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Elephants in Afghanistan: Surveying the history of a pachyderm cultural frontier *

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Elephants are an effective means by which to examine the frontier status of Afghanistan in relation to India over the historical *longue durée*.¹ In doing so, an elephant frontier history can also shed light on the cultural content of Afghan identity. This essay historically tracks elephants in the geographic space now known as Afghanistan. I will demonstrate that elephants are a key index of the porousness, unevenness and changing nature of India's northwestern Afghan frontier. I will also argue that elephants serve as a potent symbol of the contradictions within modern Afghan nationalism that has by-and-large elided historic connections to India, particularly during the British colonial period.²

Before addressing modern elephantine history in and around the Hindukush mountains that geographically define modern Afghanistan, a few words on the frontier concept and some brief consideration of the pre-modern history of elephants in this space, and Afghans outside of it, are in order. What needs to be made clear is that the modern territory of Afghanistan does not capture the full scope of Afghan history, and the national frame of reference for Afghans is generally historically misleading and can be culturally deceptive.

Conceptualising the Afghan frontier

The territory now referred to as *Afghanistan*, and the geographical units composing and surrounding it, have been known by a menagerie of different names over the course of history. Analytically isolating a stable Afghan frontier of India is methodologically problematic due to evolving and overlapping territorial nomenclatures over the past 2,500 years or so. Over roughly the last millennium we find shifting spatial and cultural parameters of Afghan communities in relation to an historic homeland as well as in relation to India, and various regionally distinct local societies within the subcontinent's dynamic historical landscape. These geographic and historical realities make it difficult to determine what kind of cultural frontiers (language?, religion?, social organisation?) have existed between Afghans and Indians and where the territorial frontier between Afghanistan and India lies (the Indus river?, the Suleiman Range?, Peshawar?, Kabul?).

Rather than looking for fixed cultural and territorial boundaries, a fluid and dynamic approach to frontiers is useful in this case. Simply put, the Afghan cultural frontier of India needs to be understood not through unsustainable tropes of perpetual tribal violence, religious zealotry and xenophobic isolationism, but through a set of interactive, shifting and contested territorial, linguistic, political and legal frames of reference, in addition to reckoning with the multiple different ways local populations experience the "frontier effects" in question.³ It is through this general conceptual prism that we will survey the historically dynamic elephant frontier Afghanistan represents in relation to India through the ancient, medieval, and early modern, and modern periods.

The Treaty of the Indus and the Delhi Sultanate

A historical survey of elephants in this region can begin with the Treaty of the Indus in c. 305 BC that sent 500 Mauryan war elephants to the Seleucid empire in exchange for control of Gandhara (c. Peshawar), Parapamisadae (c. region between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif), eastern Gedrosia (c. Baluchistan, and possibly also Archosia (c. Qandahar) and Aria (c. Herat), in other words, much of what is now modern Afghanistan with the exception of Bactria (Balkh/Mazar-e Sharif) in the north.⁴ The Treaty of the Indus establishes the geographic territory of Afghanistan as an interstitial borderland zone of imperial competition between Indian and Iranian civilisational spheres of influence. In

some ways, this elephant exchange inaugurates the frontier history of a region that became Afghanistan more than two thousand years later.

The artistically and culturally synthetic and productive Kushan dynasty (c. 30 BCE- c. 375 AD) originated in Central Asia, was based in the Peshawar valley, and extended well into South Asia. By drawing upon cultural resources from two world civilisational spheres and combining nomadic warfare with aspects of sedentary state formation, the Kushans well represent the frontier dynamics of this region. The Kushans were culturally and religiously tolerant and absorptive of South Asian aesthetics, with Buddhist iconography quite evident in their abundant sculptural production. There is an important place for the elephant in Buddhist cosmology, including reference to sacred white elephants in the context of the Buddha's mother's impregnation and the former's auspicious birth.⁵ The Kushan dynasty was a formative period for the more enduring cultural and artistic framework of Gandhara or the Gandharan civilisation that is typically narrated to commence with the Kushans and dissipate with the coming of Islam to South Asia via Sindh in the eighth century AD. There are elephant images on the coinage associated with the Kushan ruler Havishka (r. c. 160-190 AD), and Gandharan artistic and cultural production incorporated elephantine iconography.⁶

The Islamic dynasties that ruled from what is now modern Afghanistan, the Ghaznavids and Ghorids (combined rule, c. 994-1215 AD), accumulated well over one thousand elephants during their campaigns in North India, many of which were kept in the *pil khana* or elephant stables in Kabul and Ghazna.⁷ In the context of his fourteen invasions of Hindustan, Mahmud Ghaznavi (r. 998-1030) made treaties with India rulers that involved hundreds of elephants being gifted on both single occasions and repeatedly as annual tribute.⁸ [See Fig. 1 below] The Delhi Sultanate (c. 1206-1398) political system incorporated multiple groups commonly understood to be Afghans, perhaps most prominent among whom were the Khilji (c. 1290-1320) dynastic rulers. Simon Digby famously argued the Delhi Sultanate to be organised around control (and denial of enemy control) of elephant and horse supply lines to the east and west of Delhi, respectively. Elephant supplies for the Delhi Sultans dwindled to the point of a mere 120 fielded ineffectually against Timur/Tamerlane in 1398 after being able to muster about 1000 elephants for battle sixty years earlier. Beyond the sea of cavalry he commanded, Timur deployed barrier lines of strung together buffaloes and camels on the outskirts of Delhi in what Sukumar refers to as the first use of a biological deterrent against war elephants.⁹

While Afghan populations are clearly most associated with horses during the Delhi Sultanate, we can deduce that Afghans accrued elephant knowledge and some degree of cultural consciousness about them during this period. A prominent dynastic heir to the political carcass the Sultanate became after the havoc and destruction wreaked by Timur's invasion were the Lodis who controlled Delhi from c. 1451-1526. The Lodis are also reputed to be another Afghan dynasty in North India, and Ibrahim Lodi (r. c. 1517-1526) fielded approximately 100 elephants against Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur during the 1526 Battle of Panipat which marks the end of the Lodi dynasty and the beginning of the Mughals (c. 1526-1857).¹⁰ Babur (r. 1526-1530) successfully deployed field artillery against the Lodi elephants, an event simultaneously signaling the first large-scale use of gunpowder warfare in the subcontinent and symbolising the end stages of the elephant's long and arguably hegemonic role in the history of South Asian warfare.¹¹

The Mughals

Babur's memoirs, the *Baburnama*, provides information about the elephant breeding grounds in Kalpi (contemporary Jalaun district in the Uttar Pradesh Province on the right/south bank of the Yamuna River) and eastwards, about staged fights between elephants and camels, and his curiosity about the outcome of a hypothetical elephant-rhinoceros battle.¹² The Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605) represents a resurgence of elephants for a number of reasons including his own expertise as a mahout (*mahawat* [see below]) or elephant rider. In terms of military tactics, Akbar instituted new units of 10-30 elephants called *halqahs* commanded by *foujdars*, and a special squadron of 101

elephants reserved for the ruler himself. He devised new methods of capturing elephants, new harnesses and straps for them, and a new system of classification that ramified from daily diets for stabled elephants, through fines and punishments for mishandling or dereliction of duty among elephant handlers, to the deployment of battle elephants.¹³

In part due to the attention given to *bhois* or assistants to mahouts who are termed mahawats in Abu al-Fazl's Persian-language *Ain-i Akbari*, Trautmann argues that the rich corpus of new kinds of elephant documentation generated by Akbar's reign represents an approximation of day-to-day practical knowledge of the elephant. This form of ground-level elephant knowledge is absent in older more formulaic and theoretical Sanskrit literature about the elephant forming the *Gajashastra* or corpus of texts composed of versified elephant science *sutras* suitable for memorisation and oral transmission.¹⁴ The text most associated with formalised, state-controlled knowledge of elephants according to Trautmann is the *Arthashastra*.¹⁵

Before and during the Mughal era, elephants held a conspicuous presence in the realm of ambassadorial visitations and diplomatic gift exchanges, both within the Mughal empire itself and between the Mughal polity and the Ottomans, Safavids, Portuguese and French.¹⁶ In this context, we continue to see an interplay between Afghans and elephants well outside of the geographic northwest frontier of India. During the Mughal period there were historically well-sustained interactions between Afghans and elephants occurring in Indian cultural settings distant from the northwest Afghan frontier, in locations such as Ahmadnagar in Maharashtra. These interactions outlived the Mughal empire itself, for we have evidence of Afghan mahouts in Bengal in the early twentieth century.¹⁷ The key point here is that on the cusp of the modern era, the Afghan cultural frontier extended well into India.¹⁸

The term *Afghan* is used in Ghaznavid historiography, and during the early modern Mughal era it acquired a much wider geography. During the Mughal period, the Pashto language was first textualised and the term *Pathan* enters the historical record, and both developments historically and substantially infringe on the meaning of "Afghan". All of this is to say two things. First, from the ancient through the modern period we have considerable information about elephants in the region of our concern. Secondly, prior to being associated with a polity of "its" own and thus as a conceptual anchor for modern geographical cognition, the term Afghan carried multiple forms of cultural, linguistic, territorial, and political expression that cumulatively expand and destabilise its semantic range. A narrow use of the term tends to elide elephants from consideration, while an expansive cultural and historical understanding of the term Afghan brings elephants to light in a space where their presence has been quite impactful, as we shall see.

Readers are now prepared to consider elephants in modern Afghanistan. What follows demonstrates that elephants played a number of distinct and important roles at various stages of the Afghan polity's development from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century using the following periodisation:

- (i) the emergence of an empire of conquest under Ahmad Shah Abdali (r. 1747-1772), and the territorial retraction of that polity under his son and dynastic successor Timur (r. 1772-1793)
- (ii) during the polity's reconfiguration in the context of the colonial encounter with British India beginning with Mountstuart Elphinstone's inaugural embassy to the Kingdom of Kabul in 1808 and culminating in First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42)
- (iii) the "interim" years between the First and Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) during the reigns of the Amirs Dost Muhammad (r. 1826-39 and 1842-63) and Sher Ali (r. 1863-78)
- (iv) under the "Iron Amir" Abd al-Rahman (r. 1880-1901), and
- (v) during the reign of Abd al-Rahman's son Habibullah Khan (r. 1901-19) when expressions of nationalism first appeared in Afghanistan

Attention to the living memories of elephants in Afghanistan from the middle of the twentieth century to the present will conclude this essay.

Ahmad Shah Abdali and Timur Shah Durrani¹⁹

There are two primary Persian language sources that directly and extensively treat Ahmad Shah, the commonly accepted founder of modern Afghanistan in the eighteenth century, who received the now popularised appellation *Ahmad Shah Baba* in the context of twentieth-century nationalist historiography.²⁰ Ahmad Shah's official history, the *Tarikh-e Ahmad Shahi* (TAS) does not use the term Afghanistan that was to become historically legible during the next century in the context of colonialism. Ahmad Shah's official history treats elephants in at least two instances. The first involves reference to Ahmad Shah writing to an ally about the movement of a mobile treasury and *fil khana* or elephant unit soon after the assassination of Nadir Shah Afshar in 1747.²¹ Ahmad Shah was a trusted official of Nadir Shah, and while he may or may not have had a/n in/direct hand in Nadir Shah's murder, it is that event which propelled him to follow the well-worn path of invading North India which Ahmad Shah did seven times over the next twenty years in the context of creating a short-lived Afghan empire. In the context of the politically turbulent eighteenth-century Indo-Persian world, the use of elephants as mobile treasuries appears as a practical expedient Ahmad Shah would have been familiar with, in addition to his clear awareness of their military and ceremonial functions.

The *Tarikh-e Ahmad Shahi* recounts a not uncommon scene of an elephant execution. In this instance, three individuals were brought before Ahmad Shah. Of this trio, Nur Muhammad and Mian Daud were pulverised into invisibility by elephants. The third, Abd al-Rahman Khan (not the ruler discussed below), watched his comrades disintegrate and was then hoisted in the air by an elephant trunk and deposited in front of Ahmad Shah who granted him clemency and the new position of Royal Cannon Master.²² Elephants are here shown to be influential in commanding the loyalty of subordinates.

While the *Tarikh-e Ahmad Shahi* is a near contemporaneous biography of Ahmad Shah written in highly opaque metaphorical prose, the official history of Afghanistan composed during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century, the *Seraj al-Tawarikh* (ST), is a more consciously chronological narrative of the Afghan state and its officials, written in considerably more accessible but still flowery formal prose. This important and extremely valuable text is based upon extensive use of government records, but it was produced under conditions of elite patronage that could and did at times over the long course of the text's production resemble censorship including various degrees of non-cooperation, lack of sanction or political disfavour of the work.²³

The *Seraj al-Tawarikh* also narrates an elephant execution in Ahmad Shah's presence, but in a different context and with different victims than narrated in the *Tarikh-e Ahmad Shahi*. The *Seraj al-Tawarikh* addresses the use of elephants during a siege, and in its coverage of the famous 1761 Panipat battle against the Marathas this official history records Ahmad Shah accruing a great haul of booty including 500 elephants. [See Fig. 2 below] The last elephant incident during Ahmad Shah's reign recounted in the *Seraj al-Tawarikh* involves a scene where a defeated rival with a blackened face is paraded seated backwards on an elephant.²⁴ In sum, for Ahmad Shah's period, the *Tarikh-e Ahmad Shahi* gives us fiscal duties and public executions, while the *Seraj al-Tawarikh* adds battle functions and public ceremonial humiliation as uses for elephants by the founder of the Afghan kingdom.

The *Seraj al-Tawarikh* recounts Timur Shah reviewing troops on an elephant and one of his Generals ceremonially circling the elephant Timur was sitting on three times before departing to a battle as the commander of 18,000 horsemen. Timur Shah had the corpse of a notorious Khyber Pass bandit from Dakka, Arsala Khan Mohmand, dragged around Kabul city by an elephant. During Timur's reign, the use of elephants in the diplomatic gift economy in and revolving around the Afghan kingdom is documented for the first time. The context here is Prince Qaisar (not Timur's son) defecting to the Qajars from his

post as Governor of Herat and presenting the Qajar Shah with an elephant in return for which he received a *khilat* or robe of honor.²⁵ In his amazing excavation of complex source materials in multiple languages to produce a narrative cartography of Afghanistan roughly since the coming of Islam, Henry George Raverty indicates that Timur Shah's elephant stables were on the western outskirts about two kos (c. 4.5 miles) from Jalalabad, near the Tomb of Rustam Khan.²⁶

Colonialism I: Mountstuart Elphinstone and the First Anglo-Afghan War

The nineteenth century history of elephants in both India and Afghanistan largely follows the determining influence – however strong, weak, inconsistent, and/or contradictory – of British colonialism in South Asia. During this period, British colonialism brought Afghanistan to life as a discrete cartographic entity and as a unit of political economy on the fringes of British colonialism and global capitalism more broadly.²⁷ The British first made formal diplomatic contact with the Afghan ruler Shah Shuja in 1809. In the context of global imperial anxiety about a French invasion of India, the British East India Company (BEIC) organised Mountstuart Elphinstone's embassy to what was then normatively understood as the Kingdom of Kabul. The widely circulated and extremely influential publication resulting from Elphinstone's mission is titled *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* (AKC), and it, along with archival records of the mission, provides useful information about elephants.

We must appreciate that Elphinstone was very familiar with the practical and symbolic uses of elephants, as well as local cultural and political meanings of camels and horses. This is not to say that Elphinstone was a veterinarian or zoologist, only that working knowledge of these three animals was then essential to BEIC diplomats and officials in India. The extensive diplomatic embassy that resulted in *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* involved 13 elephants, two of which were to gifts to Shah Shuja. Elphinstone had to personally pay in advance out of his own pocket and then seek reimbursement from the Company for mission supplies including two elephant howdahs purchased in Calcutta for Rs. 1,200 each.²⁸ Elphinstone describes that when crossing the Indus on the way from Delhi to Peshawar, the elephants alone swam across the mighty river near Dera Ismail Khan, using mid-stream islands as way stations, while all other animal and human elements of the huge embassy that stretched two miles took boats and ferries to cross this imposing natural frontier.²⁹ Elphinstone waited for a royal audience in Peshawar (not Kabul!) for weeks during which time Shah Shuja delivered sumptuous and over-extravagant feasts to the British mission using elephants for effect. When Elphinstone finally had his chance to be received by the Afghan ruler, Shuja's officials confiscated the elephants' mahouts' accoutrements at the entrance to the royal gate of the Bala Hissar palace-fort compound.³⁰

The *Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* indicates that Shuja had a "few elephants" at the time of their encounter. From Elphinstone we also learn that while the Afghan ruler would sometimes move about publicly by elephant, a mode of transport favored by his harem, Shuja himself preferred to be carried by the Indian *Nalkee*, a palanquin either above or below poles that rested on the carriers' shoulders.³¹ However, as both a giver and receiver of elephants, Shuja was heavily invested in a vibrant ceremonial gift economy then operative in proto-Afghanistan and wider South Asia that was unevenly transitioning between Mughal and British rule.³²

Shuja was displaced as ruler of the Afghan kingdom almost literally as the ink dried on the treaty he signed with Elphinstone in Peshawar in 1809. For most of the next thirty years, Shuja resided in the stipend custody of the British in Ludhiana. Before reaching his colonial refuge in the Punjab, Shuja endured humiliation at the hands of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by being caged and dragged around Lahore by elephant. While in Ludhiana, Shuja repeatedly petitioned his British hosts/patrons/captors for remedy from the visual vulnerability of his harem women through the practice of locals passing by his assigned residential compound on elephants.³³

Shuja's reign was legitimised by the Elphinstone treaty, and Shuja leveraged that connection with the British to undertake a failed attempt to recover his former throne in Kabul in 1832-34.³⁴ At a crucial turn of events as the recuperative effort was about to be aborted near Qandahar, Shuja faced a momentous decision on top of an elephant. Shuja's choices were to charge or flee, and he gave the signal to his Anglo-Indian military advisor Campbell to rush upon the enemy. Campbell charged ahead, was injured, captured and ultimately defected from Shuja's forces. As Campbell pressed ahead, Shuja commanded his mahout to turn his elephant around and flee, thus commencing an ignoble, defeated return back to colonial custody in Ludhiana.

Shuja's attempt to recover Kabul from Dost Muhammad had very little official public British support. The exiled king's luck turned in 1839 when the British allied with Maharaja Ranjit Singh to conquer Kabul and secure it as a market depot for the Indus river trade.³⁵ Ranjit Singh entered the colonial orbit in 1831 when Alexander Burnes was assigned to deliver a set of five horses to the Sikh ruler as a way of establishing diplomatic relations. Despite being organised around the strategic and symbolic value of horses, Burnes' visit to the Sikh court in Lahore was dominated by elephant ceremonial activity, from initial encounters, through negotiations, to tours and public audiences, and pachyderm gifts to the Governor-General.³⁶ After his time in the Punjab, Burnes went on to visit Kabul and Bukhara and the publication resulting from his journey to Central Asia made him famous and influential in England and India. Burnes was a primary actor in the First Anglo-Afghan War in which context he had helped to secure the multiple thousands of camels necessary for the Army of the Indus to invade Kabul.³⁷

It is unclear whether through his local practical knowledge and contacts Burnes would have also helped to secure the elephants that were used by the British forces. It is also unclear if the elephants used would have been rented or purchased or if they came with mahouts or if mahouts and their assistants could have been contracted through the elephant labor market. Sir William Macnaughten was the official ambassador to Shuja's colonially refashioned royal court, and he was a competing center of authority in relation to Burnes throughout the British occupation of Kabul. The rivalry and factionalism among the British forces personified by the tension between Burnes and Macnaughten is often referenced as a primary cause of the catastrophic failure and total loss that the First Anglo-Afghan War was for the British. Macnaughten used elephants as a ceremonial means of transportation, and at least one of Macnaughten's elephants was stolen near Qandahar en route to Kabul in 1839. During the course of the war, Dost Muhammad's son Wazir Muhammad Akbar Khan used elephants for public transport for himself, and on at least one occasion he had Alexander Burnes along as a passenger in his howdah.³⁸ Despite their differences, both Burnes and Macnaughten shared a common understanding of the ceremonial use and symbolic value of public mobility on elephants. There appears to have been no high-value, well-documented military function for elephants during the First Anglo-Afghan War. They were used for ceremonial transportation almost exclusively.

Dost Muhammad surrendered to the British at the start of the war and was then taken into custody and pensioned in North India (Dehra Dun and Mussoorie primarily, with brief appearances in Calcutta), a form of colonial cloistering much like Shuja experienced in Ludhiana after meeting Elphinstone and being deposed thirty years earlier. The massacre of the Army of the Indus upon its fatal retreat from Kabul in January 1842 was followed by hyper-vengeful wanton killing and destruction in Kabul and elsewhere in eastern and southern Afghanistan perpetrated by General Pollock's Army of Retribution in the spring. In the fall, the British provided Dost Muhammad with two ceremonial transport elephants with howdahs for his colonially propelled recycling back to power in Kabul after the utter debacle of the First Anglo-Afghan War.³⁹

Colonialism II: Dost Muhammad and Sher Ali

There is little evidence of elephants in rural areas of Afghanistan, and the few elephants present in Kabul and other cities and large market towns such as Qandahar, Jalalabad and

Ghazni would likely have been confiscated or killed by the Army of Retribution given its directives and patterns of behavior. The two British Indian elephants Dost Muhammad rode back into power in Kabul likely continued to be used for state ceremonial purposes, despite drastically scaled back ritual pretensions of the hollowed out state structure left in the wake of the First Anglo-Afghan War.⁴⁰

The short-lived Kabul kingdom was effectually gone, and a new Afghanistan connected to British India was emerging. Two key related aspects of the colonial *realpolitik* were boundary and mutual defence treaties with Afghan rulers in return for cash and other kinds of subsidies. In 1855 Dost Muhammad signed a treaty with the British about the defense of Herat against the threat of a Persian (with Russian support) occupation of the city, in return for which he received an elephant. He received an unknown number of additional elephants from the British in exchange for his loyalty to them during the Great Revolt of 1857, when Dost Muhammad did not join the mutineers and in fact protected a British delegation then resident in Qandahar. In his second tenure as ruler Dost Muhammad reinstated a practice we saw under Ahmad Shah, that is, the public execution through elephant trampling with Sahibzadah Fateh the victim in this instance.⁴¹

Sher Ali succeeded Dost Muhammad as ruler of Kabul upon the latter's death in 1863. Sher Ali appears to have been much more interested in elephants than his predecessor. Militarily, he was likely the first Afghan ruler to deploy *atwap-e pili* or elephant swivel guns.⁴² In 1869 Sher Ali traveled to Ambala in British India for a durbar with the Governor General Lord Mayo. Durbars were then becoming increasingly common as a method used by the British to recognize local rulers while subordinating them to the hegemonic logic of British power partly through the conspicuous ritual displays and ceremonial uses of elephants at these "invented traditions". Sher Ali apparently broke with protocols the British intended for him to follow because he had to petition for special permission to enter the durbar parade grounds on an elephant. ST records that Sher Ali left Ambala with an imperial gift of 19 elephants.⁴³ These elephants from Ambala likely exponentially increased the number of elephants in Afghanistan. The visibility and social consciousness of elephants in Kabul (at least) surely increased during Sher Ali's rule.

Colonialism III: The Second Anglo-Afghan War and Abd al-Rahman

The Second Anglo-Afghan War occurred in a substantially transformed technological environment in comparison to the first war. The industrial revolution that was getting underway in the 1830s had substantially matured by the end of the century. Military technology was noticeably transformed between the two Anglo-Afghan wars, photography had become commonplace, communication through telegraphy and transportation through railroads and steamships sped up and expanded dramatically. The industrial printing of popular publications such as the *Illustrated London News* and *The Graphic* routinely provided images and narratives from the imperial periphery to a metropolitan public that thirsted for current information and visual stimuli from the colonies. As a result of this conjuncture, we have a large number of photographs of the second war where a very prominent role for elephants can be seen. In the Second Anglo-Afghan War elephants were not used for royal transport or diplomatic communication, but rather for the transport of large volumes of industrially produced artillery which could either be disassembled and loaded on elephants or configured on wheeled carts and dragged by elephants.⁴⁴ [See *Figs. 3-5* below]

Through an emerging mass media, the Indian elephant was valorised not only as one of nature's largest and most impressive elements that had been thoroughly tamed by the might of the British empire; the elephant was also shown to be scientifically manipulable by and for modern industrial usages. The elephant's configuration within various schemes of military regimentation (loading, marching, standing, drilling) for photographs that were increasingly widely circulated was a masterful manipulation of an Indian symbol for an imperial public clamouring for information and imagery from the latest Afghan war. This point is most tangibly materialised by the medal with a gun-carrying

elephant that was issued by Queen Victoria to veterans of the Battle of Ali Masjid in November 1878 and other military actions that occurred during the course of the Second Anglo-Afghan War.⁴⁵

Abd al-Rahman was selected by the British to facilitate a more orderly withdrawal from Afghanistan before their second invasion and occupation of the country could reach a point of unravelling as happened so dramatically and suddenly during the First Anglo-Afghan War. Abd al-Rahman was anxious to serve the British for reasons that surely included their well-earned reputation for dispensing bountiful cash subsidies and magnificent material gifts to local allies. It is somewhat ironic to note that when it became time for Abd al-Rahman to meet with his suitors and formally cement their unequal relationship of mutual dependence, elephant protocol appeared to be on the mind of the client but not patron in this colonial exchange. ST indicates that Abd al-Rahman called upon a local ally to provide an elephant used to carry tents, beddings and utensils necessary to host such a meeting to the chosen site at Zimmah near Charikar, roughly thirty miles north of Kabul.⁴⁶ It does not appear the British, via their representative Major Lepel Griffin, arrived with any elephant or ceremonial intent. For the British, Abd al-Rahman's appointment was more of a private, hidden business transaction than an agreement worthy of public ritual elaboration, and certainly not one involving elephants. The effectual silence about the context and terms of this critical relationship in the British media is mirrored in Afghan historiography that elides the colonial conditions that gave rise to Abd al-Rahman as Amir of Kabul.

The continued subsidisation of Abd al-Rahman allowed the British to map the various boundaries of Afghanistan, a most lucrative process for Abd al-Rahman, that was completed by 1893 with the establishment of the Durand Line which remains the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan today. The 1893 agreement increased Abd al-Rahman's annual colonial subsidy by 50% from 12 to 18 lakhs cash per year.⁴⁷ The majority of these funds were directed to the industrialisation project known as the *mashin khana*, literally machine house, or more commonly the Kabul workshops started by Sher Ali but greatly expanded by Abd al-Rahman through colonial capital provisioned in proportions the former could not have ever reasonably imagined. It is Abd al-Rahman's propensity for industrial production and his willingness to use industrial warfare (the materiel for which were the primary products of the workshops) against the Afghan citizenry that generates the popular moniker "The Iron Amir" for Abd al-Rahman.

Immediately after signing the boundary treaty with Durand, Abd al-Rahman went on a spending spree and embarked on a wholesale reorganisation of the political economy of what we can now refer to without qualification as Afghanistan.⁴⁸ Abd al-Rahman's spending was primarily for items related to his pristine but growing industrial complex that essentially routed colonially provisioned capital back to its source and against the Afghan people. One of the first major transactions Abd al-Rahman arranged after the Durand agreement was the purchase of 21 elephants from his agent in Mumbai.⁴⁹ As was the case with all international traffic to the Afghanistan that Abd al-Rahman and the British co-produced, these elephants were routed through Peshawar and the Khyber Pass to Kabul, and apparently one of these elephants perished on the journey. This purchase generates the first modern historical reference to a *fil khana* or elephant stable in Kabul. Three years later, in 1897, Abd al-Rahman purchased another 21 elephants. However, the mahouts associated with this second group of elephants refused to proceed beyond Peshawar.⁵⁰ These elephants eventually reached Kabul, but ST does not indicate whether the original mahouts accompanied or later joined the elephants they were driving to Kabul.

We are now able to envision something in the range of 50 but likely not more than 60 elephants in Kabul in the late nineteenth century. These appear to be used primarily for transport of heavy industrial machinery, a function that becomes much more thoroughly documented in the twentieth century. It is also clear that Abd al-Rahman used elephants for capital punishment, but it is important to understand this mentally unstable sadist's

range of execution styles went well beyond elephants to include public starvation pits and cages, boiling, cannoning etc., proclivities that could not have escaped the striking mahouts' notice. One of the many European technocrats Abd al-Rahman contracted for services related to the workshops and the machines that arrived there by elephant was Frank Martin.

Martin describes a time after a cholera outbreak when Abd al-Rahman left Kabul and went to his "shooting box" a few miles north of the capital city where he stayed for weeks at a time with his court and entourage. On this occasion, one of the royal elephants went into *musth*,⁵¹ killed its mahout and fought aggressively to hold approximately twenty armed horsemen at bay until it was driven into a pit. It was then decided to administer four pounds of camphor, opium and hashish (each) to temper the condition, which instead proved fatal for the elephant. Martin also indicates that elephants were used in state ceremonies, with his description coming from their use during a public celebration of the Eid al-Qurban holiday.⁵²

Lillias Hamilton was contracted to serve as a nurse for Abd al-Rahman from 1894-96.⁵³ The cover of at least one edition of the popular reading fictive account based upon her time in Kabul, *A Vizier's Daughter*, has an embossed, golden and richly decorated elephant with a mahout and howdah carrying Hamilton.⁵⁴ We can therefore deduce that Hamilton was transported to and/or from Kabul on elephant. It is unclear how many of the small but highly influential stream of foreign technocrats that flowed to Kabul during Abd al-Rahman's reign used elephant transport for their journeys.

Colonialism IV: Habibullah, global contractors and the elephantine elision within nascent Afghan nationalism

As the twentieth century progressed, these experts of one kind or another continued to arrive in Kabul for state contracted work, but they increasingly used automotive transport to enter and exit the country.⁵⁵ However, at least one early twentieth-century visitor, the British leatherworks contractor Ernest Thornton who traveled with his wife Annie to Kabul in 1906, used five elephants for baggage alone.⁵⁶ The Thorntons describe a particularly large piece of heavy machinery that was loaded on a specially designed cart dragged by four elephants from Peshawar to Kabul. Mr. Thornton's work allowed access to the state workshops that contextualize a second elephant discussion that usefully treats the bureaucracies surrounding the animal. In this narrative the *Peelwan Bashi* or Master of Elephants appears subject to the strict oversight of Habibullah's brother Nasrullah. The Thorntons also allude to a separate requisition procedure in place for chained elephants.⁵⁷ This reference suggests a bureaucratic distinction between different categories of work and transport elephants, a division of labour that would have also involved the 18 elephants mentioned as being for the Amir's personal use for touring, dragging artillery pieces on military marches, royal processions, and road building.⁵⁸

The Thorntons describe elephants used in 1908 as a fire brigade to tear down structures near the flames so as to prevent their spread in Kabul. They mention the seasonal wintering of elephants in the significantly more temperate climate of Jalalabad, which also likely helps to explain the location of Timur Shah's *fil khana* near the city.⁵⁹ The Thorntons' book includes a photograph of the four elephants that were used to ceremonially transport Habibullah's slave wives during the public wedding procession of his younger half brother Muhammad Omar Jan, who was born to their father Abd al-Rahman's favourite wife, Bibi Halima. The quarrels described among royal slave wives over boarding the howdahs perched on these four scarlet-robed animals positions the pachyderms within the complex dynamics of harem politics in addition to highlighting their service in reinforcing royal masculine power in public rituals.⁶⁰

The Thorntons state that "elephants figure largely in the court life in Kabul", and they reference Habibullah's frequent duck hunting excursions in the marshes near the Bala Hissar as evidence of this practice.⁶¹ Duck hunting on elephant receives attention in the *Seraj al-Tawarikh*, and it must have been among Habibullah's favorite pastimes, as there

are a conspicuously large number of photographs and lithographs of many different types documenting this particular activity. The images of these elephantine duck hunting expeditions appear to have been part of Habibullah's international branding policy because some were incorporated into the global print media in the United States including the *Chicago Tribune*, and others were circulated in Europe through the medium of French-produced but Afghan Government-embossed postcards.⁶² [See Fig. 6 below]

The demography of the foreign technocrats contracted by the Afghan state evolved from primarily British and Anglo-Indian cadres to include other Europeans, Americans, and a number of (Ottoman and) Turkish nationals. Elephants were very much associated with the journeys of Ottoman Turkish officers to Afghanistan.⁶³ During Habibullah's reign, the American engineer A.C. Jewett was contracted for hydroelectric work at the *Jebal al-Seraj* or Mountain of Light power station about fifty miles north of Kabul in the Parwan Province.

In an article based upon his experiences in Afghanistan, Jewett notes the emerging competition between elephant and automotive transport, and in his later book he describes the tension, literally, when an elephant transport caravan composed of 9 carts and 15 elephants carrying large industrial machinery including armatures and turbines totaling 27,900 pounds crossed three bridges en route between Peshawar and Kabul.⁶⁴ [See Fig. 7 below] The narrative of his book also includes a discussion of how elephants starved to death every year in Kabul because the *fil bashi* in charge of them when stabled siphoned their rations, and the officer responsible for them during transport work did the same when the elephants were used away from the stables. This observation situates the perhaps 30 elephants in Afghanistan in the first decades of the twentieth century within a similar plight as other animals and hundreds of thousands of Afghan people who were suffering in the context of increasingly fragile economic conditions in the country. These precarious economic conditions were precipitated in part by modernisation projects designed primarily for the Kabuli elites who were increasingly enamoured and overwhelmed by Euro-American technology, gadgetry, clothing, furniture, and forms of entertainment such as the Western aristocratic propensity for duck hunting on elephants.

The *Seraj al-Tawarikh* informs us that in November 1907, when returning from Qataghan in northern Afghanistan, Habibullah dispatched his civil chamberlain ahead to prepare arrangements at the halting points on the way back to Kabul. The official was instructed to leave an elephant without a howdah at a certain point in the Panjsher valley in case it would be necessary to use when crossing what can at times and places be a mighty and formidable Panjsher river.⁶⁵ While familiar with the use of elephants for crossing rivers, hauling machinery, serving in public ceremonies and for royal hunting excursions, knowledge of this practical serviceable utility was very likely unaccompanied by cognisance let alone appreciation of elephantine history, particularly insofar as elephants represent the deep historical connections between Afghanistan and India and therefore also symbolise the formative role played by British Indian colonialism in creating and sustaining Afghan political elites in Kabul. Inspired by Euro-American-centered versions of modernity, in the early twentieth century Afghan nationalists, including royals and their spokesmen, fetishised new industrial technologies such as cars and planes, which came at the expense of intellectually embracing age-old organic technologies such as elephants, and resulted in considerable heritage-editing by erasing Indian cultural connections and British colonial dependencies wherever possible from the official historical record.

Living memories of elephants in Afghanistan

It is unlikely there were more than a dozen elephants in Afghanistan in the 1930s and 1940s, but they were a part of local cosmology. In the 1940s, an Afghan government publication served notice regarding one of the dwindling number of local "Afghan" (?) elephants named *Sher Bahadur*. [See Fig. 8 below] This elephant became famous for winning the races held for public display at Habibullah's son Enayatullah's wedding ceremonies. As a result of this victory, the elephant was either renamed or adopted the

name of its mahout, Sher Bahadur, meaning Brave Lion. The elephant later became popularly known as *Fateh Bahadur* meaning Brave Victor as a result of the whole city hearing the animal's strained moans and groans as it dragged a cannon up one of Kabul's many hills in a futile and sadly comical effort at defending the city against the aerial bombardment of the palace compound on 24 May 1919 in the context of the brief Third Anglo-Afghan War. This brief and largely bloodless conflict is officially recognised in Afghanistan as the War of Independence from British India, the historical irony being that with negligible exceptions the colonial experience is an unreferenced, near-taboo subject in official histories.⁶⁶ This colonial shadow play ultimately yields insufficient social and cultural energy and motivation, which become the primary challenges Afghan nationalism has yet to critically engage, let alone surmount, if it is to ever resonate among the general populace.

My father, Dr. M. Jamil Hanifi, was born in Surkhab, Logar province in the mid-1930s and educated in Kabul until a government scholarship brought him to the US in 1956. He recounts local folklore about unfaithful women being trampled by Abd al-Rahman, and hearing but not seeing elephants. A friend and age mate of my father, Mr. Samad Salah, who remained in Afghanistan and spent his professional career with the Ministry of Mines and Industry, recalls the name of two elephants, *Toti* (sometimes rendered *Tota*) meaning parrot, and *Maina*, a word which when transliterated as mynah means the name of a bird that chirps a lot. Mr. Salah reports that elephants were stabled at the *fil khana* north of the Pul-e Kheshti bridge across the Kabul river in the old part of city known as the *Naghara (Naqqara) Khana*, the Drumming/Parade ground, where civic festivals were held.⁶⁷

The final steps of our path through Afghanistan's elephant history concludes with the death from natural causes of the last female at Kabul Zoo in the early 1990s and the intentional killing of the last male elephant at the zoo in the late 1990s. Some local sources say that an elephant remained alive in the possession of a Khan in the Panjsher valley until the early twenty-first century, and finally there is the death of an elephant in 2013. This last elephant was 46 years old, and had contended with severe arthritis since 1974. The elephant was born in Kabul 1967. What is either remarkable or not, is that this elephant died in the Baton Rouge Zoo in the U.S., and its passing was publicly mourned on local media. Judy was her name when she died a few years ago in the Louisiana bayou. [See Fig. 9 below] These facts allow us to conclude that an Afghan elephant with an Indian genealogy had been globalised and appropriated by American imperial projections, connections, ingestions and transformations. But surely the elephant did not experience her life that way, and maybe we should not think about elephants through global imperial, nationalist or humanist frameworks either. Perhaps the elephants' perspectives on the localities they inhabit are key to understanding them. In any event, Judy's legacy lives on because she helps us reckon with the boundaries of Afghan identity in terms of both geography and cultural content.

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NOTES

* Because the printers are unable to guarantee an adequate quality of printing, the Figures have not been printed in this volume. They can be accessed at the online version of this paper at www.geocities.ws/theelephantreader/hanifi.pdf. The captions for the Figures are reproduced below.

1. The Annales School of historiography is the reference point for the *longue durée* perspective. Braudel 1981: 334-435, dealing with animal energy and transportation is of particular relevance for present purposes.

2. I have addressed this omission and elision through colonial political economy, the biography of the Durrani ruler Shah Shuja (r. 1803-09 and 1839-42), and the history of

the camel. See Hanifi 2011a, 2012b, and 2013a and respectively. See also Hopkins 2008 and Green 2011. For foundational statements on modernity and nationalism in Afghanistan see Schinasi 1979 and Gregorian 1967 and 1969; for more recent work see Hanifi 2012a, Hopkins and Marsden 2013, Crews 2015 and Green 2015.

3. Hopkins and Marsden 2011 and Hopkins 2015.

4. For the terms of the Treaty of the Indus see Kosmin 2014: 33. For elephants in the historical record prior to that time, including the 15 Indian elephants involved the Battle of Gaugamela between the Persian King Darius and Alexander the Great in 331 BC and the 200 elephants deployed by King Porus against Alexander at the Battle of the Hydaspes (Jhelum river) in 326 BC see, among other sources, Trautmann 2015: 191-6, 223-8, and *passim*, and Wink 2002: 95.

5. Gokhale 1974.

6. There is, for example, a small 21 cm, c. second-third century figurine of an enthroned Buddha on an elephant positioned forward near the neck where a *mahout* or elephant driver sits, not as a passenger ensconced in a *howdah* or elephant carriage toward the middle of the animal. See <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/sculptures-statues-figures/a-gray-schist-figure-of-a-buddha-5111193-details.aspx>.

7. Wink: 104, references the *pil khana*s of Kabul and Ghazna and indicates the number of elephants controlled by the Ghaznavids could have been as high at 2,500. Sukumar 2003: 75, indicates Mahmud Ghaznavi inspected a muster of 1,300 elephants in 1023-24 AD and his son Masud 1,670 elephants in 1031. Wink 2002: 102, references copper coins with Ghurid rulers mounted on elephants. For more on the Ghaznavids and Ghorids, see Bosworth 1963, 1967, and 2001.

8. See Flood 2009: 79-80, for a one time gift of 50 elephants from the Hindu Shahi King Anandapal that is likely memorialised in a miniature painting accompanying the *Majma al-Tawarikh* by Hafiz-i Abru that was produced in Herat in 1425, and a treaty with the Raja of Naryanpur for an annual tribute of 50 horses.

9. Digby 1971: 80; Sukumar 2003: 76.

10. Sukumar *ibid*.

11. It is important to note here that Babur is buried in Kabul, as is Mahmud in Ghazni, but that neither figure is publicly celebrated as an “Afghan” despite the accommodating cultural framework of a Persianate state structure that arose in the context of Mughal imperial decentralisation in the mid-eighteenth century, a process that was hastened by the invasions of Nadir Shah Afshar (r. 1736-1747) and Ahmad Shah Abdali (r. 1747-1772), and the emergence of the British East India Company (BEIC) as a major territorial power in South Asia. See below for more on Ahmad Shah and the BEIC. See Singh 1959 for Ahmad Shah Durrani and Lockhart 1938 for Nadir Shah Afshar.

12. Babur and Thackston 1996: 312, 335 and 426-7 for the rhinoceros-elephant battle curiosity, Kalpi, and a camel-elephant fight, respectively.

13. See Abu'l Fazl: I, Ains 41-48 on elephants, and Trautmann 2015: 171-81, and *passim* for more on Akbar and this text as a sources of information about elephants. Citing a source from the Jahangir's reign (c. 1605-1628), Gommans 2003: 123, provides the number of 40,000 elephants in Mughal military service.

14. Trautmann 2015: 145-51, identifies and discusses five printed Sanskrit texts that form the *Gajashastra* literary canon. The *Arthashastra* is a manual of statecraft first associated with the Mauryan Dynastic (c. 321-185 BCE) Minister named Chanakya or Kautilya who served the Emperor Chandragupta Maurya (r. c. 321-297 BC) and who is commonly viewed to the original primary author. The Arthashastra contains a wealth of elephant information and after original formulation by Chanakya/Kautilya it was modified until stabilising as a more completely “frozen text” during the Gupta empire (c. 320-550 AD) or roughly one thousand years before Akbar.

15. Sukumar 2003: 75, notes that the the post-Gupta period began a proliferation of textual, artistic and architectural production organised around Ganesha, the elephant

- headed deity worshipped by Hindus (Shaivaites [as opposed to Vaishnavaites] especially).
16. Posch 2015; Subrahmanyam 2012: 140-2.
 17. Fitzgerald 1907 for an Afghan mahout named Nasri Khan in Bengal.
 18. Green 2008 very usefully demonstrates this point.
 19. Ahmad Shah changed his tribal name from Abdali to Durrani after the Afghan polity congealed, a conspicuous and important political and cultural manoeuvre that has attracted too little scholarly attention. Timur Shah is consistently referred to as Timur Shah Durrani.
 20. al-Husayni 1974 (hereafter TAS), and Katib Hazara 2013 (hereafter ST) are the two key texts, and Ghobar 1944 generated Ahmad Shah's second referential metamorphosis.
 21. TAS: Ff. 49-51.
 22. TAS: Ff. 66-69.
 23. McChesney 1999, 2013, 2014, and Forthcoming.
 24. For the elephant execution see ST: I, 19; for the siege and Panipat booty see ST: I, 38; for the face-blackened rival, see ST: I, 54. Note this defeated enemy being placed on an elephant, albeit with his allies similarly configured on donkeys and mules, is somewhat unusual in the sense of elephants being a high status symbol not ordinarily utilised by the weak and unentitled.
 25. ST: I, 61, for review of troops; ST: I, 62, for the General circling Timur Shah; ST: I, 55, for corpse-dragging. See Lally 2015 for diplomatic gifting of horse portraits, in addition to horses and *khilats* or robes of honor, all of which were primary elements in the Mughal patterns of diplomatic gift circulation that would likely have had some degree of structuring influence on the elephant gifting under discussion here.
 26. Raverty 1976: 53. See Hanifi 2011b for more on Raverty.
 27. Hanifi 2011a.
 28. Hanifi 2015 and Mountstuart Elphinstone Papers, British Library Oriental and African Studies Reading Room, Mss Eur F88/107, that also indicates Rs. 180 was expended on repairs for three elephant howdahs. Dalrymple 2013: 6, indicates that news of these "elephants with golden howdahs" reached Shuja prior to Elphinstone's arrival in Peshawar.
 29. Elphinstone 1972: 29. See Elphinstone 1972: 653, for the official cartographer on the mission, Lt. Macartney, referencing the same elephant swimming incident and describing how he used it to help gauge the depth and flow rate of the Indus at that crossing point.
 30. Elphinstone 1972: 46.
 31. Elphinstone 1972: 142, for reference to a few elephants, and Elphinstone 1972: 242, for Nalkee description.
 32. ST: I, 101, 114, 122, 125, 132, 160, 169, and 173. This animal gift economy also included horses and camels.
 33. Hanifi 2012b.
 34. Ibid.; and Latif 1989: 461-463, and *passim*.
 35. For more on the Indus market scheme that led to the First Anglo-Afghan War, see Hanifi 2011a: 51-76.
 36. Latif 1989: 455-7, and *passim* pp. 437-96; Burnes 1992: I, 18-33, and *passim* pp. 1-80.
 37. See Morrison 2014: 466-7; Hanifi 2011a: 68-72, and *passim* pp. 3-94.
 38. Dalrymple 2013: 102, describes Akbar Khan's use of elephants during his interactions with Burnes. Throughout this book, Dalrymple provides a number of other references to and details about the elephants in use by both Maharajah Ranjit Singh and British occupation forces, as well as among British and Anglo-Indian civilians such as Macnaughten's sister Emily.

39. ST: I, 327.
40. ST: II, 110, for Sahibzadah Fateh being trampled by elephant at orders of Dost Muhammad's sons Akbar Khan and Sher Ali.
41. Hanifi 2011a: 121-52, for more on the British subsidisation of the Durrani Afghan rulers in Kabul. See ST: II, 38 and 54, for the British gift of one elephant in 1855 and multiple elephants in 1857, respectively.
42. ST: II, 145.
43. ST: II, 222.
44. See Khan 2002 and Hanifi Forthcoming B for more on early photography of Afghanistan and Afghans. See also Chuter 1900: 112-7. At least some of the artillery pieces may have been called Armstrong Divided Mountain Guns. For that possibility, see *Scientific American* 1879: 2521-3. For lithograph sketches of elephants in the Khyber Pass and Afghanistan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, see *ibid.*, pp. 2532-4.
45. See the abundant online images of these particular medals.
46. ST: II, 329.
47. See Hanifi 2011a: 121-52.
48. Hanifi 2011a.
49. ST: II, 1285.
50. ST: III *Tatimah* (Conclusion); ST: IV, 146-7.
51. The word *musth* enters English through Sanskrit and the British colonial experience in India. In Farsi Persian *mast* means agitated, intoxicated, or over-excited. *Masti* in Dari Persian means animated or energized, as in the Kabuli context of describing Pashtun dancers of the tribal *atan* as *masti*, a word that can also be invoked as fun play as in the phrase "*masti boku*" or "go play and have fun."
52. Martin 1901: 139-40 for *musth*, and *ibid.*, p. 280 for ceremonial use.
53. Hanifi 2018.
54. Hamilton 1900.
55. For more on automobiles in early twentieth-century Afghanistan, see Green 2013.
56. Thorntons 1910: 34.
57. *Ibid.* for cart; *Ibid.*, pp. 60-2 for bureaucracy.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 114-5.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*, p. 68. In addition to a picture of the ceremonial elephants, the Thorntons also provide a picture of elephants transporting royal luggage on page 69.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 114-5. For an elephant involved in road building in Afghanistan in 1937, see the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee/American Geographical Society Library Digital Photo Archive <http://collections.lib.uwm.edu/cdm/ref/collection/agsphoto/id/19365>.
62. ST: III *Tatimah* (Conclusion); ST IV, 2037; Chicago Tribune 1907: undated stack of Franco-Afghan postcards (author's possession). However, it is important to note that such photos also circulated and were retained in the royal household, for which see Seraj and Dupree 1979.
63. Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture 2011.
64. Jewett 1920. See Jewett 1948: 102, for a picture of his primary work elephant named *Pari*, which means fairy.
65. ST: III, *Tatimah* (Conclusion); ST: IV, 2076.
66. Kushan 2005: 58-60, references the *Kabul Magazine* story about Sher/Fateh Bahadur. The location of this elephant's strenuous action is the Sher Darweza mountain in the southwest of the city, specifically the Bala Koh eastern portion that slopes down toward the Bala Hissar.

67. See Schinasi 2008, (unpaginated) plates 14 and 15, for photos of the interior of the Naghara Khan in 1941 and the north face of the structure in 1928, respectively. The Naghara Khana is located in today's Jad-e Shahi section of the city, south of Pashtunistan Wat.

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APPENDIX 1: CAPTIONS FOR FIGURES

[Note: these images are published only in the online version of our book]

Figure 1: An Indian Embassy before Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna from *Majma al-Tawarikh* by Hafiz-e Abru. Flood, Finbarr Barry. 2009. *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, back cover. Image courtesy of Worcester Art Museum.

Figure 2: (Third) Battle of Panipat, 14 January 1761, <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/other/zoomify55447.html>

Figure 3: This and next two photographs (Figures 4 and 5) of an elephant battery using detachable mountain guns, most likely taken in Peshawar in 1878, are provided through the courtesy of Farrukh Husain of *Silk Road Books and Photos*, <http://silkroadbooksandphotos.com/>

Figure 4: Elephant and Mule Battery near Kandahar, subtitled "Dignity Impudence." Benjamin Simpson, <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/11496/view/1/1/>

Figure 5: Second Afghanistan War Medal memorializing elephantine participation in the conflict, <http://fourthgarrideb.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Second-AFghan-War-Medal.jpg>

Figure 6: *Souvenir Kaboul, Kandahar, Galalabad, Laghman-Pagman*, postcard packet, 1925

Figure 7: See caption on following page.

Elephants in Afghanistan

Figure 8: Photo of Sher/Fateh Bahadur, facing page 69 in Kushan, Sufi Payenda Muhammad. 2005. *Ba Kabul-e Qadim Ashna Shawid* (Get acquainted with old Kabul), Peshawar.

Figure 9: Judy, popularly understood to be a Kabul-born Afghan elephant at the time of her death in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 2013. See <http://www.wafb.com/story/21828577/elephant-judy-dies-after-long-illness-at-br-zoo>



Figure: Jewett's work elephant Pari. Jewett, A. C., and Marjorie Jewett Bell. 1948. *An American engineer in Afghanistan*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. p.102.