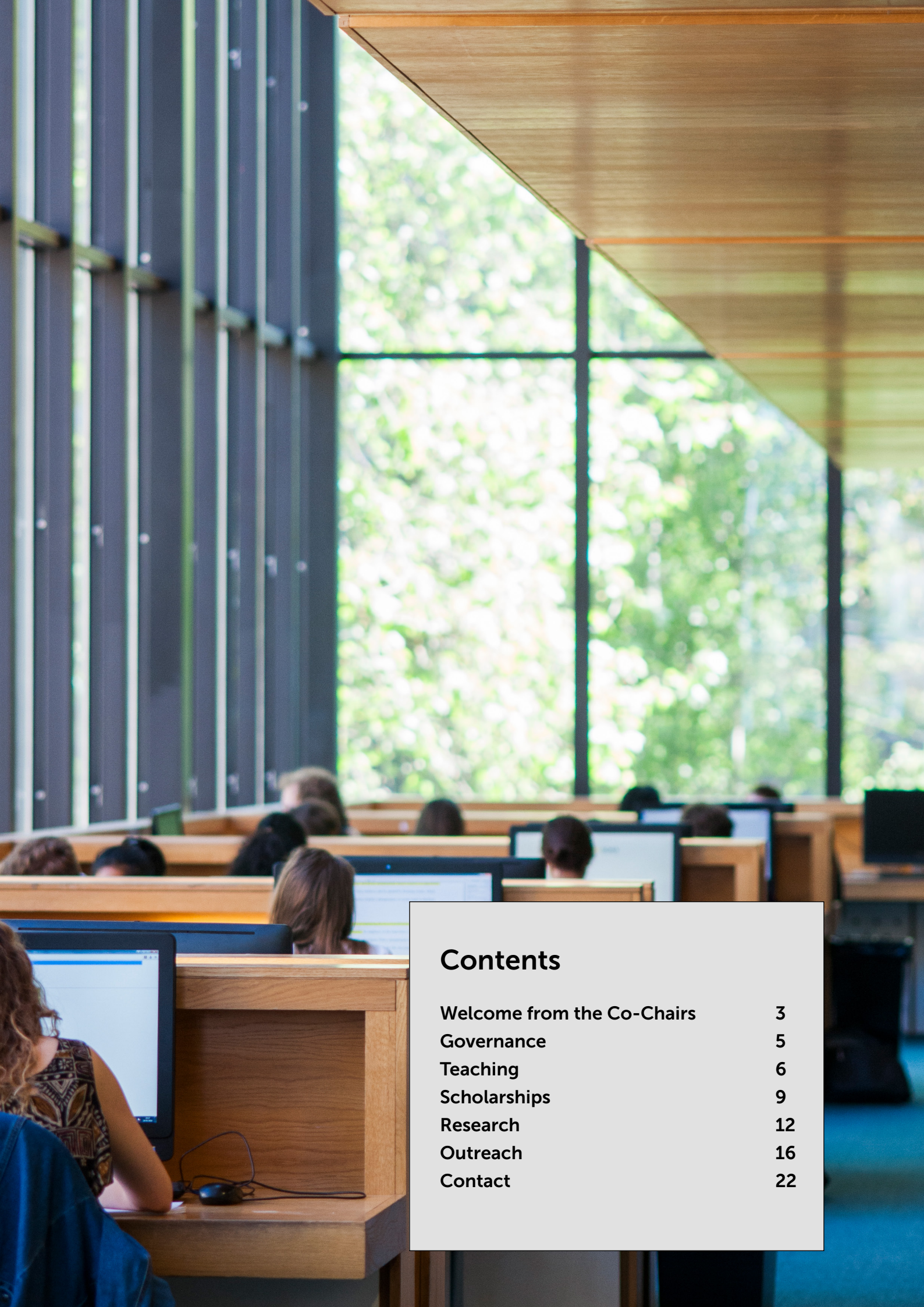
SOAS
University of London

THE SHAPOORJI PALLONJI INSTITUTE OF ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES

October 2026

SOAS University of London





Contents

Welcome from the Co-Chairs	3
Governance	5
Teaching	6
Scholarships	9
Research	12
Outreach	16
Contact	22

Welcome from the Co-Chairs

Connecting scholarship, education and community engagement has shaped the work of the Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies in 2025–26. This report brings together a year of research, teaching and public activities that reflects both the breadth of Zoroastrian studies at SOAS and the contributions of the people who sustain it.

Among this year's highlights was a pioneering leadership programme, the first of its kind to equip Zoroastrian priests with leadership skills. Made possible by Zar Amrolia's generous support, it brought together 12 Zoroastrian priests from around the world. Our Artist-in-Residence Fellow, musician and anthropologist Jonathan Galton, explored Zoroastrianism and music in modern times through research and performance, culminating in the concert Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni at Kings Place. Alongside the Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry Memorial Lecture and the Kutar Memorial Lecture, these activities created opportunities for scholarship, education and artistic expression to inform one another.

Research remains central to this exchange. With support from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the European Research Council (ERC), the Institute brings together scholars working across languages, texts, material culture and ritual. Dr Yousef Moradi researches Sasanian seals as Co-Investigator on a five-year AHRC project, while Dr Chiara Grassi, Dr Mehrbod Khanizadeh, Dr Myriadne Wang and Dr Adriana Molina-Muñoz contribute as postdoctoral researchers to the ERC project Avestan Ritual in India. Dr Anna Kuritsnya, a specialist in Central Asian languages, holds an AHRC-funded Daphne Jackson Fellowship. We also welcomed Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Researcher Massimiliano Vassalli from the University of Toronto for his work on modern Zoroastrianism in India and Iran and Professor Hai Du from the Institute of Dunhuang Studies, Lanzhou University to work on the history of the Silk Road.

Our cohort of approximately 12 doctoral students and 12 Masters students is an integral part of this research community. We also had the considerable number of 11 undergraduate and postgraduate students studying the Avestan languae. Supporting the next generation of scholars depends on making specialist study accessible. Scholarships provided through the Shapoorji Pallonji and Kamran Djam endowments, together with those offered to Zoroastrian students by the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, enable talented students to pursue their interests within SOAS's distinctive academic environment.

All of this rests on the extraordinary generosity of Mr Shapoor Mistry, whose founding gift established the Institute. We extend our warm thanks to him and to the benefactors, partners, colleagues and students whose support and participation give the Institute its character and purpose.

Looking ahead, the annual plan presented to the Senior Advisory Panel in July 2026 sets out our priorities for 2026–27. We will build on the connections developed this year, supporting sustained research and teaching while opening further opportunities for collaboration with Zoroastrian communities and wider audiences.



Dr Mariano Errichiello



Professor Almut Hintze

Governance of the Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies



The Senior Advisory Panel comprises 9 members, including the donor, who nominates up to 4 of its representatives. SOAS also nominates up to 4 members. The SOAS Panel members include the Vice-Chancellor of SOAS, who acts as Panel Chair. The Co-Chairs of the Institute are in attendance of the meetings. The Senior Advisory Panel's remit is purely advisory. It is intended to offer guidance and support to the work and development of the Institute, to collaborate to maximise opportunities, to consider the Institute's continued evolution and impact, and to support and advise the Co-Chairs in their work for the Institute, in particular on the management of any risks associated with the activities of the Institute.

The Senior Advisory Panel meets twice a year, and the Co-Chairs attend the meetings. The membership for the 2025-26 academic year was as follows:

- **Professor Adam Habib (Chair)**, Vice-Chancellor of SOAS.
- **Mr Shapoor Mistry,** Chairman and Managing Director of Shapoorji And Co Pvt Ltd.
- **Mr Kekoo Colah**, Executive Director of Shapoorji Pallonji And Co Pvt Ltd.
- **Dr Zar Amrolia**, Chair XTX Markets.
- **Dr Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis**, Emeritus Curator at The British Museum and Vice-President at British Institute of Persian Studies.
- **Mr Malcolm Deboo**, President of Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE).
- **Ms Bapsy Dastur,** General Counsel at VFS Global.
- **Justice Rohinton Nariman**, retired Supreme Court of India Judge.
- **Professor Graeme Earl**, Dean of College of Humanities and Professor of Archaeology at SOAS.

Honorary Appointments

Emiritus Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams has been appointed as Senior Fellow of the Institute, exactly fifty years since he joined SOAS in 1976 as a Lecturer in Iranian Languages. Over the following years his job-title changed several times and in 2015 he became Emeritus Professor of Iranian and Central Asian Studies. One thing which never changed throughout his years at SOAS is that Avestan and Pahlavi, the languages of the Zoroastrian scriptures, were always the main focus of his teaching. His research, on the other hand, has mainly been devoted to Eastern Iranian languages such as Sogdian, Bactrian and Khotanese. In these languages there is very little Zoroastrian literature, a rare exception being the Sogdian transcription of the Ashem vohu prayer, the oldest surviving manuscript of any Avestan text, which he published with his teacher Ilya Gershevitch in 1977. But the Zoroastrian background of the speakers of these languages is often clear from their personal names, and he found it fascinating to trace the history of Zoroastrian terms which have survived with their meanings adapted to a new Buddhist, Manichaean or Christian context.

Prof Sims-Williams joins Dr Sarah Stewart (Senior Fellow 2024-27), Prof Leilah Vevaina (Professorial Research Associate 2024-27) and Karl Singporewala (Community Fellow 2025-28) as an honorary appointee of the Institute.

Teaching Zoroastrianism at SOAS



Undergraduate

The Zoroastrian Worldview in Ancient and Modern Times

This course is offered in the undergraduate degree programme entitled 'World Philosophies'. The course introduces students to Zoroastrianism - its doctrines, rituals and observances within a historical framework. The teachings of the religion are discussed on the basis of the Zoroastrian sacred text, the Avesta, in the context of the Indo-Iranian religious system to which it belonged. The history of Zoroastrianism is traced from its prehistoric roots in Indo-Iranian times through its development under the rule of three great Iranian empires, Achaemenian, Parthian and Sasanian, its gradual development into a minority religion after the Muslim conquest of Iran, the subsequent migration and re-settlement of a diaspora community in India, and from there to the present day. Theological developments and issues of the contemporary communities are treated within this historical context with particular reference to Zoroastrian literature. The modern history and adaptation of the religion in different cultural environments are looked at mainly with reference to the Parsis in India, and the global Diaspora in such places as Britain, Canada and the USA.

Zoroastrianism: Ancient Faith, Living Philosophy

This course is offered to third year undergraduate students of the 'World Philosophies' programme. It introduces students to the major aspects of the Zoroastrian philosophy through an overview of its religious features, the engagement with relevant texts and the study of its development from ancient to modern times. It engages with key questions, debates and challenges that the field of Zoroastrian studies offers to the discipline of Philosophy by looking at critical aspects of epistemology, ethics, metaphysics and ontology emerging from the Zoroastrian esotericism, philanthropy, ritual performance and scholarship. This course proposes a community-engaged learning that entails the involvement of members of the Zoroastrians community in our seminars, allowing students for lively debates and interactions with individuals who, today, embody the Zoroastrian philosophy.

Empires of the Ancient Near and Middle East

This course provides an introduction to the most important aspects of Empires of the Ancient Near and Middle East for those with no prior knowledge of the subject. The lectures and tutorials cover the concept of empire, Semitic (Babylonian, Assyrian, Arab), Iranian (Achaemenid, Parthian, Sasanian) and Greek (Alexander) empires, and Zoroastrian minorities as 'orphans' of empires in Iran and India.

Postgraduate

Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives – World View

This course is available on the MA Religion, Politics and Society; MA Iranian Studies; MA Middle Eastern Studies; MA South Asia Area Studies.

Teaching Zoroastrianism at SOAS



Zoroastrianism, known of old as 'the Persian religion', is one of the world's most ancient living religions and one of Iran's great contributions to the history of religious thought. It is deeply rooted in the prehistoric Indo-Iranian and, ultimately, Indo-European tradition and thus shares a common heritage with the Vedic religion and Hinduism. In its long history it has been in contact with many other religions, notably Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam. For over a thousand years it was the dominant religion of three great Iranian empires under the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian rulers, extending at times from the Indus river to the coastline and islands of Asia Minor.

This course offers a survey of the teachings and religious practice of the Zoroastrian tradition and in-depth analysis of individual aspects. Topics that will be studied in greater detail include myth and historical reality in relation to the figure of Zarathustra, the question of influence of Zoroastrianism on other religious traditions, issues of the contemporary community in a historical perspective.

Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives – History

This course explores the history of Zoroastrianism from its earliest roots in the prehistoric, Indo-Iranian period up to the present day. We discuss how Zoroastrianism evolved both as a religion and as a major cultural force over the centuries in interaction with other cultures, civilisations and political powers, especially with Jews, Christians, Arabs and the British and how Zoroastrians negotiated their roles as a minority in Iran and India. No prior knowledge to take this course is required, but combining it with the course "

Avestan (Undergraduate/Postgraduate)

This course is an introduction to the language of the Avesta, the earliest and sacred texts of the Zoroastrians. To the present-day Zoroastrians pray in the Avestan language. The course is designed to provide students with a clear understanding of the basic principles of the Avestan language in a way that enables them to translate simple Avestan texts and to analyse their grammar. Students who complete the course successfully will be able to handle simple primary sources of the Zoroastrian religion in the original Avestan and to assess translations made by various scholars critically. No prior knowledge of the language is required. The course is based on lessons covering basic grammar and on the reading of texts (the selection of which may vary according to the particular interests of the students). Some memorisation of grammar and vocabulary will be required, but the emphasis will be on learning how to approach the philological and the linguistic problems of the texts in a critical fashion.

Executive Education

From 29 June to 3 July 2026, the Institute hosted *Future Zoroastrians: Leadership Programme for Emerging Priestly Leaders*, a pioneering initiative designed to equip Zoroastrian priests with leadership and professional skills. The first programme of its kind, it was made possible by Zar Amrolia's

Teaching Zoroastrianism at SOAS

support and convened by Dr Mariano Errichiello. It attracted 35 applications from six countries, with 12 priests selected from Australia, India, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The programme combined four strands: critical engagement with Zoroastrianism, leadership development, practical skills and cultural immersion. Academic sessions explored the historical diversity of Zoroastrian beliefs and practices, encouraging participants to consider how scholarly perspectives could inform their responses to contemporary community questions. Workshops covered communication, public speaking, debating, bereavement support, commercial thinking and personal branding. A commercial pitch competition challenged participants to translate ideas into persuasive, practical proposals.

A visit to the British Library, a performance at the Marylebone Theatre, shared meals and participation in the Tirgan celebration at the Zoroastrian Centre complemented classroom learning, offering participants opportunities to build relationships and exchange perspectives across national and cultural contexts. The programme concluded with action planning and the development of a collective vision, with participants identifying commitments such as organising educational sessions for young Zoroastrians, strengthening pastoral support and developing collaborative community projects.

Feedback from all 12 participants was highly positive. Every respondent strongly agreed that they would recommend the programme and that the learning environment encouraged open discussion, questioning and respectful debate. Average self-reported confidence across key leadership activities increased from 2.17 to 3.33 on a four-point scale. Participants described a broader understanding of priesthood, encompassing responsibilities as educators, mentors, counsellors and community leaders alongside ritual expertise.

These initial findings provide a foundation for developing the Institute's executive education activities. A follow-up study six months after the programme will assess how participants have applied their learning and how their intended actions have translated into changes in priestly practice and community engagement.



Participants and instructors of *Future Zoroastrians* with members of the Senior Advisory Panel of the Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies.

Scholarships

In 2025–26, we awarded Mr Rooyintan Mehenty a scholarship covering full tuition fees for his full-time MA and Ms Nafiseh Ansari a scholarship contributing towards her PhD tuition fees. We also supported Mr Shiruy Billimoria with his living costs.

Nafiseh Ansari's PhD is concerned with a Pahlavi text entitled 'The Assyrian Tree' (Draxt ī Asūrīg). Relating the debate between a goat and a palm tree on who of the two is of greater use to human beings, the text is a unique specimen of Zoroastrian agonistic literature. It is thus a precious part of Zoroastrian literature, although no critical edition with a translation currently exists. Nafiseh is preparing an edition of this text based on the manuscripts and a translation. Moreover, she interprets and analyses it in the context of Mesopotamian and Iranian material cultural traditions.

Shiruy Billimoria's PhD is on the business ethics of Parsi entrepreneurs and businessmen and -women. In particular, he is hoping to throw light on the question whether religion plays any role in the way they approach their business practices and how they use funds they have generated through their business activities.



Rooyintan Mehenty

MA Near and Middle Eastern Studies

First, I want to thank the donors who made my MA year at SOAS possible: Dr Zar Amrolia, who supported my living costs, and the Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies, which covered my tuition fees. I know I am only able to study here because of the kindness of our donors, and I do not take that for granted.

I come from India, where I am a practising Zoroastrian priest and have performed the higher liturgical ceremonies. It was my father who first guided me into the priesthood. My deepest thanks go to my parents, and above all to him; his faith and support have carried me to this point.

I chose SOAS because I have always wanted to bring together the ritual I know from the inside and the methods of academic scholarship. The MA in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, with its training in Zoroastrian studies and historical linguistics, gave me the chance to start doing that.



Rooyintan Mehenty

MA Near and Middle Eastern Studies

Looking back, I can honestly say this year changed the way I think and write. I came with years of experience explaining our religion in the traditional way. British postgraduate study asked something quite different of me: to question sources, to argue a case, and to say it clearly in as few words as possible. It took time to adjust, but I finished the year with distinction-level marks in my examinations and dissertation.

For me, the heart of the year was the training in Avestan: reading the language, working with manuscripts, and getting to grips with the script and its diacritics. Studying Sanskrit alongside it helped enormously, because it kept showing me how closely the two traditions are related. I can now read our scriptures critically, weigh historical evidence, and take part in the theological and interpretive debates that matter to our community around the world. Presenting in departmental seminars also taught me a great deal about explaining ritual to people who have never seen it performed.

My supervisor, Professor Almut Hintze, has been central to all of this. Her knowledge, patience and encouragement have shaped my work more than I can easily say.

The scholarship support made a real difference. Because my living costs and tuition fees were covered, I could give my full attention to my studies without financial worry.

I am staying at SOAS to begin an MPhil, leading to a PhD, on the Nīrangdīn ceremony: its ritual meaning, its textual history, and how it is performed today. This is generously supported by the Zartoshty Brothers Scholarship, and I am very grateful for the chance to continue.

Research

Avestan Ritual in India (AVINDIA), Jan 2024 -Dec 2028.



The team of this five-year project, funded by an Advanced Investigator Grant of the European Research Council (€2,499,999) filmed the performance of a Visperad ceremony at the Cama Athornan Institute in Andheri, Mumbai, in November 2024. Using film and computational technologies, the project team, led by Almut Hintze, seeks to detect, describe, visualise and analyse how the ritual is structured as systematically organised activity, and to reconstruct its genesis and historical trajectory. By analysing the ritual structure of the Visperad in the Indo-Iranian diachronic perspective, we are hoping to reveal change over long periods of time and across the boundaries of religious cultures.

In addition, the team examines how the ritual is practised and understood in India. Building on editing tools and work already undertaken in Professor Hintze's Multimedia Yasna (MUYA) ERC project, we edit, translate, and analyse the Sanskrit version of the Avestan recitation text, the Gujarati preparatory ceremony (Paragna) and ritual directions, and Gujarati language treatises. This will create new insights into the historical trajectory of ritual change, as well as local variation of the performances in India.

The project will generate a large volume of research data in audio and visual digital formats, bringing with it responsibility for effective management both of data captured in field research and of subsequent processing. Technical infrastructure will be created to ensure that the data complies with recognised standards and can be made preservable in the long term. Early establishment of such infrastructure will significantly strengthen long-term preservation of raw data as well as discovery and accessibility of outcomes of AVINDIA, resulting in standards-based and sustainable research and public data resources. Deliverables of AVINDIA, including movies, annotated collections and publications including books will be formed into corpus repositories designed for sustained use and further enrichment by the team and by the wider research community, and to also deliver publicly-accessible presentations of key outputs.

Research

Beyond Discovery: Religion, economics and administration in Sasanian Iran through new clay bullae from Taxt-e Solayman, June 2023 - May 2028. Co-Investigator: Dr Yousef Moradi.



This five-year project is funded by a Standard Grand of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council with £999,998. The team analyses and publishes newly discovered bullae and the seal impression they bear from one of the most important fire temples of Sasanian Iran. The World Heritage Site of Taxt-e Solayman, or 'Throne of Solomon', is located in the province of Western Azerbaijan in Iran. It was home of the 'fire of the warriors and military chieftain', in Middle Persian: Adur Gushnasp, one of the three most sacred Zoroastrian fires of the Sasanian Empire (224-651 CE). There, between 2002 and 2008, during archaeological excavations under the auspices of the then Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization, Yousef Moradi excavated 824 Sasanian clay bullae, bearing almost 2,000 seal impressions. He thus recovered a new Iranian primary source for Sasanian history, which to date largely relies on non-Iranian accounts.

The outstanding feature of this find is not only that it comes from one of the most important religious centres of Zoroastrian Iran, but also that it has a secure provenance. For, in contrast to most other collections of Sasanian seals, this one comes from a controlled and fully documented excavation. Now housed in the Museum of Urmia in Azerbaijan, it is unpublished and inaccessible to the public. The purpose of our project is to analyse and publish it in a methodologically innovative way both in print and online, and to enhance its public visibility through film, exhibitions, 3-D models and replicas.

The project provides new insights into the reading of inscriptions and the imagery, the production process of bullae, sealing practices, the role of seals in Sasanian society, the economic activities of the Zoroastrian fire temple, and its interaction with different social and religious groups, including Jews and Christians. Results will be disseminated in print as articles and as a two-volume book to be published in the series Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, covering sealing practices, inscriptions, iconography, and providing a full descriptive catalogue with plates. An electronic dataset, published online with metadata, will provide photographs and line drawings of all 824 bullae, and 3D models. Replicas of selected bullae will be made available at a workshop, and at exhibitions in the UK and at the Urmia Museum, Iran, where the bullae are stored.

Outreach

Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry Memorial Lecture

The fourth Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry Memorial Lecture, entitled "Oral Literature, Adaptation, and Resistance in the Zoroastrian Community", was delivered by Prof Saloumeh Gholami on 10 November 2025 at SOAS University of London. Gholami, British Academy Global Professor at the University of Cambridge, presented findings from her British Academy-funded research project, *Persisting Through Change: A Study of Oral Literature and Cultural Interaction in the Zoroastrian Community*.

The lecture examined the role of oral traditions in preserving and transmitting Zoroastrian cultural heritage, with particular attention to storytelling, songs, prayers and other forms of oral expression among Zoroastrian communities in Iran. It explored the ways in which these traditions had been adapted across generations and changing social environments, highlighting their significance in sustaining collective memory and cultural identity. Particular attention was given to the contributions of women in preserving and transmitting oral knowledge, as well as the relationship between cultural adaptation and resilience.

Kutar Memorial Lecture

On 30 April 2026, the Institute held the Kutar Memorial Lecture, at which Dr Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis delivered the keynote address, "Bird Wings and Diadems: Zoroastrian Symbols in Parthian and Sasanian Art". The lecture explored the representation and significance of Zoroastrian-associated symbols within the artistic traditions of the Parthian and Sasanian periods. It contributed to the Institute's programme of public scholarship by bringing historical and art-historical perspectives on pre-Islamic Iran to a wider audience.



Outreach

Cosmos, Memory, Scale

The exhibition Cosmos, Memory, Scale (Oct-Dec 2025), developed by the Institute's 2024–25 Shapoorji Pallonji Artist-in-Residence, Karl Singporewala, attracted 9,700 visitors and provided the foundation for an extended programme of community engagement and creative activities. The exhibition explored relationships between Zoroastrian material culture, domestic religious spaces, memory, migration and cultural identity.

During November and December 2025, Karl Singporewala delivered creative engagement activities through a ZTFE children's club, working with children aged 4–14. These sessions introduced younger audiences to the exhibition through age-appropriate artistic activities and encouraged them to explore connections between art, cultural heritage and personal identity. Further public engagement activities included an artist talk delivered by Karl Singporewala on 8 December 2025, which provided insights into his creative practice and the development of Cosmos, Memory, Scale. He also conducted a virtual tour of the exhibition in collaboration with the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA).

Following the exhibition, the Institute organised two community workshops involving participants from the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) and the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE). These workshops encouraged participants to share personal experiences, family histories and memories associated with Zoroastrian devotional objects and domestic spaces. The material gathered through these discussions informed the development of Home, Elsewhere: Objects That Carry Us, a theatrical work that explored the relationship between material heritage, migration, belonging and intergenerational memory.



Produced by Tamina Davar, the play was presented on three occasions, at SOAS (22 April 2026), the Zoroastrian Centre (20 June 2026) and the Marylebone Theatre (3 July 2026). These performances extended the reach of the original exhibition and created further opportunities for audiences to engage with

Outreach

Cosmos, Memory, Scale

questions of cultural continuity, identity and the meanings attached to objects carried across generations and geographical boundaries.

Recordings of the theatrical production and associated public events were made available through the SOAS YouTube channel, supporting continued access to the Institute's activities beyond their original presentation dates.



Film screening

On 10 May 2026, the Institute's public engagement programme included the premiere of the documentary film Mobed: The Parsi Priest, held at the Zoroastrian Centre in collaboration with ZTFE. The screening provided an opportunity to explore the traditions, training and contemporary experiences of Parsi Zoroastrian priests, drawing attention to the transmission of religious knowledge and ritual practices across generations.

Almut Hintze, Zartoshty Brothers Professor of Zoroastrianism at SOAS, also presented findings from the Multimedia Yasna (MUYA) project. This major collaborative research initiative had brought together scholars and specialists to investigate the textual transmission, performance and documentation of the Yasna, a central Zoroastrian liturgical tradition. The project combined manuscript research, philological analysis and digital technologies, including audiovisual documentation of ritual performance. The event connected the Institute's academic research with the experiences and interests of the wider Zoroastrian community, demonstrating the value of collaboration between scholars, practitioners and community organisations.

Outreach

Film screening

The event connected the Institute's academic research with the experiences and interests of the wider Zoroastrian community, demonstrating the value of collaboration between scholars, practitioners and community organisations.



Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni

Developed and curated by Jonathan Galton, the 2025–26 Shapoorji Pallonji Artist-in-Residence, *Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni* drew an audience of 350 to Kings Place on 29 May 2026. The concert marked the culmination of Galton's exploration of Zoroastrianism and music, bringing the Institute's research into a public setting through artistic collaboration and performance.

At the heart of the project was a question: how have sound and performance shaped Zoroastrian identity across time? The programme drew inspiration from the rich musical worlds connected to Zoroastrian culture, from the distinctive soundscape of Avestan prayer to the long history of Parsi engagement with Western classical music and Persianate traditions. These connections offered a way to explore how religious and cultural identities are expressed, sustained and reinterpreted through music.

Hosted by Nina Wadia OBE, the concert combined newly commissioned works with familiar classics. Performers included baritone Frazan Kotwal, violinist Fra Rustumji, pianist Firoze Madon, Amir Massoumian and the Ava Choir, with contributions from composers Kahan Taraporevala and Raiomond Mirza. Together, they brought a range of musical perspectives to a programme that placed contemporary creativity in conversation with inherited traditions.

Outreach

Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni

The event brought musicians, scholars and members of the Zoroastrian community together, creating opportunities to share knowledge and experience beyond the classroom. For audiences, music provided an accessible introduction to aspects of Zoroastrian history and culture, while inviting reflection on the relationships between religious practice, artistic expression and belonging. The evening concluded with a drinks reception generously sponsored by the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO), offering audiences, performers and guests an opportunity to meet and continue the conversations inspired by the concert.

The concert demonstrated the value of the Artist-in-Residence Fellowship as a meeting point for scholarship, creative practice and public engagement. Donor support makes space for this exchange, enabling artists to develop work informed by research and bringing the study of Zoroastrianism to wider audiences. With 350 people attending, *Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni* offered a substantial public platform for this work and illustrated how the Institute can connect its academic mission with cultural life beyond SOAS.



SOAS
University of London



CONTACT

Suzy Rushforth
Senior Philanthropy Manager
SOAS, University of London
Thornhaugh Street
London
WC1H 0XG

+44 (0)20 7898 4600
s.rushforth@soas.ac.uk