
Honorary Editor's: Preface



PROFESSOR SARAH ANSARI

In my time as the Honorary Editor of the JRAS, I have always been very grateful to François de Blois for his support, both as a staunch reviewer of article submissions and as a member of the JRAS Editorial Board. More broadly, from a Royal Asiatic Society perspective, François has been on Council for many years, including serving as a Vice President and also as an active member of its Library Committee. Notably, he contributed to the multi-volume work entitled *Persian Literature*, initiated by C. A. Storey and published by the Royal Asiatic Society; likewise, he has worked on the *Shahnama* of Muhammad Juki, an important part of the Society's collection (currently on long-loan at Cambridge University Library: <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/ras/1>). Other Society members report that François has been a stalwart of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum* and both a participant and attendee at forums and lecture series organised by the Ancient Indian and Iran Trust.

Since my own area of academic expertise is far removed—in both time and place—from François's work, I must leave discussion of its scholarly impact to this issue's guest editors, Dr Arash Zeini and Dr Adam Benkato. I will take the liberty, however, of sharing an anecdote that perhaps puts a different slant on his formidable and sometimes difficult-to-define qualities (indeed, our guest editors respectfully describe him as having a 'Roar of Silence'). At the age of three François was taken by his parents to see the prehistoric cave paintings at Lascaux in France. The tour guide explained that the meaning and context of the paintings' production were now no longer understood. Apparently, François resolved there and then to rediscover every idea, language and thought system that had gone before him, but which was no longer understood. An extravagant ambition for one so young. As the variety of disciplines and areas of learning represented in this special issue produced in his honour demonstrate, to date he has made a more than reasonable attempt to follow through on this objective!

SARAH ANSARI
Editor