

Subscription Publishing and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Indian Print Culture

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Studies of Indian print culture almost invariably have dated its origins to the period after 1800. The consumption and production of print in South Asia before then, supposedly, was limited to Europeans. This article challenges this consensus through an examination of Indian participation in subscription publishing. It uses lists of subscribers to reveal the existence in the eighteenth century of a community of Indian print readers and patrons. It identifies more than one hundred members of this community, and, to the extent possible, reconstructs their backgrounds and motivations. It finds that they were a diverse lot: they lived in various places, belonged to various social groups, bought various kinds of books, and did so for various reasons. By the end of the eighteenth century, print had caught on with some of the key groups and individuals responsible for its later spread. If Indian print culture blossomed in the following decades, then it was able to do so because its roots had been planted already.

The humble request of several Natives of Bengal.—We humbly beseech any Gentlemen will be so good to us as to take the trouble of making a Bengal Grammar and Dictionary, in which, we hope to find all the common Bengal country words made into English.

— *Calcutta Gazette* (23 Apr. 1789)

Mr. Cooper takes this method of informing the Natives, at whose request the Card was inserted in the last Calcutta Gazette, that if they will take the trouble of calling at his Printing-office, they may see part of a Bengal and English Vocabulary; which is now going on; and which may be speedily published if properly supported by Subscriptions

— *Calcutta Chronicle* (30 Apr. 1789)

In recent years, many historians and other scholars have taken an interest in the print culture of South Asia, “the first fully formed print culture to appear outside of Europe and North America.”¹ Almost invariably, they have dated its appearance to the nineteenth century. Printing in India

¹ Vinay Dharwadker, “Print Culture and Literary Markets in Colonial India,” in Jeffrey Masten, Peter Stallybrass, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds., *Language Machines: Technologies of Literary and Cultural Production* (New York, 1997), ch. 4, p. 112.

before 1800, according to the consensus, was “entirely the preserve of Europeans.”² This consensus has derived from the apparent scarcity of instances “before 1800 of the press being used *by Indians for Indians*.”³ And it is true that, with vanishingly few exceptions, it was only in later years that Indians managed presses or contracted with them. As the above exchange hints, however, Indians did in fact take an active part in print culture in the late eighteenth century. They did so in two principal ways: as readers and as patrons.

Even on the basis of existing evidence, it would seem that Indian contacts with print in this period have been downplayed. It is well known, for instance, that some Indians contributed to periodicals, many read them, and an even greater number heard them read. The India hand Joseph

² Graham Shaw, “South Asia,” in Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, eds., *A Companion to the History of the Book*, 2nd edn. (2 vols., West Sussex, 2019), i, ch. 9, p. 131. For studies of Indian print culture that have supposed a nineteenth-century starting point, see Anindita Ghosh, “An Uncertain Coming of the Book: Early Print Cultures in Colonial India,” *Book History* 6 (2003), pp. 23-55; Anindita Ghosh, *Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778-1905* (New Delhi, 2006); Vivek Bhandari, “Print and the Emergence of Multiple Publics in Nineteenth-Century Punjab,” in Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist, and Eleanor F. Shevlin, eds., *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein* (Amherst, 2007), ch. 13; Ulrike Stark, *An Empire of Books: The Naval Kishore Press and the Diffusion of the Printed Word in Colonial India* (Ranikhet, 2007); Jan E.M. Houben and Saraju Rath, introduction to Rath, ed., *Aspects of Manuscript Culture in South India* (Leiden, 2012); A. R. Venkatachalapathy, *The Province of the Book: Scholars, Scribes, and Scribblers in Colonial Tamilnadu* (Ranikhet, 2012); Cristina Pecchia, Johanna Buss, and Alaka A Chudal, introduction to Pecchia, Buss, and Chudal, eds., *Print Cultures in the Making in 19th- and 20th-Century South Asia: Beyond Disciplinary Boundaries*, special issue, *Philological Encounters* 6 (2021).

³ Shaw, “South Asia,” p. 131.

Price claimed in 1783 that “newspapers are as much read in Asia as in London.”⁴ Around the same time, newspapers in Calcutta—and shortly afterwards, in Madras and Bombay—began to carry items in local languages [FIGURE 1].⁵ Many Indians first encountered print in the form of religious texts sent from Europe or produced in missionary enclaves.⁶ By one estimate, as many as 250,000 Indians were exposed to printed Tamil Bibles before 1800.⁷ Perhaps as many saw or handled the official documents with which Bengal, at least, was awash by the 1780s.⁸ Meanwhile, Indians were as extensively involved in the production of print as they were in the consumption of

⁴ Joseph Price, *A Short Commercial and Political Letter from Mr. Joseph Price to the Right Honourable Charles James Fox* (London, 1783), p. 15. Price evidently was referring both to *akhbarat* (handwritten newsletters) and to printed English newspapers. On Indian news-writers and their audiences, see Michael H. Fisher, “The Office of Akhbār Nawīs: The Transition from Mughal to British Forms,” *Modern Asian Studies* 27 (1993), pp. 45-82; C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 36-44, 69-73, 199-207.

⁵ See also James Mulholland, *Before the Raj: Writing Early Anglophone India* (Baltimore, 2021), ch. 2.

⁶ A detailed example is given in J. Ferd. Fenger, *History of the Tranquebar Mission, Worked Out from the Original Papers* (Tranquebar, 1863), pp. 174-80. Printed hymns and songs, in particular, would have been many Indians’ first point of contact with the medium. For this argument made with reference to the early nineteenth century, see Abhijit Gupta, *The Spread of Print in Colonial India* (Cambridge, 2021), p. 15. For the popularity of Tamil hymnals as early as the eighteenth century, however, see John Murdoch, *Tamil Printed Books, with Introductory Notices* (Madras, 1865), pp. 9-10.

⁷ Stuart Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India* (Delhi, 2003), p. 63.

⁸ A report of the Bengal government in 1787 showed that, in the past decade, it had printed well over one hundred thousand documents, including “a huge variety of forms, proclamations, advertisements, and regulations in English, Persian, and Bengali.” Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago, 2007), p. 230.

it. Most printing offices were “worked by natives.”⁹ At least one newspaper was financed by them.¹⁰ A few works were edited by Muslims.¹¹ A few others were edited and printed by Parsis.¹² Still, for all of this evidence, historians of Indian print culture have written out the eighteenth century. This article uses a rich and untapped source on book reading and patronage to write it back in.

What is most striking about the exchange between the “several Natives of Bengal” and the printer Joseph Cooper is its air of regularity. There was clearly nothing strange about Indians sponsoring a publication—nor about them doing so through subscription. Subscription publishing has been extensively treated by scholars of eighteenth-century Britain, Europe, and America.¹³

⁹ Nota Manus [Haji Mustapha], Appendix to Seid-Gholam-Hosseini-Khan [Ghulam Husain Khan Tabatabai], *A Translation of the Seir Mutaqharin; or, View of Modern Times*, trans. Nota Manus [Haji Mustapha] (4 vols., Calcutta, 1789-90), i. 5 n. For details on some of these workers, see R. B. Ramsbotham, “Pages from the Past: Extracts from the Records of the Government of India,” *Bengal Past and Present* 29 (1925), pp. 207-16, at 215.

¹⁰ Mulholland, *Before the Raj*, p. 46.

¹¹ Examples include [Abu Talib Khan, ed.,] *The Works of Dewan Hafez: With an Account of His Life and Writings* (Calcutta, 1791); [John Herbert Harington and Moulavee Mohummud Rāshid, eds.,] *The Persian and Arabick Works of Sādee* (2 vols., Calcutta, 1791-5).

¹² Anant Kakba Priolkar, *The Printing Press in India: Its Beginnings and Early Development* (Bombay, 1958), pp. 71-2; Shaw, “South Asia,” p. 131.

¹³ See, *inter alia*, John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1997); Amy M. Thomas, “‘There Is Nothing so Effective as a Personal Canvass’: Revaluing Nineteenth-Century American Subscription Books,” *Book History* 1 (1998), pp. 140-55; Wallace Kirsop, “Patronage across Frontiers: Subscription Publishing in French in Enlightenment Europe,” in Bill Bell, Philip Bennet and Jonquil Bevan, eds., *Across Boundaries: The Book in Culture and Commerce* (New Castle, Del., 2000), pp. 57-72; Richard B. Sher, *The*

Subscription lists have been extensively used by such scholars to reconstruct networks of readership and patronage.¹⁴ Yet neither the practice nor the attendant material has been much examined in other contexts.¹⁵ This study is the first to examine them at any length in the context of British India.¹⁶ It finds not only that subscription publishing was popular there but that it was so among Indians in particular.¹⁷ Indian names appear on nearly half of the extant lists of subscribers to books published in India in the eighteenth century.¹⁸ Overall, the article identifies 106 subscriptions by 102 Indians to 138 copies of twelve titles (See Appendix). These numbers

Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America (Chicago, 2006); Michael Winship, "Subscription," *Early American Studies* 16 (2018), pp. 777-82.

¹⁴ For general considerations, see P. J. Wallis, "Book Subscription Lists," *The Library* 5th ser. 29 (1974), pp. 257-86; Thomas Lockwood, "Subscription-Hunters and Their Prey," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 34 (2001), pp. 121-35.

¹⁵ See, however, John J. Garcia, "Subscribing to Empire: The Global Expansion of American Subscription Publishing," *Book History* 24 (2021), pp. 85-114.

¹⁶ Scholars have sometimes mentioned in passing the complaints of two authors, Haji Mustapha and John Gilchrist, regarding subscription publishing. See especially Miles Ogborn, "The Amusements of Posterity: Print Against Empire in Late Eighteenth-Century Bengal," in Ogborn and Charles W. J. Withers, eds., *Geographies of the Book* (Farnham, 2010), ch. 1, pp. 42-7.

¹⁷ In this article, the term "Indian" will be used to describe indigenous residents of South Asia, including individuals of other, usually Persian, origin who can be said to have assimilated into Indian society. It will not be extended to mixed-race Eurasians ("Portuguese" or "East Indians") nor to Armenians, though both groups were active in eighteenth-century print culture. On the latter, see Sebouh D. Aslanian, "A Reader Responds to Joseph Emin's *Life and Adventures*: Notes toward a 'History of Reading' in Late Eighteenth Century Madras," *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift für Armenische Philologie* (2012), cols. 363-418; Sebouh D. Aslanian, "Port Cities and Printers: Reflections on Early Modern Global Armenian Print Culture," *Book History* 17 (2014), pp. 51-93.

¹⁸ The following tally may omit some subscriptions by Indian Christians, who often took European names.

attest to the existence, by the late eighteenth century, of a community of Indian print readers and patrons. This community was present in all three East India Company presidencies—Bengal, Madras, Bombay—and beyond. It included rulers and landholders, men of business, and men of letters. It also included print authors and entrepreneurs. Far from being insignificant, therefore, early Indian experience with print paved the way for its later proliferation.

The rest of the article examines Indian participation in subscription publishing to reveal the existence before 1800 of an Indian print community. On the basis of the available subscription lists, it tentatively attempts to reconstruct the membership and motivations of this community. It concludes by addressing the limitations and implications of these findings. The former are many, yet the latter are compelling nonetheless. If Indian print culture “really took off ... in the first half of the nineteenth century,” then it was able to do so because its foundations had been laid already.¹⁹

The first recorded instance of Indians subscribing to a book, in the 1770s, may have been an aberration. Yet soon Europeans in India were debating whether subscription publishing, and print at large, might attract “native” interest. There were notable skeptics. But by the end of the 1780s these questions had been answered in the affirmative. Among other signs of Indian interest in print were the many Indian names now appearing on subscription lists.

The story of Indian participation in subscription publishing has a curious beginning. The first book to which Indians subscribed, apparently, was a 1777 biography of the Sienese theologian Faustus Socinus. The story gets stranger. The book was published in London; the author, the dissenting minister Joshua Toulmin, had no connection to India. The Indian subscribers were

¹⁹ Ghosh, “An Uncertain ‘Coming of the Book,’” p. 23.

neither Christians nor visitors to England but rather the Nawab of Arcot and the Raja of Tanjore. By chance a letter survives in which Toulmin relates how the former came to subscribe to his book: “The Title, Nabob of Archot, was given to me thro’ the hands of a friend, by the agent of this East Indian Prince residing then in London. The Nabob understand[s] English.”²⁰ Whether or not the nawab understood English may not have mattered; he may not even have received the book. Subscribing in his name was likely part of a strategy of literary publicity pursued by his London agents.²¹ This strategy likewise probably accounts for the inclusion of the name of the Raja of Tanjore. The nawab and the raja were inveterate enemies; their agents vied on their behalf for influence and sympathy with British authorities.²² Why these agents subscribed to this particular work—and not, it seems, others—is a mystery. But Toulmin’s disapproval of falsified subscription lists suggests that his own list was genuine.²³

Subscription publishing came to India in earnest the following decade. This development owed, first, to the emergence of Calcutta as a center of print, and, second, to the resurgence of this method in Britain.²⁴ It also owed to a seismic upheaval in the imperial political scene. Among the

²⁰ Toulmin to Joseph Fownes, 7 Jul. 1778, in Timothy Whelan, ed., *Baptist Autographs in the John Rylands Library of Manchester, 1741-1845* (Macon, Ga., 2009), p. 37.

²¹ See George McElroy, “Ossianic Imagination and the History of India: James and John Macpherson as Propagandists and Intriguers,” in Jennifer J. Carter and Joan H. Pittock, eds., *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1987), ch. 41.

²² P. J. Marshall, introduction to vol. v of Edmund Burke, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. Paul Langford (9 vols., Oxford, 1981-2015), pp. 6-10.

²³ Toulmin to John Sturch, 17 Mar. 1777, Dr. Williams’s Library, MS 12.45, ff. 128r-v.

²⁴ See respectively, Graham Shaw, *Printing in Calcutta to 1800: A Description and Checklist of Printing in Late 18th-Century Calcutta* (London, 1981); Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 139.

charges faced in parliament by the first Governor-General of Bengal, Warren Hastings, was that he had patronized books in order to conceal or excuse corruption and other abuses. His successors took note. Lord Cornwallis kept writers and scholars at arm's length during his high-minded and high-handed administration of 1786-93.²⁵ Those who sought to appear in print must find other sources of funding.

They turned to subscription for various reasons. Some of these were the same in India as in Britain. Most importantly, the method limited risk: if not enough subscribers could be found to cover the cost of a book, then it could be abandoned. In addition, funds could be raised in advance; print runs could be tailored more accurately to demand; and, with the promise to publish the names of subscribers, demand could be stimulated among those conscious of status and reputation. Other considerations were India-specific. Printing was more expensive and the difficulties attendant on it greater than in Britain. This made the prospect of controlling risk through subscription still more attractive. So too did greater uncertainties about the audience for print in India, which was just coming into being. Each publication was an experiment: questions surrounded the size, tastes, and expectations of this audience. One question, as late as the 1780s, was whether it included Indians. European commentators did not always answer in the affirmative.

There were notable skeptics. The Calcutta printer and Persianist Francis Gladwin assumed that interest in his translation of the *Ain-i Akbari* (1783-6) would be confined to "English readers."²⁶ The absence of Indian names on the list of subscribers to the work might have been taken to support this assumption. The army officer William Kirkpatrick, who at one point projected

²⁵ Joshua Ehrlich, *The East India Company and the Politics of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 2023), ch. 2.

²⁶ Francis Gladwin, preface to [Abu al-Fazl,] *Ayeen Akbery: Or, The Institutes of the Emperor Akber*, trans. Gladwin (3 vols., Calcutta, 1783-6), i. viii.

a “Hindvi Grammar and Vocabulary,” doubted whether print would ever be embraced by an Indian public.²⁷ His remarks on the subject, in an essay published in 1789, are worth quoting at length:

As to the natives of this country being sometime or other induced to embark in, or to encourage, such an undertaking, the prospect is very far from flattering.... Liberal literature is no longer countenanced by the princes, or the opulent subjects, of India The learned among the natives are, in fact, by no means insensible to the advantages resulting from printed books. On the contrary, many of them have been known to lament their inability to assist, effectually, in the introduction and general adoption of an improvement so important to the cause of learning. A few of this description have even manifested a desire of executing an impression of some particular manuscripts: but have been deterred from the undertaking by the magnitude of the expense.

The specific “undertaking” to which Kirkpatrick referred was the printing of “Oriental manuscripts.” But his claim was more general: the “art of printing” would never succeed in India, except perhaps among Europeans.²⁸ For all of his doubts, Kirkpatrick acknowledged that “many” Indians wished to read or patronize print. What he and Gladwin failed to appreciate was that, in their capacity as subscribers, some were beginning to do so already.

²⁷ On this project, see Kirkpatrick to Court of Directors of the East India Company, 16 Jul. 1784, British Library, IOR E/1/75, ff. 74r-79r. On its abandonment, see John Gilchrist, *Dictionary, English and Hindoostanee* (2 vols., Calcutta, 1787-98), i. x.

²⁸ William Kirkpatrick, “An Introduction to the History of the Persian Poets,” in [Francis Gladwin, ed.,] *The New Asiatic Miscellany. Consisting of Original Essays, Translations, and Fugitive Pieces* 1 (1789), pp. 13-60, at 38-9 n.

By the time Kirkpatrick was writing, there were numerous signs of Indian participation in subscription publishing. The newspaper exchange between Cooper and the “several Natives of Bengal” was but one of these. Subscriptions to a work published in India were first collected from Indians no later than 1788.²⁹ By that year, “proposals for subscription” printed in Calcutta often featured text in Bengali or Persian. Reportedly, an edition of the poems of Hafez advertised in that year was snatched up by “the learned in Bengal.”³⁰ Around the same time, the orientalist Sir William Jones expressed hope that local publications might receive “a large publick subscription.”³¹ This statement featured in bilingual proposals for what would prove to be one of the most popular works with early Indian subscribers: John Herbert Harington and Maulvi Muhammad Rashid’s edition of the writings of Sadi [FIGURE 2]. Meanwhile, the Madras surgeon and printer Henry Harris, whose *Hindustani dictionary* of 1790 would be another such work, urged promoters of print to take Indian demand into consideration. “Permit us to add,” he and two partners wrote to the governor, “that specific application has even been made to us by the Bramins of Madras ... to publish some *Comments on the Shasters* by Poonacoorty.”³² By the 1790s, Indian interest in printed books was no longer in question: Indian names appeared on subscription lists

²⁹ One “Mirza Bakir” appears on the list of subscribers to William Francklin, *Observations Made on a Tour from Bengal to Persia, in the Years 1786-7* (Calcutta, 1788). In addition, Harington and Muhammad Rashid’s edition of Sadi, which found many Indian subscribers, was advertised in that year. *Calcutta Gazette* (28 Aug. 1788).

³⁰ “Remarks on the Poetry of Hafez,” *Oriental Collections* 1 (1797), p. 182. The edition ([Abu Talib Khan, ed.,] *Works of Dewan Hafez*) was advertised in 1788.

³¹ [Sir William Jones,] preface to [Jones, trans.,] *Laili Majnun, a Persian Poem of Hâtifi* (Calcutta, 1788), p. x.

³² Thomas Chase, Joseph Shawe, and Henry Harris to Governor of Madras in Council, 4 Mar. 1788, in Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras 1640-1800* (4 vols., London, 1913), i, pp. 361-2.

for all to see. Those lists furnished contemporaries with an index of Indian readers and patrons. Today, they furnish historians with the same thing.

The lists contain fragmentary yet invaluable evidence on who subscribed to printed books in the eighteenth century. Among other things, they reveal that Indian subscribers made up a heterogeneous category. They fell into a few main groups. One consisted of rulers and landholders, another men of business, and a third men of letters. Each of these groups would have had various reasons to subscribe, ranging from political calculation to intellectual interest. A final group comprised print authors and entrepreneurs, who may have sought to gain exposure to and through the medium. By the end of the eighteenth century, print had caught on with some of the key groups and individuals responsible for its later spread.

While the Nawab of Arcot and the Raja of Tanjore may have been unwitting patrons of Toulmin's biography, this could not have been true of most of the landed elites—including the nawab—who later subscribed to local publications. In the comments cited in the proposal for Harington and Muhammad Rashid's edition of Sadi, William Jones solicited not only "a large publick subscription" but also "the patronage ... of monarchs or ... wealthy individuals."³³ Many such individuals proved willing to oblige. Rulers and landholders accounted for approximately half of the Indian names on eighteenth-century subscription lists. They ranged from zamindars (landlords) and other gentry to nawabs (governors) and their households to the padishah (Mughal emperor). The act of subscribing would have been viewed by them as a means to perform a duty of scholarly patronage. Furthermore, it allowed them to do so on what the pamphleteer Haji

³³ [Jones,] preface to [Jones, trans.,] *Laili Majnun*, p. x.

Mustapha called “the Theatre of an English world.” According to Mustapha, the nawab of Bengal, Mubarak ud-Daula, and the *naib nazim* (deputy governor), Muhammad Reza Khan, took umbrage at his translation and publication of a history that criticized them. The coming of print, Mustapha suggested, compelled “the great ones of this land” to cultivate their reputations anew.³⁴ This the nawab and the *naib nazim* may have done, in part, by subscribing to books and thus appearing in print as patrons. The same tactic seems to have been embraced by the *ijaradar* (revenue farmer) Raja Devi Singh, who was notorious for having enforced the Company’s revenue demands so harshly as to provoke a rebellion.³⁵ The five copies of Harington and Muhammad Rashid’s edition of Sadi to which Devi Singh subscribed were second on the accompanying list only to Reza Khan’s ten.

Men of business—among whom in fact might be classed a commercial raja like Devi Singh—constituted the second largest group of Indian subscribers. They would have been stirred by some of the same concerns as landed elites, including their reputations and their relations with

³⁴ [Haji Mustapha,] *Some Idea of the Civil and Criminal Courts of Justice at Moorshoodabad, in a Letter to Capt. John Hawkshaw, at Behrampore, of the 30th May 1789* (Calcutta, 1789), pp. 67-8; Ogborn, “Amusements of Posterity,” p. 44.

³⁵ Parliamentary speeches condemning Devi Singh appeared in Calcutta newspapers at the same time the subscription to Harington’s work was open—and, at least once, on the same page as an advertisement for it. *Calcutta Gazette* (18 Mar. 1790), supplement. On Devi Singh, see P. J. Marshall, “Indian Officials under the East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Bengal,” in *Trade and Conquest: Studies on the Rise of British Dominance in India* (Aldershot, 1993), ch. 5, pp. 102, 111, 115. On the rebellion, see Jon E. Wilson, “‘A Thousand Countries to Go to’: Peasants and Rulers in Late Eighteenth-Century Bengal,” *Past and Present* 189 (2005), pp. 89-109; James Lees, “‘A Character to Lose’” Richard Goodlad, the Rangpur *Dhing*, and the Priorities of the East India Company’s Early Colonial Administrators,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3rd ser. 25 (2015), pp. 301-15.

British officials. They also had practical concerns. The “several Natives of Bengal” requested an English grammar and dictionary because, in their words, “by this means we shall be enabled to recommend ourselves to the English Government and understand their orders.”³⁶ The stewards, clerks, tailors, and other men of business who subscribed to books on language, accounts, and sugarcane cultivation also probably did so out of practical interest. Finally, some magnates evidently sought to demonstrate their civic and communal leadership by lending their names and resources to numerous works and causes. The Bombay merchant Nasservanjee Manockjee subscribed not only to a book of drawings but also to statues, memorials, and charitable funds.³⁷ The eighteenth century saw the rise of commercial classes across the three main Company settlements of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Entering their names on subscription lists was one way for members of these classes to signal and solidify their newfound status.

Interest not only in status but also in scholarship, and in print as a medium for it, would have weighed with Indian men of letters. Among those who subscribed to books were the munshi (writer) Sadr ud-Din, the physician Athar Ali Khan, and the mathematician Tafazzul Husain Khan. All three contributed to the spread of print in other ways. Sadr ud-Din later became a patron of the Calcutta School-Book Society.³⁸ Athar Ali Khan wrote two articles for the journal *Asiatick Researches*.³⁹ But the case of Tafazzul Husain Khan is perhaps the most salient. Tafazzul was one

³⁶ *Calcutta Gazette* (23 Apr. 1789).

³⁷ *Bombay Courier* (8 Jan. 1803); *ibid.* (18 Aug. 1804); *ibid.* (13 Oct. 1804); *ibid.* (18 Jan. 1806); *ibid.* (21 Feb. 1807); *ibid.* (30 May 1807).

³⁸ *Report of the Provisional Committee of the Calcutta School-Book Society* (Calcutta, 1817), p. 45.

³⁹ At’har Alí Khán, “On the Baya or Indian Gross-Beak” and “On the Cure of the Elephantiasis,” *Asiatick Researches* 2 (Calcutta, 1790), pp. 109-10, 149-58.

of the leading political and intellectual intermediaries in eighteenth-century India. When not conducting diplomatic negotiations on behalf of the Company, he was translating Newton's *Principia* into Arabic.⁴⁰ He also collected printed books. Tafazzul subscribed to Robert Jones's volume of Persian and English dialogues, as well as to Harington and Muhammad Rashid's edition of Sadi. One acquaintance reported that the former governor-general Hastings "sends him out mathematical books" from England.⁴¹ Tafazzul was said to have begun translating not only *Principia* but also a half-dozen other European books.⁴² A liminal figure in many ways, Tafazzul straddled the worlds of script and print. He not only produced "beautifully written" works but also amassed a library of printed ones.⁴³ His role in bridging the two worlds continued even after his death in 1800: one of the earliest publications of the Calcutta School-Book Society was an account of his surviving oeuvre.⁴⁴

While Tafazzul probably did not subscribe to books with an eye to becoming a print author or entrepreneur, others of his countrymen probably did. One of these was Byramjee Jeejeebhoy, a

⁴⁰ Simon Schaffer, "The Asiatic Enlightenments of British Astronomy," in Schaffer et al., eds., *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770-1820* (Sagamore Beach, Mass., 2009), ch. 2.

⁴¹ James Dinwiddie to Joseph Hume, 27 Feb. 1796, in William Jardine Proudfoot, *Biographical Memoir of James Dinwiddie, LL.D.* (Liverpool, 1868), p. 134.

⁴² Ibid.; "An Account of the Life and Character of Tofuzzel Hussein Khan," *Asiatic Annual Register* [5] (1804), "Characters," pp. 1-8, at 7.

⁴³ Warren Hastings to Charles Wilkins, 7 Apr. 1809, cited in Peter Gordon, *The Oriental Repository at the India House* [London, 1835], p. 3.

⁴⁴ Mowluwee Hydur Ulee, *Account of Three Mathematical Works by Tufuzzool Hoosyn Khan* (Calcutta, 1819).

Bombay newspaper compositor and typesetter, who in 1798 printed a Parsi holy text.⁴⁵ His motives for subscribing to a volume of drawings the previous year can only be conjectured, but they likely included gaining familiarity with the medium and publicity through it. Similar motives may have been at work in the case of Mohan Prasad Thakur, who subscribed to a book-keeping manual published in 1799. Thakur later became a librarian at the College of Fort William in Calcutta, and published several works of his own by subscription. Intriguingly, one of the largest subscribers to both works was the author of the earlier manual, John Williamson Fulton.⁴⁶ For Jeejeebhoy and Thakur, subscribing to books would have been a way to make contact with the world of print and perhaps find an entrance to it. For one “Nelloo Baboo,” it may also have been a way to prove to Europeans that Indians belonged in this world.

“Nelloo Baboo” appears on the list of subscribers to Robert Jones’s *A New Persian and English Work* (1792). Nelloo was not a common name, but it was the nickname of one prominent Calcutta “baboo” (gentleman), Nilmoney Dutt.⁴⁷ It was also the nickname used by the writer of a series of letters that ran in the *Calcutta Chronicle* in the summer of 1790. This writer described himself as a “Bengallee” and “citizen of the world” who moved in a higher “sphere of life” than

⁴⁵ *Bombay Courier* (12 Nov. 1796); *ibid.* (28 Jul. 1798); Robert Drummond, *Grammar of the Malabar Language* (Bombay, 1799), preface.

⁴⁶ Mohunpersaud Takoor, *A Vocabulary, Bengalee and English, for the Use of Students* (Calcutta, 1810), list of subscribers; Mohunpersaud Takoor, *A Vocabulary, Ooriya and English, for the Use of Students* (Calcutta, 1811), list of subscribers. For Fulton’s life and career, see Sir Theodore C. Hope, *Memoirs of the Fultons of Lisburn* ([London,] 1903), pp. 70-72.

⁴⁷ Shoshee Chunder Dutt, *The Works of Shoshee Chunder Dutt. Second Series. Imaginative, Descriptive, and Metrical* (6 vols., London, 1885), i. v.

his ancestors.⁴⁸ This Nelloo's self-description and command of English match Dutt's reputation as a "liberal and catholic" thinker and an associate of "Englishmen."⁴⁹ His letters aimed to rescue Bengalis from the slurs of several European and "Portuguese" (mixed-race) correspondents. He described Bengalis as reliable and judicious: "They have mixed with the world, they have become acquainted with men and manners, and thereby have acquired a more liberal way of thinking; they can now express themselves, and that clearly too; and they know good men from bad."⁵⁰ Thus, Nelloo made a case for his and his countrymen's right to appear in print. If indeed the same Nelloo subscribed to Jones's book, then this act served to reinforce his earlier argument. Letters from Indians would become a common feature of Indian newspapers only in the nineteenth century. Subscribing to books, however, had become a common practice among Indians already.

This article has used lists of subscribers to show that a community of Indian print readers and patrons emerged before 1800. In the interest of learning more about this community, it has also tried to identify which individuals and groups subscribed to books and why. Certain caveats are in order. No study of lists of this kind would be valid without an acknowledgment that they are partial

⁴⁸ *Calcutta Chronicle* (1 Jul. 1790); *ibid.* (19 Aug. 1790).

⁴⁹ Romesh Chunder Dutt, cited in J. N. Gupta, *Life and Work of Romesh Chunder Dutt C.I.E.* (London, 1911), p. 2. See also Ananda Krishna Bose, "A Short Account of the Residents of Calcutta in the Year 1822 (Classified According to Ranks at the Time)" (1822), ed. J. K. Bose, in Alok Ray, ed., *Calcutta Keepsake* (Calcutta, 1978), pp. 301-22, at 321.

⁵⁰ *Calcutta Chronicle* (19 Aug. 1790).

and potentially misleading sources.⁵¹ Accordingly, many of the above conclusions about the makeup and motivations of the early Indian print community have been tentative.

Further doubts might be raised about this community's size and significance: was it a community at all? The table included here, showing one hundred-odd subscribers to one hundred-odd books, may seem an inadequate basis for this claim. What the table provides, however, is a window onto the community in question rather than a comprehensive picture of it. Only a fraction of books at the time were published by subscription; of these, not all listed subscribers, and many were bought by non-subscribers. All told, therefore, Indian readers and patrons of books—not to mention other printed matter—may have numbered in the thousands before 1800. Other sources, such as letters, and signatures on books, may help to identify further members of this community.⁵² Even if this community was small, meanwhile, it was nevertheless significant. Print was not yet popular, but it had taken hold among some of the groups and individuals that would make it so.

This point has larger implications. In the usual narrative, Indian print culture—as opposed to European print culture in India—emerged after 1800, and grew in particular out of the Serampore Mission Press and the College of Fort William. Yet if these institutions (both founded in 1800) gave a spur to Indian print culture, then they did not create it *de novo*. A number of key developments had already taken place. Rulers and landholders had begun to patronize printed

⁵¹ See Lockwood, "Subscription-Hunters and Their Prey," pp. 122-3.

⁵² Correspondence reveals, for instance, that the Madras scholar and translator Teroovercadoo Mootiah was an active subscriber to and promoter of publications in the 1790s. Mootiah to James Anderson, 2 Mar. 1793, in Anderson, *Letters for Extending the Manufacture of Raw Silk on the Coast of Coromandel* (Madras, 1793), p. 12; Mootiah to James Anderson, 10 Nov. 1796, in *Annals of Agriculture and Other Useful Arts* 31 (1798), p. 466. Several owners' signatures are reported in Graham Shaw, *The South Asia and Burma Retrospective Bibliography (SABREB), Stage 1: 1556-1800* (London, 1987), pp. 264, 274, 298.

books. (Might this have encouraged Serfoji II to found his own press in Tanjore?⁵³) Men of business and men of letters had become familiar with the medium; they were primed to take the lead in producing and consuming it. Some individuals were already making pioneering efforts in this direction. Finally, though evidence from subscription lists is lacking, there was clearly a growing Indian market for English schoolbooks. The grammar and dictionary advertised by Cooper appeared in 1793 bearing the subtitle, *Very Useful to Teach the Natives English*.⁵⁴ Another work, professedly *Well Adapted to Teach the Natives English*, made its appearance in 1797.⁵⁵ Its author, John Miller, “printed no fewer than 4000 copies ... and the whole impression was subscribed for ... before the work issued from the press.” Such was the recollection of Ramkamal Sen, who at the time was attending a school near Calcutta where English schoolbooks were in great demand. Ramkamal harkened back to this time, thirty-odd years later, in the preface to his own Bengali-English dictionary.⁵⁶ The task for him, and for other nineteenth-century print entrepreneurs, was less to create a taste for print than to exploit one that existed already.

⁵³ For details, see Savithri Preetha Nair, “‘... Of Real Use to the People’: The Tanjore Printing Press and the Spread of Useful Knowledge,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 48 (2011), pp. 497-529.

⁵⁴ *An Extensive Vocabulary, Bengalese and English: Very Useful to Teach the Natives English, and to Assist Beginners in Learning the Bengal Language* (Calcutta, 1793). The author claimed that the work “promises much utility in diffusing the English language among the Natives.” Ibid., preface. For other details, see Shaw, *Printing in Calcutta to 1800*, pp. 157-9.

⁵⁵ John Miller, *The Tutor, or a New English and Bengalee Work, Well Adapted to Teach the Natives English* ([Calcutta,] 1797).

⁵⁶ Ram Comul Sen, *A Dictionary in English and Bengalee* (2 vols., Serampore, 1834), i. 17-18.

Figure 1: An advertisement in English, Arabic, Persian, Hindi, and Bengali for a pamphlet reproducing the articles of charge against Warren Hastings in parliament. Multilingual items, including advertisements for books, quickly became common in Indian newspapers.

Source: *Calcutta Chronicle* (22 Mar. 1787).

Figure 2: Subscription proposals were carried by newspapers, distributed by agents, and included as front- or endmatter in books. Versions of this one ran in the *Calcutta Gazette* for several months, from 1788 to 1789.

Source: *Calcutta Gazette* (12 Mar. 1789), supplement.

Appendix: Indian subscribers to printed books before 1800, compiled from extant subscription lists.

To be had, of

Messrs. S T U A R T and C O O P E R,
No. 8, Council-House Street,
Price One Gold Mohur,

ARTICLES of Charge of High Crimes and Mis-
demeanors, against WARREN HASTINGS
Esq. late Governor-General of Bengal; presented to
the House of Commons on the 4th Day of April, 1786,
by the Right Hon. EDMUND BURKE.

ایہا الناس اعلیٰ و ان مستر کوپرو
ستورت یخبر اکم ان کل من
یرید ان یرستطبک کتابا و عبارة
بخط حسن صلیح سوا کان بخط
النسخ العربی او النسخ العلیق
الفارسی فلیذہب بنفسہ او
یرسل مع احد ما یرستطبہ الی
بیتہا الواقع علی راس احد
الشوارع الاربعۃ الذاہبۃ الی
محکمۃ اصحاب الشوری
الہشور بالکونسل ببلدۃ کلکتہ

استہار مید ہندوستان و کوپرو
ہر ایتمعنی کہ حروف نستعلیق خوش خط و در
چہ پایہ خانہ خود موجود دارم اگر کسی را کتابی
یا عبارتیں بدین خط منظور باشد مسودہ خود
را در ملکیت خانہ ایجاب کہ بر راسۃ کونسل
واقع است بفریستد

बबनदी ब्राजात है मी सत न सी
टुबो न टुबो मी सत न कुप न सारे
बकाद्या पाव्याना मे नागनी काहन
फबहुत ब्रछा मौजूद है ब्रग न जी
स आदमी को पोछी इ आजो कूछे छे
पावने का नागनी मे आही सहो ऐक
लक ते मे कौ सल छ न के सउ क पन
सारे बकी रह बेली है उहा जा ऐक न
कैद न आ सत छ पावने का कने

মেংইধুব ও দপৰ সাহেব
থবৰ দিতেছেন জো অমাৰ
দিগেৰ ছাপাখানাত বাঙলা
হৰফ বঙালো তেই আৰ
ইহা জে কাহাৰ কোন ছাপা
কৰাইতে দৰকাৰ থাকে
সাহেবেৰ ঘৰে আশিআ
কাউৰ কথা কহিব। সাহেবেৰ
ঘৰ কেঁচল ঘৰেৰ বাঙাতে
চনম্বৰ জানিব। ইতি

PROPOSALS,

For Publishing by Subscription,

THE

PERSIAN AND ARABICK

WORKS OF SADEE.

I. TO be printed on English SMALL FOLIO Paper, in the Nustaleec Character, and comprised in Two Volumes. Vol. I. to contain His *Risālehs*, or *Short Prose Tracts*; *Goolistān*; *Bōstān*; and *Pundnāme*.—Vol. II. His *Arabick Casidehs*; and *Deewān*, or *Micellaneous Collection of Poems*.

II. The Impression to be made from a collated manuscript, corrected by a learned Native, and superintended by a Gentleman who has for some years applied himself to the Persian language.

III. A short biographical account of *Sadee*, with authorities, to accompany the Work in Persian and English.

IV. The Subscription to be Two GOLD MOHURS, payable on delivery of the First Volume.

V. The Work to be commenced as soon as Fifty Copies shall have been subscribed for, and finished with all convenient expedition. The First Volume to be delivered as soon as printed.

VI. A List of Subscribers to be inserted with the English Introduction.

N. B. A specimen of the Work may be seen on application to the PRINTER of the CALCUTTA GAZETTE.

EXTRACT from the Preface to a Persian Poem entitled *Laili Majnūn* recently published in Calcutta, for the benefit of Imprisoned Debtors, by Sir William Jones.

“The incorrectness of modern Arabian and Persian Books is truly deplorable, nothing can preserve them in any degree of accuracy but the art of printing; and if Asiatick literature should ever be general, it must diffuse itself, as Greek learning was defused in Italy after the taking of Constantinople, by mere impressions of the best manuscripts without versions or comments, which future scholars would add at their leisure to future editions: but no printer could engage in so expensive a business without the patronage and the purse of monarchs of states, or societies of wealthy individuals; or at least without a large publick subscription.”

The above suggestion, and the offer of an excellent manuscript by a Gentleman who possesses the most valuable collection of Persian books among Europeans in this country, have chiefly given rise to the foregoing proposals. Should the undertaking be encouraged other Editions of the most esteemed

Asiatick Authors may hereafter be in like manner diffused by publication.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to the above Work, will be received by Mr. CANTOPHER, the Printer of the Calcutta Gazette.

چون اجرای کار چہا پہ حروف فارسی برای تکرار کتب و رفع غلطی کاتبان کم فہم بس مفید و سودمند است و نسخہ کلیات شیخ سعدی طایہ الرحمۃ کہ فصیح ترین کلام ہا است نزد ہر کس عزیز و ارجمند لہذا متقرر شد کہ کلیات مذکورہ را بکمال صحت بر کاغذ انگریزی بخط نستعلیق بدو جلد جلد اول متضمن رسالجات و کاتان و بوستان و پندنامہ و جلد دوم مشتمل قصائد عربی و دیوان چہا پہ

نمودہ شود و مدکرہ مشتمل احوال شیخ طایہ الرحمۃ با کلیات مذکورہ نیز چہا پہ کرد و قیمت ہر دو جلد مقررہ دو اشرفی است و ادای این مبلغ وقت رسانیدن جلد اول واجب خواہد کردید کسانی کہ ازادہ گرفتن کلیات مزبورہ بقیمت مستطورہ دارند نام خود را پیش مستر کندو فر چہا پہ کنندہ ہمین کاغذ اخبار بنویسند و اگر خواستہ باشند نمونہ کلیات مذکورہ پیش صاحب موصوف بہ بیسند

Appendix: Indian subscribers to printed books before 1800, compiled from extant subscription lists.

<i>Books and Subscribers</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Joshua Toulmin, Memoirs of the Life, Character, Sentiments and Writings of Faustus Socinus</i> (London: J. Brown, 1777).	
Nabob of Arcot	Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah, Nawab of the Carnatic. Also subscribed to Harris.
Rajah of Tanjour	Thuljaji Bhonsle, Raja of Tanjore.
<i>William Francklin, Observations Made on a Tour from Bengal to Persia, in the Years 1786-7</i> (Calcutta: Stuart and Cooper, 1788).	
Mirza Bakir	Possibly Mirza Baqir of Lucknow, who would later be sent as an Awadhi emissary to Kabul, and who was also known to British officials. <i>C[alendar of] P[ersian] C[orrespondence]</i> (11 vols., Calcutta and Delhi, 1911-69), x. 296, 374.
<i>[Henry Harris,] A Dictionary English and Hindostany, vol. 2</i> (Madras: printed for the author, 1790).	Göttingen University Library, Göttingen: Ling.II,5368.
His Highness Walajah &c. &c. &c. Nabob of the Carnatic	Also subscribed to Toulmin. See above.
His Highness the Omdat Ul Omra Behader	First son of Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah, Nawab of the Carnatic. Also subscribed to Harington.
His Highness the Ameer Ul Omra Behader	Second son of Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah, Nawab of the Carnatic.
[Sef Ul Mulk?]	Possibly Saif ul-Mulk, third son of Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah, Nawab of the Carnatic.
The Nabob Mubarek Ud Dowleh, [Khauja?] Aly Khan Behader (2 copies)	Nawab of Bengal.
Saadet Ulla Khan	
Kazim Aly Khan	

Jaffire Aly Khan

Nujum Ud Dean Aly Khan

Possibly a descendant of a celebrated Muslim saint, whom the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II placed in the care of Governor-General Lord Cornwallis in 1790. *CPC*, ix. 96.

Calapatapoo Soobanadry

Moorgum

Sanav (2 copies)

Tella Singa Pillah

John Thomas Hope, *A Compendium of Practical Arithmetick* (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1790).

University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor: QA101 .H79.

Bysaack, Govin Chund

Bysaack, Tillochund

Wealthy Calcutta merchant and banian (intermediary for Europeans). Ananda Krishna Bose, "A Short Account of the Residents of Calcutta in the Year 1822 (Classified According to Ranks at the Time)" (1822), ed. J. K. Bose, in Alok Ray, ed., *Calcutta Keepsake* (Calcutta, 1978), pp. 301-22, at 318.

Collypersaud Dutt

Dugerchurn Muckergee

Wealthy Calcutta dewan (steward or treasurer) to several British officials. Loke Nath Ghose, *The Modern History of the Indian Chiefs, Rajas, Zamindars, &c*, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1879-81), ii. 234.

Ramsunder, Mojumma (2 copies)

Ramkhaunt, Mitter

[John Herbert Harington and Moulavee Mohummud Rāshid, eds.,] *The Persian and Arabick Works of Sādee* (2 vols., Calcutta: The Honorable Company's Press, 1791-5).

List of subscribers published with the first volume.

Âbd-ool-Hyee

Ahmud Âlee Khān

Âlee Rezā, Meerzā

Behādoor Beg

Patna resident involved in a property dispute that came before the Calcutta Supreme Court in 1791. *CPC*, ix. 320 n. 1.

Bhugwunt Rāw

Calcutta *vakil* (political representative) of successive leaders of the Sindhia dynasty of Gwalior. *CPC*, vii. 29 n.

Burkut oollā, Meer

Amil (revenue collector) of Patna. J. Reginald Hand, *Early English Administration of Bihar, 1781-1785* (Calcutta, 1894), p. 43.

Deibee Singh, Rajeh (5 copies)

Major landholder in Bengal, whose harsh measures as the *ijaradar* (revenue farmer) of Rangpur and Dinajpur led to a rebellion in 1783. P. J. Marshall, "Indian Officials under the East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Bengal," in *Trade and Conquest: Studies on the Rise of British Dominance in India* (Aldershot, 1993), ch. 5, pp. 102, 111, 115.

Heimnāth, Lāleh

Jeewan Rāw

Possibly one mutsuddy (clerk or administrator) taken as a prisoner of war by the Raja of Travancore and released in 1791. *CPC*, x. 210.

Khoondkkār Mohummudee

Khoosh hāl Singh, Rāee

Sikh chief who ruled extensive territories in Punjab. *CPC*, vii. 465.

Kishen Singh, Rāee

Zamindar of Champaran, Bihar. *CPC*, x. 388.

Mittajeet Singh, Rājeh	Zamindar of Sanaut, Bihar. <i>CPC</i> , ix. 176.
Mohummud Bācur, Meer	Son of Mir Qasim, former Nawab of Bengal. <i>CPC</i> , vi. 108.
Mohummud Hosein, Meer	Early Indian visitor to England, then political agent of the British in Hyderabad until his retirement in 1789. He died in 1790. <i>CPC</i> , viii. 27 n. 1.
Mohummud Jāfer, Mirza	First son of Mirza Muhammad Kazim Khan, onetime Foujdar (district commandant) of Hooghly and associate of Robert Clive. <i>CPC</i> , viii. 41.
Mohummud Khān, Syud	
Mohummud Sālih Khān	Son-in-law of Nawab Ruhud-Din Husain Khan, Amil of Purnea. <i>CPC</i> , viii. 170 n. 4.
Mōzuffur Jung, Nuvvāb (10 copies)	Muhammad Reza Khan, <i>Naib Nazim</i> (Deputy Governor) of Bengal and leading power-broker in the province. Abdul Majed Khan, <i>The Transition in Bengal, 1756-1775: A Study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan</i> (Cambridge, 1969).
Nufrut Jung	
Ômedut-ool-Omerā, Nuvvāb (4 copies)	Also subscribed to Harris. See above.
Perān Kishen, Bāboo	Also subscribed to Jones.
Pershād Rāee	
Rām Kishen, Rājeh (4 copies)	Zamindar of Rajshahi, Bengal. <i>CPC</i> , viii. 151 n. 1.
Sādho Ram, Rāee	
Shums-oo-douleh	Saiyid Ahmad Ali Khan, brother of Saiyid Ali Khan, Nawab of Dacca. <i>CPC</i> , x. 199 n. 2.

Sirinjeeb Singh, Bāboo

Sookhun Lāl

Tefuzzool Hosein Khān (2 copies)

Awadhi mathematician and political intermediary for the British, based alternately in Lucknow and Calcutta. Simon Schaffer, "The Asiatic Enlightenments of British Astronomy," in Schaffer et al., eds., *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770-1820* (Sagamore Beach, Mass., 2009), ch. 2. Also subscribed to Jones.

Uthur Alee Khān, Syud

Hakim (physician) of Delhi and acquaintance of William Jones who contributed two articles to the journal of his Asiatic Society. William Jones, Notebook, Beinecke Library, MS Osborn c400, pp. 2, 14, 21; At'har Alí Khān, "On the Baya or Indian Gross-Beak" and "On the Cure of the Elephantiasis," *Asiatick Researches* 2 (Calcutta, 1790), pp. 109-10, 149-58.

[James Bristow,] *A Narrative of the Sufferings of James Bristow, Belonging to the Bengal Artillery, during Ten Years Captivity Hyder Ally and Tippoo Saheb* (Calcutta: The Honorable Company's Press, 1792).

Carey Library and Research Centre, Serampore: Pam76 BR 1.76/4.

Moodalear, Jyapah

Robert Jones, *A New Persian and English Work, After the Method of Boyer and Others* (Calcutta: Archibald Thomson at the Hon. Company's Press, 1792).

Bodleian Library, Oxford: G.Pamph. 1872 (1).

Benerassee Baboo

Rajah Bisnochunder Buhauder (2 copies)

Bissummer Baboo

Possibly Bihambhar Pandit, Calcutta *vakil* of the Raja of Nagpur. *CPC*, vii. 12 n. 2.

Rajah Bowanny Sing Buhauder

Brother of Maharaja Kalyan Singh, *Naib Nazim* of Bihar. *CPC*, vii. 211.

Bulram Baboo

Bullanauth Chatterjea

Meer Bundeh Allee Khan Behauder

Son-in-law of Muhammad Reza Khan, *Naib Nazim* of Bengal. *CPC*, x. 369.

Cashinaut Baboo

Prominent Calcutta agent and dewan. Ghose, *Modern History*, ii. 39-40.

Choiton Baboo

Contai Baboo

Probably Warren Hastings' banian, Krishna Kanta Nandi (known as "Cantoo Baboo"). Somendra Chandra Nandy, *Life and Times of Cantoo Baboo (Krisna Kanta Nandy) the Banian of Warren Hastings*, 2 vols. (Bombay and Calcutta, 1978-81).

Maha Raja Cullian Sing Behauder

Naib Nazim of Bihar. *CPC*, vii. 3 n. 3.

Hajee Mahomed Curbeloi

"A rich Persian merchant of Chinsura" in Bengal. L. S. S. O'Malley and Monmohan Chakravarti, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Hooghly* (Calcutta, 1912), p. 276.

Maeen ul Mulk Nawaub Dillawur Jung
Buhauder (4 copies)

Younger son of Muhammad Reza Khan and pensioner of the Company. *CPC*, viii. 134 n. 2.

Durnee Dur Baboo

Mirza Fuzzul Allee

Gopymohun Baboo

Gopychurn Baboo

Govinchund Baboo

Sheikh Golaum Hussein

Mirza Jaffer

Probably a merchant living in Bengal. *The East India Kalendar; or, Asiatic Register* (London, 1792), p. 65.

Raja Isherchunder Behauder ([2] copies)

Zamindar of Nadia in Bengal. *CPC*, vii. 206 n. 1.

Hajee Mahomed Mehdee

Probably a merchant living in Bengal. *East India Kalendar* (1792), p. 65.

Nelloo Baboo (2 copies)

Probably Nilmoney Dutt, a prominent baboo (gentleman) who was nicknamed Nelloo. Shoshee Chunder Dutt, *The Works of Shoshee Chunder Dutt. Second Series. Imaginative, Descriptive, and Metrical* (6 vols., London, 1885), i. v; Romesh Chunder Dutt, cited in J. N. Gupta, *Life and Work of Romesh Chunder Dutt C.I.E.* (London, 1911), p. 2.

Nettianund Baboo

Maha Raja Nubkissen Buhauder (2 copies)

Wealthy banker, property owner, and political agent in Calcutta. P. J. Marshall, "Nobkissen versus Hastings," in *Trade and Conquest*, ch. 1, pp. 382-3.

Obeychurn Baboo

Rajah Petumber Mitter

Onetime *vakil* in Delhi and *jagirdar* (Mughal landholder) in the Doab who retired to Calcutta in the late 1780s. Ghose, *Modern History*, ii. 399-400.

Prawnkissen Sing Baboo

Deputy and adopted son of the wealthy Calcutta revenue administrator Ganga Govind Singh. P. J. Marshall, "Ganga Govind Singh [Ganga Gobinda Sinha]," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

Prawnkissen Baboo

Also subscribed to Harington.

Ramconny Gosaul

Ramconny Baboo

Ramjohn Usthagur

Ramgopaul Baboo

Ramlochun Baboo

Rammohun Baboo

Ramnarain Misseree (2 copies)

"An opulent banian." *India Gazette* (13 Jan. 1781).

Ramnarain Choudree

Rampersaud Baboo

Ressicklol Baboo

Sheeboopersaud Baboo

Sherriethoola Khan Buhauder

Member of a prominent Muslim family of Burdwan, Bengal, who was granted a revenue-free estate in Ballia, Bihar, by Governor-General Warren Hastings. H. R. Nevill, *Ballia: A Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1807), p. 93.

Monshee Sudder Ud Dien

A former munshi (clerk) of British officials and the founder of a madrasa and library in Buhar, Bengal. *Catalogue Raisonné of the Bûhâr Library* (2 vols., Calcutta, 1921-3), i. vii.

Thuffuzzul Hussein Khaun (2 copies)

Also subscribed to Harington. See above.

Henry Becher, *Remarks and Occurences* [sic] of Mr. Henry Becher. During His Imprisonment of Two Years and a Half in the Dominions of Tippoo Sultaun, from whence

British Library, London: Mic.A.6705 (microfilm; original in Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, Mumbai).

***He Made His Escape* (Bombay: Courier Press, 1793).**

Baboolset, Sunkerset

Hindu merchant of Bombay. *The East India Kalendar; or, Asiatic Register* (London, 1793), p. 169.

Balajee, Jaganath

Senior member of a prominent *chhetri* caste family of Bombay. *Bombay Courier* (4 Jun. 1803).

Rom Toney Dutt, Calcutta

Possibly "Ramconnoy Dutt," a resident of Calcutta and sirkar (steward or clerk) to a "country captain" (commander of a free merchant vessel). John Hyde, Notes (3 Aug. 1791), Victoria Memorial Hall, Judicial Notebooks of John Hyde and Sir Robert Chambers.

W[illiam] Fitzmaurice, *A Treatise, on the Cultivation of Sugarcane, and Manufacture of Sugar* (Calcutta: James Leary at the World Press, 1793).

Senate House Library, London: [G.L.] 1793 fol. (Goldsmiths'-Kress no. 15587).

Lalbaherry Baboo

J[ohn] H[orsford], *A Collection of Poems, Written in the East Indies* (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1797).

British Library, London: 1481.d.15.

The King of Delhi

Mughal Padishah (emperor) Shah Alam II.

Robert Mabon, *Sketches Illustrative of Oriental Manners and Customs* (Calcutta, 1797).

National Library of India, Kolkata: A.C.915.4084 M1.

The Nabob Hyatt Saheb (2 copies)

Shaikh Ayaz, a servant of the Sultan of Mysore, Haider Ali, who defected to the Company and retired to a suburb of Bombay. *CPC*, x. 112.

Nasservanjee Monackjee

Parsi merchant of Bombay. *The East India Kalendar, or, Asiatic Register* (London, 1797), p. 175.

Byramjee Jeejeebhoy, Bombay

Parsi compositor for the *Bombay Courier* who cast Malayalam and Gujarati types, and used the latter to print the *Khordeh Avesta* in 1798. *Bombay Courier* (12 Nov. 1796); *ibid.* (28 Jul. 1798); Robert Drummond, *Grammar of the Malabar Language* (Bombay, 1799), preface.

John Williamson Fulton, *British Indian Book-Keeping. A New System of Double Entry and Progressive Adjustment* ([Calcutta:] The Mirror Press, 1799).

Private collection of Richard Kossow, London.

Buddenaut Mokerjea, Calcutta

"An intelligent man ... first employed in the Court of Requests" and later as a dewan. Bose, "Short Account," p. 318.

Mohunpersaud Tagore, Calcutta

Later assistant librarian at the College of Fort William in Calcutta, and compiler of an English-Bengali textbook. Mohunpersaud Takoor, *A Vocabulary, Bengalee and English, for the Use of Students* (Calcutta, 1810).