007. In addition to his contributions to the European Association, he also served on the Governing Council of the Society for Afghan Studies and its successor, the Society for South Asian Studies, as well as being associated with the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust, the British Academy's Stein-Arnold Committee and the Advisory Council of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Not only did these publications, committees and conferences firmly propel South Asia into the mainstream of the English-speaking archaeological world but they also attracted research students and post-doctoral fellows to Raymond's office in Sidgwick Avenue. One of his strengths as a supervisor was never to be surprised by new or unexpected results, which would swiftly be reviewed and either assimilated or rejected.

³² F. R. Allchin, 'Problems and perspectives in South Asian archaeology', in N. Hammond (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1971* (London, 1973), p. 10.

³³ F. R. Allchin, 'Concluding synthesis', in F. R. Allchin (ed.), *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 341.

This trait, which in combination with his suspicion of theoretical trends, allowed him to update his publications and rethink his sequences as he acknowledged major discoveries such as the pre-pottery Neolithic sequence at Mehrgarh or the presence of pre-Asokan Early Brahmi at Anuradhapura. Indeed, Raymond's presence in the Faculty of Oriental Studies insulated him from the competing schools of processual and post-processual thought within the Department of Archaeology and Raymond's view of theory was made clear in one reference for a former research student which read that the individual had been 'unduly influenced by the emphasis on theoretical archaeology which was fashionable in his undergraduate days' but was now properly engaged with all aspects of cultural material! Tutored and tested by Raymond amongst an assortment of sherds, sculpture and a particularly large and animated scene of an Indic hell, these individuals form a formidably broad and diverse cohort of academics, keepers and curators of archaeology, ancient history, art and architecture, including former Directors General of Archaeology in India and Sri Lanka and at least one vice chancellor. He was also protective of his research students when necessary, and Professor Danny Miller of UCL wrote soon after Raymond's death that 'He was a genial and generous figure who fully supported my work, mainly by making sure that no one in the University tried to stop me doing what was then seen as a rather unconventional piece of research in ethno-archaeology. For those who knew him he appealed as the kind of "old-school gentleman-scholar" who maintained his affection and concern for colleagues in both South Asia and the UK.'³⁴ Others have remembered his and Bridget's generosity, with Professor Romila Thapar commenting that 'We were all on a shoe-string budget, given the Government of India regulations regarding foreign exchange in those years, so life was tough' but Raymond and Bridget 'had a lot of affection for South Asian students and were always ready to help with problems—from locating research journals in obscure libraries to finding unused perambulators for babies!'

Following retirement in 1989 with the status of Emeritus Reader in Indian Studies, Raymond remained concerned with the vagaries of continuing university funding for minority subjects such as South Asian archaeology and, now freed from administrative burdens, committed the next twenty years to enhancing the research profile of South Asian archaeology through the work of the Ancient India and Iran Trust. It had been

³⁴ Reproduced with Professor Miller's permission from <http://blogs.nyu.edu/projects/materialworld/2010/07/ramond_allchin_19232010.html>.

founded earlier in 1987 by Raymond and Bridget, Professor Sir Harold Bailey, Professor Johanna van Lohuizen de Leeuw and Dr Jan van Lohuizen, as an independent charity concerned with the study of early India, Iran and Central Asia, promoting both scholarly research and popular interest in the area. With offices and an excellent library on Brooklands Avenue, the Trust provided, and continues to provide, both Cambridge-based and visiting academics and students with open access to the founders' libraries, specialist seminars and lectures and tea parties of varying cleanliness. As critical, it also continued Raymond's earlier policy of arranging for visiting fellowships to Churchill College, which had included both Professor Romila Thapar and Professor Gregory Possehl of Pennsylvania, by coordinating funds to support a new series of both Indian and Pakistani visiting fellowships. The list of fellows is highly distinguished and its inclusion of scholars of the quality of Dilip Chakrabari, Ravi Korisettar, K. Krishnan, V. N. Misra, Lolita Nehru, K. Paddaya, Gautam Sengupta and Vasant Shinde demonstrates the phenomenal draw which the Allchins name enjoyed. Debate, enquiry and tea at the Trust would often be followed by supper at home in Barrington, where 'Uncle' and 'Auntie', as the Allchins were affectionately known in South Asia, would entertain parties as diverse as their own research interests. Raymond was particularly proud of the new house that they had built in the gardens of their old nineteenth-century farmhouse which had faced the green, because he had designed the plans himself. Reflecting their own personalities and interests, it was focused on a vast joint study and the ample dining room. Although thoroughly professional in supervisions and conferences, Raymond was also known to possess a keen sense of humour as illustrated by chanting a Sanskrit grace whilst presiding at dinner at Churchill College and by presenting a first draft chapter on epigraphy for the second volume of the Anuradhapura excavations in which he had shortened the Peninsular India Symbol System to its acronym. Hospitable but exacting on fieldwork, together Raymond and Bridget could be remarkably persuasive and Sir Nicholas Barrington, then Ambassador to Pakistan, remembered one instance when, having missed their plane from Islamabad to Delhi, Raymond and Bridget succeeded in ordering the Pakistani air traffic controller to have it return to pick them up, despite the very loud protests of crew and passengers.

Suffering from high blood pressure and failing hearing, Raymond began to grow distant from the South Asian field although he never failed to perk up to hear news of new finds and dates and continued to accompany Bridget on her visits to Brooklands House. He suffered a major

stroke and went into a coma from which he never recovered and died in Addenbrookes Hospital on 4 June 2010. He is survived by Bridget and their two children, Sushila and William.

ROBIN CONINGHAM

University of Durham

Note. I am extremely grateful to James Cormick, Custodian of the Ancient India and Iran Trust, for kindly sharing the unpublished text of interviews he had recorded with the Allchins concerning Raymond's formative years and their first years in India, and also to a number of their colleagues and former students, who generously offered their recollections. This short memoir is also based on my own personal reflections as a student and colleague of FRA for the last quarter of a century.

