
Building a Library: The Arabic and Persian Manuscript Collection of Sir William Jones



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Abstract

This article contributes to the established scholarship on Sir William Jones (d.1794) by providing a detailed overview and analysis of the Arabic and Persian manuscript collection that Jones acquired both before arriving in India in 1784, and during his time living in Kolkata. 118 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu and 69 Sanskrit manuscripts, as well as nine Chinese manuscripts, were transferred to the Royal Society library by Jones in 1792. These were then transferred to the India Office Library in 1876 and are currently housed in the British Library. As well as an in-depth survey of these manuscripts, this article provides important information on the manuscripts which remained in the Jones's possession after 1792 and which were sold, along with the rest of Lady Jones's (d.1829) library, at auction in 1831 after her death. Within this overview of the Arabic and Persian manuscript collections, there will be a sustained focus on the methods of acquiring manuscripts and Jones's curatorial management of his library.

Keywords: Sir William Jones; oriental manuscripts in 18th century collections

The life, work and thought of Sir William Jones (d.1794) have been extensively studied and discussed ever since his death and the publication of Lord Teignmouth's (d.1834) *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones* and the 13-volume *The Works of Sir*

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Note on transliterations: I have used the Library of Congress Persian Romanisation and Arabic Romanisation systems. Where a text is in Persian but has an obviously Arabic title, I have continued to use Arabic transliterations. For names of authors, I have used the transliteration system corresponding to the language in which they produced their texts, regardless of where they were from; in the one instance when the name of an author, who wrote or produced texts across both languages, would be written differently in the two systems, I have opted for the Persian transliteration system.

William Jones, edited by his wife, Anna Maria Jones (*née* Shipley) (d.1829).¹ Scholarship on Jones has produced several detailed biographies and analyses of his contributions to the fields of linguistics, the study of Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Chinese, and the law, both in England and in India.² Practically speaking for an eighteenth-century judge in Bengal, in order to study such a diverse array of subjects, Jones required physical books. This simple fact has long gone under-acknowledged in discussions of Jones's scholarship.

In his letters, he describes from an early period in his life his desire to acquire a position in the Ottoman Empire or India where he might purchase manuscripts and have texts commissioned with his savings.³ In a 1782 letter to Edmund Burke (d.1797), Jones laments his seemingly slim prospect of going to India to take up the judgeship in Bengal.⁴ His sadness stems, largely, from this position being the "golden apple" for which he has seemingly spent many years of his life hopelessly striving.⁵ Yet, despite the fact his letters show that he was very much thinking about the excellent salary he might obtain in India, Jones states that:⁶

I was far from insinuating that gold is by any means my principal object, for I believe that the greatest part of my savings would be spent in purchasing oriental books and in rewarding ... the translators and interpreters of them. I should remit part of my fortune in manuscripts instead of diamonds and my university [Oxford] would ultimately have the benefit of them.

Before his journey to India, Jones's letters reveal a man spellbound with the physical study of Arabic and Persian; his letters abound with rich details of manuscripts he either owns or has been able to consult in various libraries and collections, principally the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, his *alma mater*.⁷ In this letter to Burke, Jones says that he intends

¹William Jones and John Shore, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones*, by Lord Teignmouth (London, 1807; 3rd edition) and William Jones and Anna Maria Jones (eds.), *The Works of Sir William Jones* (London, 1807).

²See, for example, Garland Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics* (Cambridge, 1991), Michael Franklin, 'Orientalist Jones': *Sir William Jones, poet, lawyer and linguist 1746–1794* (Oxford, 2011), and A. J. Arberry, *Asiatic Jones: The Life and Works of Sir William Jones* (London, 1946); Alan Jones has written about Jones the Arabist, importantly noting the limitations of what he was able to know about Arabic literature, in Alan Jones "Sir William Jones as an Arabist", in *Sir William Jones 1746–1794: A Commemoration*, (ed.) Alexander Murray (Oxford, 1998), pp. 67–90; from the same volume, see Thomas Trautmann "The Lives of Sir William Jones", pp. 91–122, and David Ibbetson, "William Jones as a Comparative Lawyer", pp. 17–42, for important discussions of Jones's life and legal scholarship; on Jones as a sinologist, see T. C. Fang "Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies", *The Review of English Studies* 2, 88 (1946), pp. 304–314; on Jones the Sanskritist, see Alfred Master "The Influence of William Jones upon Sanskrit Studies", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. 11, 4 (1946), pp. 798–806; see also Garland Cannon, "Sir William Jones, Persian, Sanskrit and the Asiatic Society", *Histoire Epistémologie Langage* 6, 2 (1984), pp. 83–94, for Cannon's discussion of Jones's scholarship in these areas and the setting up of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta; for Jones's contributions to linguistics, see, for example, R. H. Robins "Jones as a General Linguist in the Eighteenth Century Context" in *Objects of Enquiry: The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones (1746–1794)*, (eds.) Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York, 1995), pp. 83–91.

³See William Jones, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, (ed.) Garland Cannon (Oxford, 1970), i, pp. 108, 271 and ii, pp. 481, 522.

⁴*Ibid*, ii, pp. 520–523.

⁵*Ibid*, ii, p. 521.

⁶*Ibid*, ii, pp. 521–522.

⁷See, for example, his letter to James Bate referring to his study of Nizāmī (d.608AH/1209AD) in W. Jones, *Letters*, i, pp. 90–92 or his letter to Viscount Althorpe (d.1834) in which he discusses becoming a Fellow of Cambridge University as well as a fellow at Oxford in order to have access to manuscripts in *ibid*, i, pp. 138–140. Equally, his entire correspondence with luminaries such as Count Revcizky (d.1793) and Henry (Hendrik) Albert Schultens (d.1793) are focused on works of Arabic and Persian literature, for which see *ibid*, *passim*.

for the Bodleian to see the fruit of his manuscript collection. Instead, in 1792 he transferred almost 200⁸ manuscripts in Persian, Sanskrit, Arabic, Urdu and Chinese⁹ to the library of the Royal Society, which then transferred the materials to the India Office Library in 1876.¹⁰ This was not, however, the full extent of the collection. Jones retained 40 manuscripts (as well as an extensive book collection in European languages), which were then sold at auction in May 1831 and dispersed into different private collections.¹¹

In spite of the rich evidence of Jones's reading and scholarship found within his large manuscript collection, there has been a marked paucity of academic study focused on the physical manuscripts in his library. Gillian Evison's study of a small number of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Bodleian library is an important addition to the study of William Jones, providing an outline of how the manuscript collection can shed light on the life, thought and scholarship of the collector.¹² Beyond that, there are the two catalogues of Jones's manuscripts that are housed in the British Library, which provide some measure of information about the manuscripts, but neither catalogue focuses with any depth on Jones's use of these manuscripts or the methods by which he procured them.¹³ Before these catalogues were written, Charles Wilkins, Jones's friend and fellow Sanskritist, had also drawn up a (very) rudimentary list of Jones's manuscript holdings. However, to date, there has been no study committed to a detailed analysis of Jones as a manuscript collector and the library collection he built beyond these catalogue lists, which themselves do not take

⁸I have been careful not to give an exact number of manuscripts here. Charles Wilkins (d.1836) numbers 170 manuscripts in total. However, some manuscripts are only fragmentary, whilst others are bound together, and some are catalogued twice by the cataloguers of the Royal Society collection, Dennison Ross, Browne, Tawney and Thomas. Furthermore, Tawney and Thomas did not provide each volume of a multi-volume manuscript with its own shelf mark. By contrast, Dennison Ross and Browne numbered each volume of an individual title as a new manuscript shelf mark. See E. Dennison Ross and E. Browne, *Catalogue of Two Collections of Persian and Arabic Manuscripts Preserved in the India Office Library* (London, 1902), C. Tawney and F. Thomas, *Catalogue of Two Collections of Sanskrit Manuscripts Preserved in the India Office Library* (London, 1903) and, for the catalogue by Wilkins, see Charles Wilkins "A Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts presented to the Royal Society by Sir William Jones and Lady Jones. By Charles Wilkins Esq. F.R.S.", *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 88 (1798), pp. 582–593 (for the Sanskrit manuscripts) and 89 (1799), pp. 335–344 (for the remaining manuscripts).

⁹In Wilkins's catalogue of Jones's library, he lists nine Chinese titles (some of more than one volume); see Wilkins, "Catalogue" (1799), pp. 335–336. Unfortunately, these manuscripts were left out of the two aforementioned catalogues. Because of this, they now have different shelf marks to the rest of the Royal Society holdings, which are now unknown, awaiting further curatorial work at the British Library. Only one manuscript is accessible via the British Library online search function, this being his Chinese-Latin dictionary, under shelf mark BL MSS EUR C119. By contrast, his one Urdu manuscript was catalogued by Dennison Ross and Browne, under shelf mark BL MS RSPA 118.

¹⁰Cannon notes that Jones (naturally) did not realise he would never see the manuscripts again and so we cannot be certain that he did not intend to send them at a later date to the Bodleian upon his death. By a twist of fate, however, Jones never did see them again. See Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 906, n. 2. See also Garland Cannon, "Sir William Jones, Sir Joseph Banks and the Royal Society", *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 29, 2 (1975) pp 205–230 for a discussion of the relationship between the two men and, in particular, pp. 225–226 for the discussion of these manuscripts and Jones's gift of them to the Royal Society.

¹¹*Catalogue of the Library of the Late Sir William Jones* (London, 1831); the Royal Asiatic Society archives contain the original sales ledger from the sale of the library, which includes the surnames of the buyers of the manuscripts, as well as the prices paid for them, presumably in the hand of the auctioneer, Mr. Evans. A version of this catalogue without the manuscript notes is available at https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=nTJbAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s (accessed 22 April 2020). Where the MS copy is needed for the reference, it is noted as (MS) specifically.

¹²Gillian Evison, "The Sanskrit Manuscripts of Sir William Jones in the Bodleian Library", in Murray (ed.), *Commemoration*, pp. 123–141.

¹³See footnote 8.

into account any manuscript owned by Jones that once formed an integral part of his library but that are not found in the specific collections (RSPA and RST) in the British Library.¹⁴

Much further work can, and indeed should, be done to situate Jones within his Indian intellectual milieu and to understand how Jones's reading of texts and the ideas that he formed from them, came from physical manuscripts he held between his hands and which had to be sought out, purchased and acquired. The materials and constraints of scholarship were very different in the 1780s and 90s from the modern day. Moreover, any understanding of the history of Arabic and Persian literature in the European scholarship of the time depended, to some extent, on which manuscripts had been available to and studied by previous generations of scholars, these being the resources a budding student of Arabic had at their disposal.¹⁵ This article and its appendices provide only the most basic level of scholarship on Jones's manuscript collection and await future contributions, which may provide further codicological advancements on the physical manuscripts, as well as insights into Jones as a reader of the manuscripts he collected and the way the reading of the manuscripts he owned informed his scholarship.

Here, however, are the basic facts of how a man from England who wanted to acquire a collection of two hundred or so manuscripts did so. From whom did Jones procure his manuscripts? When did he acquire them? Can we trace the evolution of his scholarship through his manuscript acquisitions or use the manuscripts to advance our understanding of how Jones read the materials at hand and engaged with a literary text culture so different from his own? Upon which networks did he rely for manuscripts to be accessible to him in Kolkata in the 1780s and 90s? From where did these manuscripts come? Who had owned them before Jones, and can we trace the movement of these manuscripts over time?

Before India

The majority of Jones's manuscripts were acquired during his period working in Kolkata as a puisne judge for the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William in Bengal between 1783 and his death in 1794. Certainly, there were many more avenues for manuscript acquisition open to him in India, where he received books as gifts, bought and commissioned books, and acquired them through the connections and pilgrimage practices of members of his networks. It can fairly safely be stated that Jones came into possession of all his Sanskrit language material whilst in India, given his complete lack of knowledge of the language beforehand.¹⁶ It has, however, been noted that Jones acquired certain manuscripts before India; for example, his Persian acquaintance I'tiṣām al-Dīn (d.circa.1215/1800) gave him one of the two copies of the *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī* found in his collections, this being BL MS RSPA

¹⁴For example, his Chinese-Latin dictionary, or his notebook containing the *Dīvān-i Khusrāw* now held as BL MSS EUR 274. Otherwise, the manuscripts sold will require a detailed examination of archival records to trace their whereabouts. For example, Jones's copy of the Maitreya Upanishads (Evans lot 338) can be found (it would appear) in the Sanskrit collections of the British Museum. See, British Museum, "List of Additions to the Department of Manuscripts in 1844", in *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years MDCCCXLI-MDCCCXLV* (London, 1850), p. 3 for mention of some Sanskrit manuscripts acquired by the library that were once owned, or at least used, by Jones, including this one.

¹⁵See A. Jones. "Arabist", pp. 69–70

¹⁶Cannon, "Sir William Jones, Persian, Sanskrit and the Asiatic Society", pp. 86–87.

21.¹⁷ Likewise, in his letters, he discusses whether or not he could acquire a copy of Jāmī's (d.898/1492) *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā* as early as 1771; he was clearly on the hunt for manuscripts from an early period of his career.¹⁸

BL MS RSPA 107

One of the more unusual manuscripts in the Royal Society-British Library collection of Jones's manuscripts, Jones's copy of al-Mutanabbī's (d.354/965) *ḏūvān* (BL MS RSPA 107) was a gift from a man who signed off as 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg (fl.1188/1774), and who wrote the following inscription:¹⁹

يصل الكتاب إلى بندر أفرد ويتشرف بلثم أنامل الألحن الممجد حضرة وليام جونز
يا رياح العاشقين أوصل مجيبنا السلام *** شابهو الزيجان والأزهار شماً في الجنان
إن وصلتم يا نسيم الحب منا قل لهم *** يا عميد العلم كن عن كل كرب في الأمان
في الفصاحة كالحرير في السخاوة حاتم *** كان هذا وليام جونز انكليزيان في العيان
من عند العبد الفقير عبد الرحمن بيك

This book is to arrive at the port of Oxford and is honoured to kiss the fingertips of the most intelligent and glorious Sir William Jones:

*O winds of the lovers, send greetings to our beloved
He is akin to the sweet smell of flowers in a garden
If you arrive, o fragrant breeze of love, say to him,
"You pillar of learning, be free of all worries!"
Judicious in his generosity, he is like silk in eloquence,²⁰
This man is William Jones, the Englishman*

From your humble servant, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg.

Jones received the manuscript in 1774 by way of Middleton Howard (d.1791), an acquaintance of Jones, who had received the manuscript from Edward Wortley Montagu (d.1776), the son of the famous author Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (d.1762), in Venice.²¹ In his letters, Jones mentions the manuscript twice, once in a letter to Howard, thanking him for the manuscript and telling him of the verses which he "could not read ... without blushing".²² The second letter was sent to Henry Albert Schultens, one of Jones's favourite correspondents with whom he spoke at length about Arabic literature.²³ In this letter, Jones appended

¹⁷Franklin, *Oriental*, p. 63. In the manuscript itself, there is no indication of this provenance.

¹⁸W. Jones, *Letters*, i, 80; Jones did acquire a copy of this, now housed at the John Rylands Library, Persian MS 267.

¹⁹BL MS RSPA 107, f. or; see also Jonathan Lawrence, "William Jones, al-Mutanabbī and Emotional Encounters", British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog), 26 February 2020, available at <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2020/02/william-jones-al-mutanabb%C4%AB-and-emotional-encounters.html> for a further discussion of this manuscript and its possible contribution to a study of the history of emotions across cultures (accessed 22 April 2020).

²⁰The line may also be read idiomatically, "Like al-Ḥarīrī in eloquence, he is another Ḥātim in generosity" referencing al-Ḥarīrī of Basra (d.516/1122), author of the *maqāmāt*, and Ḥātim al-Ṭā'iy (d.circa.578), the pre-Islamic Arab poet. I have chosen the less idiomatic rendering for ease of comprehension in English. The poem was also translated by Garland Cannon in his edition of Jones, *Letters*, i, p. 170.

²¹See Jones, *Letters*, i, p. 159.

²²*Ibid.*

²³For this letter (in the original Latin and the translation), see Jones, *Letters*, i, pp. 163–170.



Fig. 2. The poem of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Beg and, below, William Jones’s translation. The O of Oxford is visible on the preceding torn-out verso side.

Source: British Library MS RSPA 107

Jones, it would appear, was rather embarrassed about ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s note, blushing presumably because of the “exaggerated encomiums”, to use John Shore’s translation from the Latin, with which ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Beg praised him.²⁶ He states in his note (Fig. 2), dated 3 October 1774, below the Arabic inscription on f. for that he could “barely translate them without blushing”, again referencing a very physicalised performance of his

²⁶See Shore, *Memoirs*, i, p. 159.

embarrassment for the presumed future reader of the manuscript, distancing himself from the verses in question.²⁷ In any case, Jones's own translation has been lost to time. On the opposite *verso* side, there is the faintest trace of a capitalised 'O' from the 'Oxford' found in 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg's inscription (Fig. 2). The page appears torn, although it may be that the page was lost due to wear and tear. The binding, a fragile brown leather and board binding with gilded square decoration, is so fragile and worn that it has completely come away from the manuscript contents, rendering the textblock susceptible to damage.

Jones suggests 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg was likely one of Montagu's acquaintances from his travels to the Ottoman Empire and was probably someone with whom Montagu had spoken about Jones, given the reference to him by name in the final line of the poem.²⁸ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg is, unfortunately, not easy to trace; the Ottoman administrative title Bey/Beg and the potential connection to Montagu suggest that he might have been a notable of some sort, although even that is hard to prove with any certainty. Where might 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg have lived and from where did the manuscript originate?

Based on previous ownership comments and the colophon, I would suggest that the manuscript originated in Hama, where 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg likely lived. The long colophon tells us that Sayyid Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥamawī wrote the manuscript at the very beginning of Muḥarram in 1054AH/1644AD.²⁹ Whilst there is no indication that the manuscript was specifically written there, the name al-Ḥamawī (from Hama) suggests that it was. This is then supported by two important ownership notices, the first being appended to the colophon and the second being written on f.1r next to the short biographical notice about al-Mutanabbī. The first notice lists the owner as Sayyid Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḥājjī 'Alī al-Ḥāqq from the Awaj, a region near Hama, who acquired the manuscript in Muḥarram 1130/December 1717.³⁰ Following on from that, the second notice lists another owner connected to Hama, this being Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ḥamawī, the son of Muḥayyid 'Alī, as the owner in Rabī' al-Awwal 1188/July 1769.³¹ These dates provide us with some understanding of the life of the manuscript before it reached Jones. Likely produced in Hama, the manuscript remained there, probably until it reached the hands of 'Abd al-Raḥmān Beg, who does not record his acquisition of the manuscript, but who, given the proximity in dates between the final ownership statement and the date on which Jones received the manuscript, possibly acquired it directly from Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ḥamawī.

Unlike most of the books in this collection, this manuscript was an unexpected surprise for Jones. Not given by an acquaintance, the gift exchange also speaks to the emergence of European scholarship on Arabic (and, given Jones's own interest, Persian) literature and the awareness of this scholarship among Arabs and Arabic speakers in the Ottoman Empire, who thought it appropriate to send such students manuscript gifts. This manuscript, a *ḏiwān* of al-Mutanabbī, one of the most, if not the most, widely regarded and respected poets in the entirety of Arabic literary history and indeed a local of northern Syria, is perhaps

²⁷BL MS RSPA 107, f.0r.

²⁸See Jones, *Letters*, i, p. 170.

²⁹BL MS RSPA 107, f.158r.

³⁰BL MS RSPA 107, f.158r. There are several pages at the end of the manuscript which detail recipes for scents and perfumes using quantities of herbs and spices and oils. These are written in what looks like the same hand as this ownership statement.

³¹BL MS RSPA 107, f.1r.

reflective of what an Arab notable, a native of the area, might have thought a European would appreciate or would want or need to read in studying Arabic: that is, one of the greats.

Kitāb al-Ḥamāsah

Among the rest of the British Library collection, there is another manuscript of Arabic poetry which definitively originates from before Jones's journey to India. This manuscript, BL MS RSPA 117, is a copy of Abū Tammām's (d.231/845) *Kitāb al-Ḥamāsah*, the well-known collection of pre-Islamic and early Islamic poems. Now extremely fragile, the copy was traced from a much older copy of the *Ḥamāsah* that had been brought to Oxford from Aleppo by Edward Pococke (d.1691), the first Laudian Professor of Arabic at the University of Oxford.³² MS RSPA 117 was traced for him, presumably by the "native of Aleppo" that he himself hired whilst at university to tutor him in Arabic, named Mīrẓā.³³

This copy was then used by Jones whilst he was in India as the *urtext* for his commissioned version, this being BL MS RSPA 106.³⁴ Written for him by al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī (fl.1206/1792), a native of the Hijaz, who was residing in India during Jones's sojourn in the nascent British administration, Jones notes (Fig. 3) on f.IV of that manuscript that:³⁵

This book was copied from a manuscript on transparent paper traced at Oxford on an inestimable copy of the *Ḥamāsah* which Pocock had brought from Aleppo and on which he set a high value. I gave ten guineas to the boy who traced it and I value this book at least at twenty guineas. W. Jones 26th Nov 1788.

This ownership note in BL MS RSPA 106 links the manuscripts (117 and 106) together and provides the chain of manuscript editions that resulted in the final, pristine copy that Jones clearly read extensively in his study of Arabic literature, given the vast quantity of marginal notes that show the metre of individual poems, provide translations of certain poems and, occasionally, biographical information about the poets in the anthology.³⁶ Equally, the manuscript note serves to link Jones indelibly into a line of scholars who procured manuscripts; like Pococke, Jones is suggesting, he also travelled afar to bring manuscripts back to England and he also deserves to be considered in this lineage of orientalist scholars. His manuscript note performatively ties him into this chain of scholarship.

Curiously enough, the delicate manuscript, BL MS RSPA 117, which is not available for viewing because of its fragility, appears to be mirrored by another manuscript, now found at

³²The tracing is so fragile that the copy can no longer be viewed by the public, the only manuscript in the British Library collection that has restrictions upon it. Because of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, I have been unable to access the manuscript in question.

³³Cannon, *Life and Mind*, pp. 9–10.

³⁴The link between BL MS RSPA 117 and BL MS RSPA 106 was first noted by Charles Wilkins in Wilkins, "Catalogue" (1799), p. 344, in which he states that his manuscript number 167, "An Arabic manuscript traced on oil paper", is likely the one mentioned in Jones's prefatory note in MS number 153 (now BL MS RSPA 106). This was later confirmed by Dennison Ross and Browne, *Catalogue*, p. 76.

³⁵BL MS RSPA 106 f.IV; see the section "Commissions" for a longer discussion of this man.

³⁶See BL MS RSPA 106, *passim*. Furthermore, the note also tells us that, despite the fragility of the manuscript, Jones did take at least some of his manuscript copies of Arabic manuscripts with him to India. This is important because it also has implications for BL MS RSPA 107 listed above; if Jones affirmatively took manuscripts with him to India and sent them back in 1792 as a group for the Royal Society, then he must also have taken BL MS RSPA 107 with him to India, given the collection it is found in. This means that whilst he intended to acquire manuscripts with him when he was there, he did not arrive with nothing.

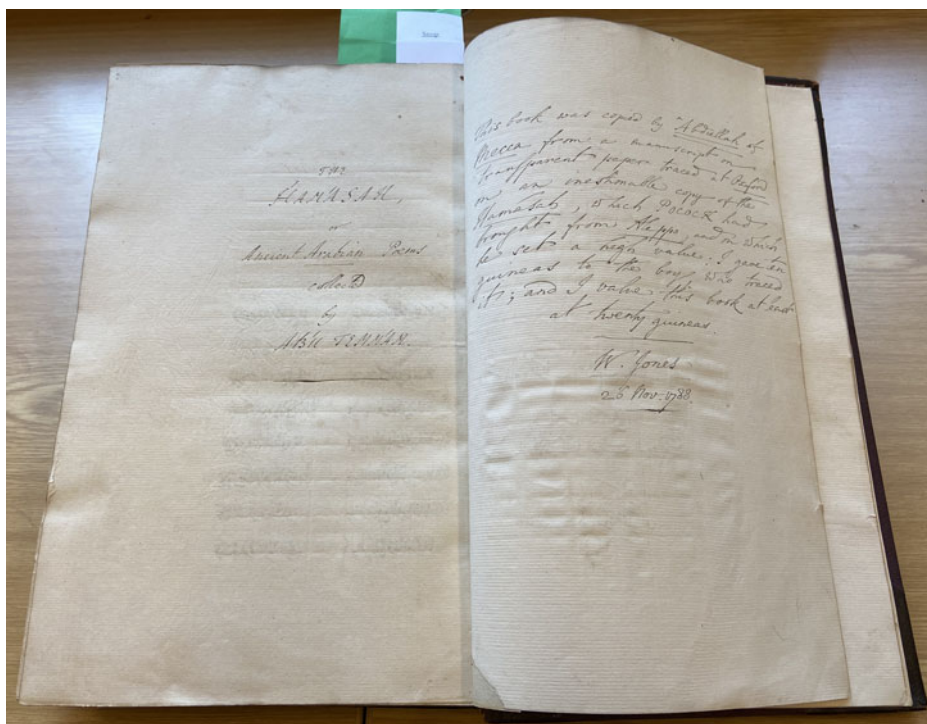


Fig. 3. William Jones's manuscript note linking this manuscript to Pococke's manuscript.
Source: British Library MS RSPA 106.

the Bodleian Library, under the shelf mark MS Caps OR.b.13-14, purchased by the Hare brothers at the auction of Lady Jones's library along with the Sanskrit manuscripts discussed by Gillian Evison.³⁷ This is a further copy of the *Hamāsaḥ*, the individual leaves of which were written on a dark brown paper and have been mounted on card for protection. This manuscript contains the following note on f.1r in the top corner: "I gave ten guineas for this MS, W. Jones".³⁸ The listing of the guinea as the unit of currency is the indication on this manuscript that it was owned or acquired by Jones before India, as during his time in India he purchased books in the standard Indian unit of currency, the rupee, and noted as such.³⁹ This manuscript, listed by Evans in the auctioneer's catalogue as lot number 343, is a "curious" specimen, perhaps because of the quality of the dark paper or its pre-Bodleian bound (or, indeed, unbound) state.⁴⁰

Here we have an interesting problem in the collection: did Jones pay the exact same amount of money for two copies of the manuscript or does BL MS RSPA 117 represent a copy of a copy? That Jones owned three copies of the *Hamāsaḥ*, on this count, is perhaps not surprising given the extent of his Arabic poetic and literary collections, of which very few specimens that he bought or acquired willingly include any Arabic poetry beyond

³⁷See Evison, "Sanskrit", p. 125.

³⁸Bodleian MS Caps OR.b.13, f.1r.

³⁹See below for the purchase of manuscripts in India.

⁴⁰*Catalogue of the Sale*, p. 14.

the earliest period of Arabic literature. Likewise, for example, he owned several copies of the *Mu'allaqāt* and various different commentaries on them.⁴¹ What is surprising about his collection, is that he should have two copies of the same manuscript, purchased for the same amount, both of which are on dark brown paper and come from the same period.

A further question that arises out of the separate existence of these two manuscripts is what their trajectories were within the collection. Jones clearly took BL MS RSPA 117 to India with him, as the manuscript returned to Great Britain in his consignment to the Royal Society, the core block of his library of Arabic and Persian language manuscripts. Bodleian MS Caps OR.b.13-14 may or may not have travelled to India, however. If the manuscript did not journey to India, we might ask where he kept it in England and why. If it did, we might wonder why Jones kept it with him after sending the manuscripts to the Royal Society. These questions are rather difficult to answer; it is likely that Jones kept a single copy of the manuscript because he still wanted to use it or read from it whilst in India after the consignment of his manuscripts were sent to Britain, especially given that he appreciated the *Ḥamāsah* enough to commission or purchase three separate copies of it, all of which bear reading marks. Jones, we can safely say, liked the text contained within the manuscript: but why choose this one to keep?

Here, just as with the translation of the note in BL MS RSPA 107 above and Jones's gloss of his reception of it, I would suggest we see evidence for Jones the librarian and curator thinking about the future users of the manuscripts. In his letter to Sir Joseph Banks (d.1820) attached to the now untraced Bill of Lading with which he sent his manuscripts to the Royal Society Library, Jones states that the manuscripts should "be lent out without difficulty to any studious men, who may apply for them". This copy of the text, one of the two fairly poor-quality ones, is certainly not the one to send back to the Royal Society library, should one want a well-curated collection of accessible and useful manuscripts on good quality paper; if he were to keep one of the three, it is axiomatic that he would keep either BL MS RSPA 117 or Bodleian MS Caps OR.b.13-4.

Jones as student, copyist and translator

There are several manuscripts in the John Rylands library in Manchester that were also once owned by Jones, two of which were conclusively in his possession before his journey to India. These two manuscripts, a two-volume copy of Ibn Abī Ḥajalah's (d.776/1475) *Sukkarḍān al-sulṭān* and a copy of Sa'dī's (d.691/1292) *Būstān*, respectively lots 435 and 432* in Evans' auction catalogue (see Appendix 3), were both, like the majority of Lady Jones's Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit language collection, bought by bookseller John George Cochrane (d.1852).⁴² These manuscripts were subsequently owned by Samuel Hawtayne Lewin (d.1840) and then Nathaniel Bland (d.1865) and are now held respectively under shelf marks Arabic MS 264-5 [94-5] and Persian MS 240.

Jones was himself the copyist of the *Sukkarḍān* and notes this in his colophons and on the title page. On f.502r of the first volume, Jones notes, signing himself "G. Jonesius" in Latin,

⁴¹For example, BL MS RSPA 103, BL MS RSPA 104, BL MS RSPA 105 and part of BL MS RSPA 110 are all copies of the *Mu'allaqāt* with different commentaries on them.

⁴²*Catalogue of the Sale* (MS copy), p. 17.

that he finished the first volume (by far the majority of the Arabic text) at Althorpe on 9 December 1766.⁴³ As for the second volume, Lord Teignmouth mentions Jones copying out a book about Egypt and the Nile which had been borrowed from Dr Alexander Russell (d.1768) in the summer of 1767.⁴⁴ The manuscript is almost completely translated, again by Jones, as a dual language reader with Arabic on the *recto* and English on the *verso* sides. This was part of a project Jones had for the *Sukcardān*; on f.ivr, Jones writes, “I may, perhaps, be induced, in my declining age, to amuse myself with printing the original of this curious work”. Indeed, this was not Jones’s only copy of the *Sukcardān* and in BL MS RSPA 97, a small manuscript copy missing several folios, which previously belonged to an unidentified Muḥammad al-Birmāwī. Jones also wrote a note indicating his desire to publish the original, stating the manuscript was “for the press” (Fig. 4).⁴⁵

The two-volume Manchester manuscript is, however, much more than a copy of the *Sukcardān*; described in detail by Alphonse Mingana, the manuscript also includes Jones’s “Keys of the Chinese Language”, various extracts in Persian, Arabic, Turkish and Sanskrit, as well as Jones’s translation (in the second volume) of the *Hitopadēśa*, a collection of Sanskrit fables.⁴⁶ The inclusion of Sanskrit materials, and in particular his own translation of the *Hitopadēśa*, tells us that Jones took the manuscript with him to India, considering he did not begin learning the language until 1785.

As for the *Būstān*, it is a copy of Sa’dī’s original complete with a Turkish-language translation and commentary of each verse. The manuscript is filled with notes by Sir William Jones and, perhaps most importantly for our purposes, has an ownership note that states that Jones owned the manuscript whilst a fellow at University College, suggesting he owned this manuscript before embarking on his legal career. The manuscript is one of a very small number of physical texts which suggest Jones’s interest in Turkish, an area of scholarship that Jones did not particularly pursue.⁴⁷ The manuscript was copied by someone who calls themselves “Ibrāhīm Sarvalī” (ابراهيم سرولي) but if we compare the manuscript with Arabic MS 264-5 (94-5), which Jones affirmatively copied, I would suggest that this name is a falsified version of Jones’s own name or merely an alias for him.⁴⁸ Michael Kerney more tentatively suggests that this manuscript was either written by Jones or someone employed by him, presumably because the manuscript includes notes in Jones’s hand, and an autograph ownership note.⁴⁹ The “ugly” hand resembles closely Jones’s own rough *naskh* script.

Why these manuscripts did not form part of the Royal Society collection is unclear, although it is likely because, as they were scripted by him, he did not consider them authentic editions to put into a library, or, perhaps more importantly, might not have wanted to lose the valuable

⁴³John Rylands Library, Arabic MS 264 [94], f.502r.

⁴⁴Shore, *Memoirs*, i, p. 47.

⁴⁵BL MS RSPA 97 f.1r.

⁴⁶See Alphonse Mingana, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library Manchester* (Manchester, 1934), pp. 426–428.

⁴⁷See Cannon, *Life*, p. 45.

⁴⁸John Rylands Library Persian MS 240, p. 734.

⁴⁹See Michael Kemey’s unpublished *Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts of the Earl of Crayford*, p. 93, available at https://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/detail/Manchester~91~1~379072~126269?qvq=q%3Apersian+catalogue+bookreader%3Bsort%3Areference_number%2Cimage_sequence_number%3Blc%3AManchester%7E91%7E1&cic=Manchester%7E91%7E1&sort=reference_number%2Cimage_sequence_number&mi=3&trs=4 (accessed 22 April 2020).

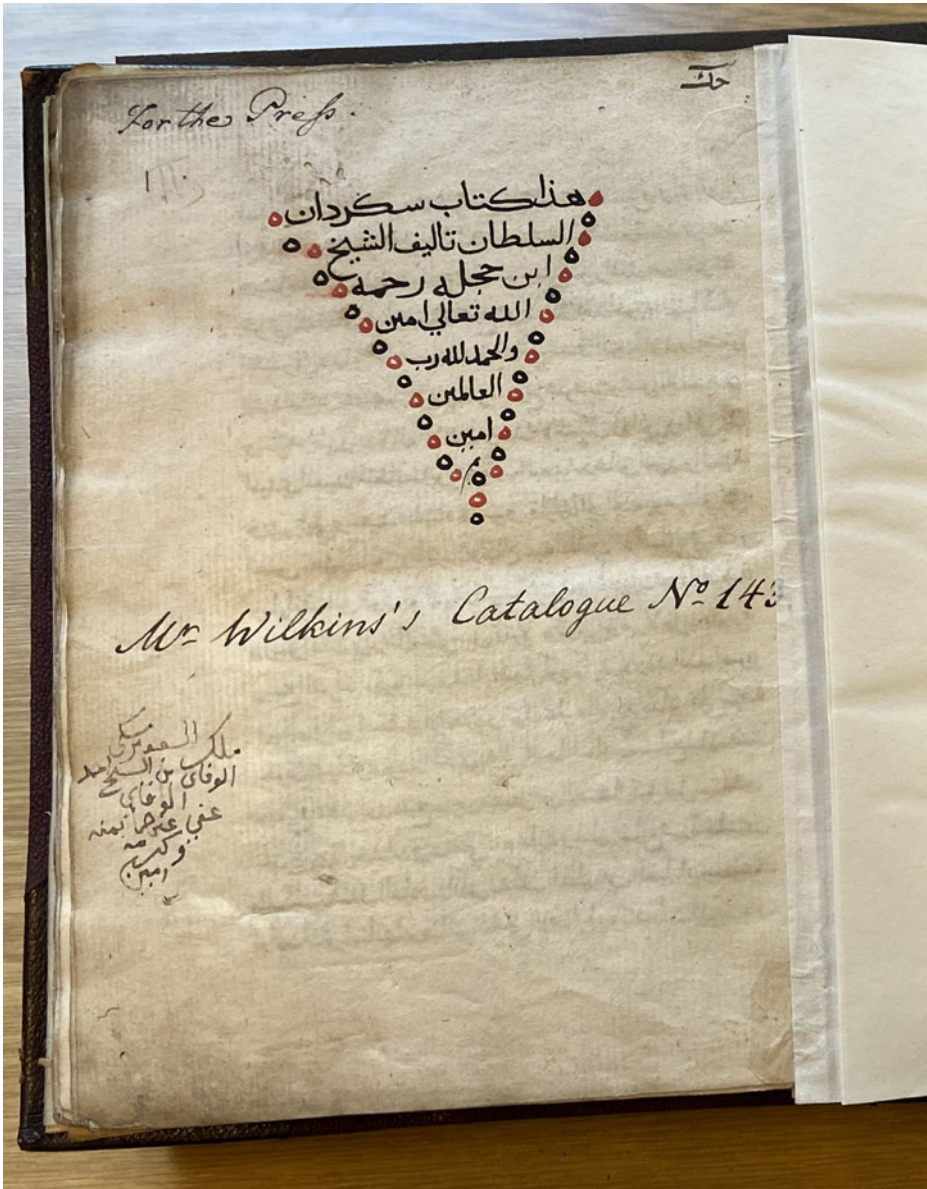


Fig. 4. Jones's note in BL MS RSPA 97, attesting his desire to publish the *Sukkardān*.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 97.

intellectual property in his English translation of the *Sukkardān*, or the Turkish of the *Būstān*. Indeed, Jones had already come close to suffering intellectual property theft in 1770, when his manuscript of his *Persian Grammar* was almost poached from underneath him.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Franklin, *Oriental*, pp. 66–67.

In India: purchases, gifts and networks

On his arrival in India, Jones set about procuring the vast majority of his Arabic and Persian language manuscript collection, principally those that reside now in the British Library under the Royal Society shelf marks (RSPA 1-118). There were three main methods by which Jones acquired manuscripts, these being purchasing, receiving gifts and commissioning manuscripts. All of these, in particular his receipt of gifts and his commissions, required a fairly sophisticated network of both British and Arab, Iranian and Indian colleagues and friends. The rest of this article will detail the acquisition of his manuscripts, where possible, and provide further cross-manuscript analysis of Jones's methods of collecting and curating his book collection. Furthermore, several manuscripts will be discussed in depth to illuminate the previous lives of the manuscripts and the hands through which they moved before they reached Jones, to add to the existing scholarship on manuscript culture in the centuries leading up to Jones's arrival in India.⁵¹

The book market

Perhaps the simplest method of acquiring manuscripts was through purchasing them. In eight manuscripts in the collection, Jones lists the price paid and the date of purchase. On 4 November 1783, only two months after docking in India, Jones purchased six Persian manuscripts, all works of poetry, listed in Table 1:

Table 1. Manuscripts purchased on fourth November 1783 with price paid.

Shelfmark	Author	Title	Cost
BL MS RSPA 29 ⁵²	Anvarī	<i>Dīvān-i Anvarī</i>	35r ⁵³
BL MS RSPA 32	Nizāmī	<i>Makhzan al-Asrār</i>	11r
BL MS RSPA 44	Qāsim-i Anvār	<i>Dīvān-i Qāsim-i Anvār</i>	6r 8a
BL MS RSPA 45	Kātibī	<i>Dīvān-i Kātibī</i>	6r 8a
BL MS RSPA 56	Mu'īn al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh Ghulām al-Khwīshagī al-Chishī	<i>Asrār-i Ma'navī va Anvār-i Maghnavī</i>	5r
BL MS RSPA 57	Unknown	<i>Sharḥ-i Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ</i>	

These books all came from the same auction. BL MS RSPA 56 and 57 were bought together in one lot, as Jones notes in his ownership note on f.1r of MS RSPA 56. Looking at the ownership records of these manuscripts, as well as other physical evidence, it is unclear

⁵¹See, for example, Jeremiah Losty and Malini Roy, *Mughal India: art, culture and empire: manuscripts and paintings in the British Library* (London, 2012), Francesca Orsini (ed.) *The History of the Book in South Asia* (Farnham, 2013), and Allysa B. Peyton and Katherine Anne Paul (eds.), *Arts of South Asia: Cultures of Collecting* (Gainesville FL, 2019). See also Kenneth G. Zysk "The Use of Manuscript Catalogues as Sources of Regional Intellectual History in India's Early Modern Period" in *Aspects of Manuscript Culture in South India*, (ed.) Saraju Rath (Leiden, 2012), pp. 53–287 for a discussion of how we discuss intellectual history in this period of Indian manuscript history with a focus on Sanskrit materials rather than Persian or Arabic ones.

⁵²Table cells are shaded blue for Persian manuscripts, green for Arabic manuscripts and orange for Sanskrit manuscripts throughout.

⁵³35r being 35 rupees. The subdivision used by Jones, the anna (a), was 1/16 of a rupee.

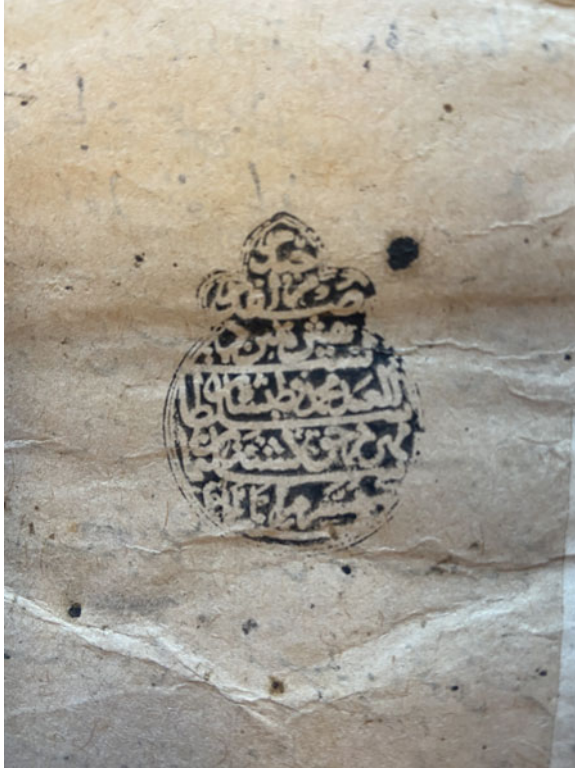


Fig. 5. Seal of Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 32

where the books all came from, whether the auction was of one person's library or the libraries of several people. Of these manuscripts, there are some interesting past owners; BL MS RSPA 32, the copy of Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-Astār*, had previously been owned by Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh (d.1020/1612), one of the rulers of the Quṭb Shāhī dynasty based in Hyderabad (Fig. 5). Dating from 1609, the manuscript's transmission history between Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh and Jones is untraceable.

Among the other manuscripts purchased, BL MS RSPA 29, the *Dīwān* of Anvarī (d.585/1189), had previously been owned by Thomas Ford (fl.1780), who dated his acquisition to 6 November 1779. Ford was the Persian interpreter for Colonel Grainger Muir (d.1786) of the East India Company; this tells us that the manuscript had been in British hands before the auction at which Jones bought the manuscript. The sixteenth-century manuscript also bears the seal of a Mīr Abū 'Alī Khān Bahādur from 1172/1758–9, the date of which suggests he was possibly the owner previous to Ford. This person's seal is also present on a manuscript, now in the Eton College Library's Edward Pote (d.1832) Collection, Eton Pote 315, a copy of Amīr Khusraw's *Qiṣṣah-i Chahār Darvīsh*.⁵⁴ This latter manuscript was gifted

⁵⁴The record for this manuscript can be found at https://www.fihrist.org.uk/catalog/manuscript_15464 (accessed 22 April 2020).

to Eton in 1788 by Pote, who largely acquired his manuscripts from Colonel Antoine-Louis Henri Polier (d.1795), who himself became one of Jones's friends in India, before settling in France in 1788.⁵⁵ It is unclear exactly how Ford's manuscript ended up in the book market, but it does point to the market selling manuscripts which had been owned by both Indian and European owners beforehand. Unfortunately, Jones did not note his attendance at this auction either in his letters or his notebooks and so the setting is unknown.

Of the other manuscripts in the Jones collection, there were two further purchases which were listed inside the manuscripts, these being BL MS RSPA 31 and BL MS RSPA 51, Niẓāmī's *Khamsah* and the collected works (*Kullīyāt*) of 'Urfī Shīrāzī (d.999/1591) respectively. The latter of these was purchased only eight days after the previous auction for 20 rupees. The manuscript bears no other evidence of Jones's use or reading, although he did have two other manuscripts which included a lot of material by 'Urfī, suggesting Jones liked the poet (BL MS RSPA 54 and BL MS RSPA 55).

As for BL MS RSPA 31, this is one of two copies of the *Khamsah* that Jones owned. The other, BL MS RSPA 30, includes a note dated 1790 in Krishnagar, West Bengal, a spot north of Kolkata that the Joneses frequented to escape the city.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, there are no physical indications of how this manuscript wound up in Jones's possession. BL MS RSPA 31, on the other hand, was purchased in April 1788; it is one of Jones's most valuable and beautiful manuscripts, containing 18 miniature paintings, depicting scenes from all five of the texts, although they are principally clustered in the *Haft Paykar*, Niẓāmī's romantic epic depicting Bahrām Gūr (d.438) and seven princesses who tell seven tales. This particular epic poem also bears the most marginal comments, these ranging from linguistic points to descriptions of the plot, as well as the structure of the narrative. These annotations are too numerous to discuss here and warrant a detailed study to understand Jones's reading practices and engagement with the text. According to two separate ownership statements, the manuscript had previously been owned by a Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir (Fig. 6), who unfortunately did not date the ownership notes, meaning it is difficult to work out exactly which Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir he was.⁵⁷

The manuscript notes made by Jones reveal further aspects about his acquisition of manuscripts and practices of collection and ownership, as well as his understanding of Persian literary history. On f.1r, (Fig. 6) Jones comments, "I bought this fine copy of Niẓāmī for 100 S.R. the seller having at first demanded 200. 11 April, 1788 W Jones", and, in Persian, "مالک این کتاب سر ولیام یونس یکی از حاکمان عدالت عالیہ پادشاهی در شهر کلکتہ قیمتش صد روپیہ". His Persian translates to, "the owner of this book is Sir William Jones, one of the judges of the Imperial High Court in Kolkata, its price being one hundred rupees".

⁵⁵See Antoine Louis Henri Polier and Muzaffar Alam (eds.), *A European Experience of the Orient: the I'jāz-i-Arsalānī (Persian letters, 1773–1779) of Antoine-Louis Henri Polier* (Delhi and Oxford, 2007), and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Career of Colonel Polier and Late Eighteenth Century Orientalism", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10, 1 (2000), pp. 43–60, for detailed discussions of this French orientalist.

⁵⁶BL MS RSPA 30, f.0v; see, for example, his letter to Sir John Macpherson (d.1821), dated 1785, in which he describes the "dry soil and pure air" of the town, W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 687.

⁵⁷Two possible contenders are Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir Dāmād Astarābādī (d.1040/1630), the Iranian philosopher who lived in Najaf, or Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir Khātūnābādī (d.1127/1715), who lived in Isfahan, a confidant of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn (d.1139/1726), and scholar of tradition and religious lore.

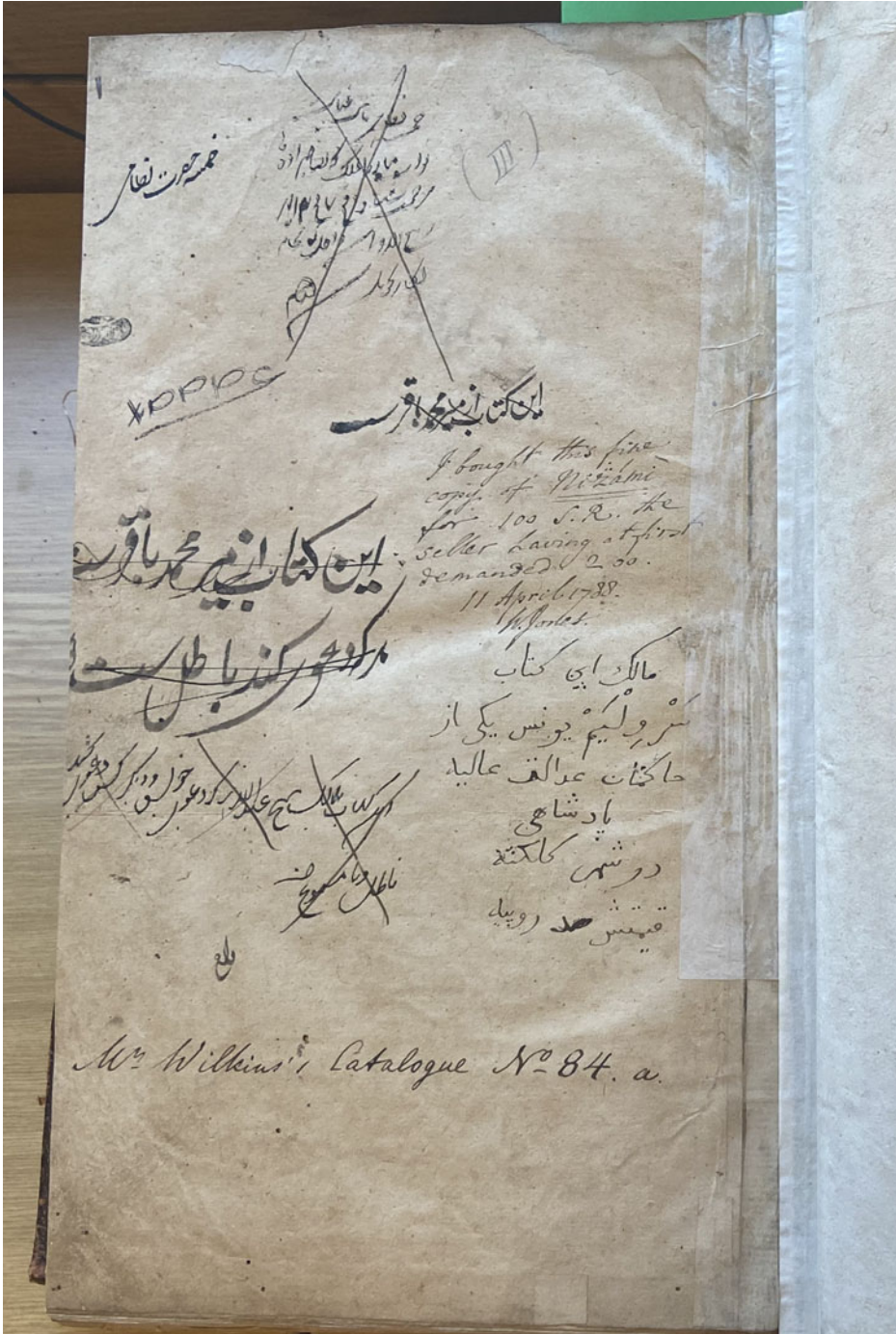


Fig. 6. Title page and ownership notes on Sir William Jones's copy of Nizami's *Khamsah*. Source: British Library, MS RSPA 31

The two ownership statements are, therefore, somewhat different. Whilst Jones lists the price in both, only in the English statement does he acknowledge having negotiated the seller down to a 50 percent reduction. That the book cost 100 rupees is of course indicative both of its high value, visible in the miniature paintings, and also that Jones was willing to spend large sums on acquiring valuable manuscripts, clearly appreciating the aesthetic and physical qualities of the manuscript, not just the contents of the material inside, especially as this was not his only copy of the *Khamsah*. Furthermore, the ownership statements tell us about his use of the material within different networks; why should Jones have included an ownership statement in Persian at all? Why did he introduce himself and state his official function in the Persian, as opposed to the English?

In the English introductory note, Jones focuses on the aspect of haggling at the book market, arguing the owner-seller of the manuscript down to half the price originally demanded. This note speaks to Jones's desire to impress upon his contemporaries, and future readers, his success in acquiring materials at good prices, highlighting both a linguistic ability to haggle and engage with local book sellers, as well as demonstrating a kind of pride at having bargained him down, winning the interaction, so to speak. In his Persian note, however, Jones invokes his official and structural positions of power (one of the judges of the high court), presumably to inform the reader who William Jones actually was, but also to impress upon the Persian-speaking reader of the note the position itself and his importance as holder of that position. He does not need to brag to the Persian-speaking reader of his acquisitional prowess at the book-market, for the power-relation expressed through haggling is only invoked to impress Jones's compatriots; rather, he produces his colonial authority, in a method like the seal's impression of ownership on a manuscript, through his ownership note, invoking the official rank of a British official in eighteenth-century Bengal.⁵⁸

The other important manuscript note in this manuscript is on f.411v; it is one example of a type of manuscript note made relatively frequently by Jones in his manuscripts, this being what I shall term the text/author-circle (see Fig. 7 for an example). In this particular version, Jones writes out the names Firdawsī (d.411/1020) – Mavlavī [Rūmī] (d.672/1273) – Sa' dī – Anvarī (d.585/1189) – Ḥāfiẓ (d.792/1390) – Niẓāmī in a sort of circle, with no other obvious indication as to why he has written them in that shape or grouped them together at all; what does group these authors together, of course, is that they are widely deemed to be the luminaries or classic authors of Persian literature. In other text/author-circles, he adds poets, and indeed, texts to this list; for example, in BL MS RSPA 40, the final volume of Jones's commissioned copy of the *Maḡnavī* of Rūmī, or in BL MS RSPA 61, a copy of Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshif's (d.910/1504–5) *Anvār-i suhaylī* (the circle which is shown in Fig. 7) there are other circles with more names in them.⁵⁹

These text/author-circles appear to be both a vignette of how Jones understands Persian literary history and also expressions of the process of collection. This is most obvious in BL MS RSPA 61, in which Jones notes, alongside the aforementioned poets, other poets, like

⁵⁸For a similar argument, see Daniel A. Lowe, "Performing Authority: the 'Islamic' Seals of British Colonial Officers", British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog) 26 March 2014, <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2014/03/performing-authority-the-islamic-seals-of-british-colonial-officers.html>

⁵⁹BL MS RSPA 40, f.1r and BL MS RSPA 61, f.ov.

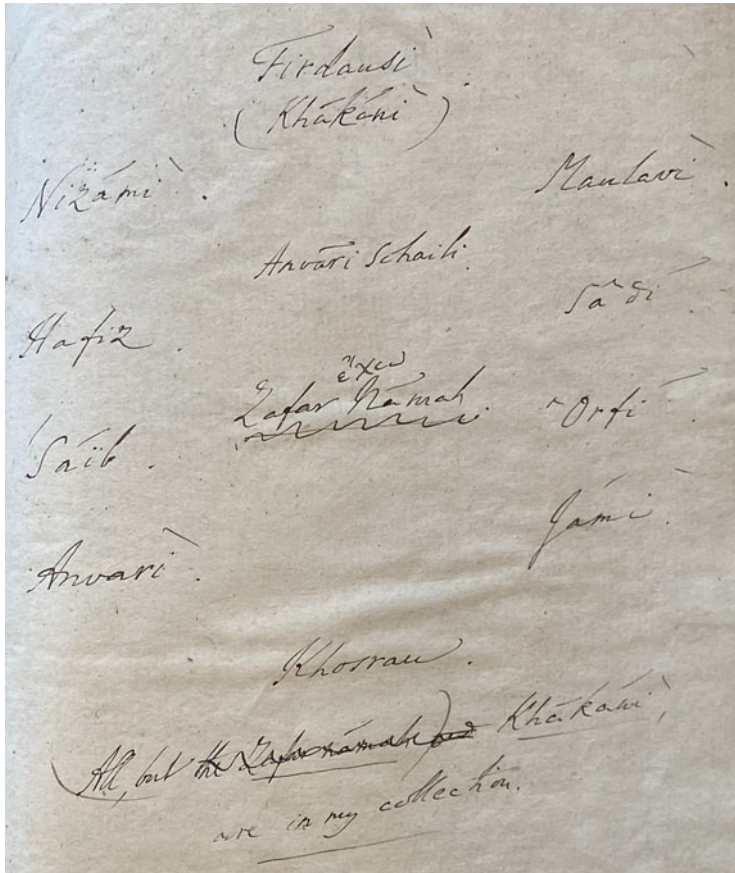


Fig. 7. Sir William Jones's circular annotation of a selection of Persian authors and texts.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 61

'Urfi and Jāmī, as well as the text, the *Zafarnāmah*. Underneath this circle, he wrote that he possessed all of these, except for Firdawsī. Originally, the *Zafarnāmah* had also not been owned by Jones, but presumably upon receipt of BL MS RSPA 7 from Justice Hyde in 1792, he crossed this note out. Here again, we can see Jones acting like a librarian, diligently taking notes of his collection, assessing what he wants to acquire and also returning to these notes to take stock of his collection moving forward. This is a way of curating a collection and provides textual, codicological evidence of Jones's intentions to expand his collection in certain ways, in particular following the trends of what is deemed to be the chief texts of Persian literature. Furthermore, it tells us that he did not own a copy of Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmah* until some time after 1792, otherwise he would have crossed this out as well.

We find a further example of his curatorial intentions in his copy of the *Rāg Darpan*, BL MS RSPA 71 (Fig. 8).⁶⁰ This time, Jones writes, "To complete the collection of

⁶⁰BL MS RSPA 71, f.1r.

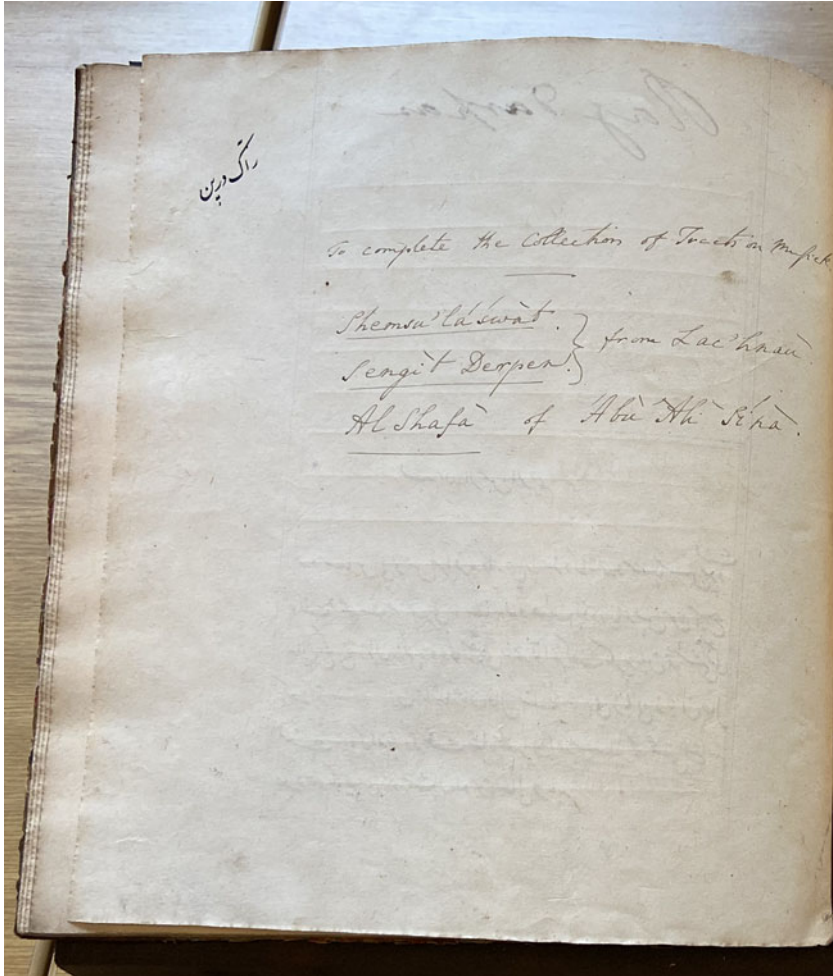


Fig. 8. Sir William Jones's list of musical texts that he hopes to acquire.

Source: British Library MS RSPA 71

Tracts on Musick: Shemsu'laswat / Sengit Derpent (both from Lac'hnau) / Alshafa of Abu Ali Sina [sic]". Two of these texts he did eventually buy, being the *Shams al-aṣwāt*, held under shelf mark BL MS RSPA 70, and a portion of Ibn Sīnā's (d.428/1037) *al-Shifā'* BL MS RSPA 114. Again, here we see Jones as librarian and scholar, actively looking out, as evident in his note about the texts being accessible in Lucknow, for chances to acquire what he understands to be the best texts for a scholar to obtain on a particular subject.

This list of texts is also found in his notebook, now housed at the Beinecke Library at Yale University. Jones here lists these texts, alongside another entitled *Mir'āt-i Naḡmah*, with notes about their translation from Sanskrit, as well as the note, "4 books on music in

Shanscrit [sic] at Lucknow?"⁶¹ After this note, he also writes that the *Tuhfat al-Hind* (BL MS RSPA 78) set out the systems of Indian music during the reign of 'Ālamgīr (r. 1658–1707). As for the *Sangīt*, Jones notes that it was an "ancient book on music in Shanscrit [sic]" which has been translated into Persian by Ras Baras (fl.1697); later in his notebook, Jones explicitly says that the *Shams* was a translation of *Sangīt Darpan*.⁶² However, *Shams al-aṣwāt* was a translation (and expansion and commentary) of *Saṅgītaratnākara* by Śārīgadeva (d.1247), whilst the *Sangīt Darpan* was a different text authored by Dāmodara (fl.1625).⁶³ Among his Sanskrit manuscripts, Jones owned a different musicological work, *Saṅgītanārāyaṇa* (BL MS RST 16) but it would appear he did not own a copy of Dāmodara's *Sangīt Darpan*, either in Sanskrit or Persian, or at least this manuscript did not make it into either Wilkins's rudimentary list of Royal Society manuscripts or Evans's auction catalogue.

These manuscript notes highlight the limitations of his knowledge of Sanskrit musical works and the history of Indian music, a subject of study about which he became increasingly interested during his time in India, as is evident from the vast number of manuscript notes on the *Tuhfat al-Hind*. Furthermore, whilst these notes highlight Jones the librarian and curator who was actively seeking ways to collect manuscripts, here in Lucknow from an undisclosed source, they also underline the necessary limitations of the time on his pursuit of study, namely his limited access to physical manuscripts, which he might use to better inform himself about the field of study at hand.

A European network of collection

There were many well-known collectors of manuscripts that travelled to Asia and brought manuscripts back to Europe to study. These manuscripts now fill the stacks of libraries all over Europe; I have already mentioned several such figures, like Antoine-Louis Henri Polier, Edward Pote and the Russell brothers. Jones's manuscript copies also attest to a lively trade among Europeans, particularly British officials of the East India Company, from within India. Manuscripts were traded as gifts or they were loaned or sent as study materials. There were several men among Jones's European network whose books were transferred into his personal ownership (see [Table 2.1](#)).

To this we can probably add the following two manuscripts:

BL MS RSPA 28, a copy of the version of the epic poem *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā* attributed to Firdawsī, still bears the just visible traces of previous ownership.⁶⁴ On f.1r, there is a heavily erased seal, which is no longer visible, as well as the autograph of John Shore, also scribbled out. John Shore, the first Baron Teignmouth, and, after 1792, Governor-General of India, was a very intimate acquaintance and later wrote Jones's memoirs. Why his name should be

⁶¹William Jones, Notebook, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS Osborne c400, pp. 38–39.

⁶²Jones, Notebook, p. 71.

⁶³See Ras Baras, *Shams al-Aṣwāt: The Sun of Songs by Ras Baras (an Indo-Persian Music Theoretical Treatise from the Late 17th Century)*, (eds. and translators) Mihrdād Fallahzādah and Maḥmūd Ḥasanābādī (Uppsala, 2012) for a scholarly edition and English translation of the text and a discursive introduction. On the authorship of the *Sangīt Darpan*, see "Sangeet Darpan (treatise)" in *Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Music of India*, available at <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195650983.001.0001/acref-9780195650983-e-4347?p=emailAaMPARyDWEhoo&d=/10.1093/acref/9780195650983.001.0001/acref-9780195650983-e-4347> (accessed 23 April 2020).

⁶⁴This is not the place to enter into the thorny debate over the text's authorship. See Asghar Dadbeh, "Joseph i. in Persian Literature" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/joseph-i-in-persian-literature> (accessed 22 April 2020), for a discussion about this particular version's authorship.

Table 2.1. Manuscripts gifted by European acquaintances with the date, if known.

Shelfmark	Title	Donator	Date (if known)
BL MS RSPA 1	<i>al-Farā'id al-Sharīfīyah</i>	Warren Hastings (d.1818)	
BL MS RSPA 7	<i>Zafamāmah</i>	John Hyde (d.1796)	25th June 1792
BL MS RSPA 9	<i>Jahāngīrāmāmah</i>	(Possibly) John Morrison (d. after 1792)	
BL MS RSPA 13	<i>Siyar al-Muta'akhirīn</i>	John Shore	1783-8
BL MS RSPA 14	<i>Scientific Pamphlets</i>	Francis Gladwin (d.1812)	1783-5
BL MS RSPA 20	<i>Farhang-i Jahāngīrī</i>	Charles Roddam	16th February 1788
BL MS RSPA 40	<i>Mīhr va Mushtarī</i>	Matthew Day	27th May 1786
BL MS RSPA 46	<i>Kullīyāt-i Jāmī</i>	Francis Shelley	22nd March 1791
BL MS RSPA 47	<i>Dīvān-i Jāmī</i>	Francis Gladwin	5 th November 1783
BL MS RSPA 85-6	<i>al-Hidāyah</i>	Henry Vansittart (d.1787)	
BL MS RSPA 99	<i>al-Qāmūs al-mulḥīṭ</i>	John Shore	1787
BL MS RSPA 100	<i>al-Qāmūs al-mulḥīṭ</i>	Francis Balfour (d.1818)	

Table 2.2. Manuscripts possibly gifted to Jones from his acquaintances.

Shelfmark	Title	Probable Donator	Date (if known)
BL MS RSPA 28	<i>Yūsuf va Zulaykhā</i>	John Shore	Before 1789
BL MS RSPA 109	<i>Dīvān al-āshiq</i>	John Carnac (d.1800)	Possibly 1787 or before India

crossed out so strikingly is unclear, especially as his name was not, in fact, crossed out in BL MS RSPA 99; in any case, it is likely the manuscript passed directly between the two men, given two other manuscripts in the Jones collection were also gifted by him.

As for BL MS RSPA 109, it is one of several miscellanies in the Jones collection that are difficult to classify. This one is a collection of Arabic and Turkish love poems, but also includes pages of what appear to be handwriting practice and a number of folios dedicated to glyphs of numbers of more than one digit. The reason why this is a possible gift from John Carnac is that there is a note (Fig. 9) on f.91 which lists the “Eastern Manuscripts of Gen. J. Carnac”. Carnac lived in Mumbai on India’s west coast by the time Jones arrived in India, having served for a long time in the army of the East India Company, accompanying Robert Clive to his famous negotiations with Shujā‘ al-Dawlah (d.1188/1775) and Shāh ‘Ālam II (d.1221-1806). Was this manuscript a gift from Carnac? There is every chance of this possibility, as Carnac, like Jones, was a member of the Asiatick Society and is recorded by Jones as transferring six ancient plates he had come across in the area around Mumbai to the Society in 1787.⁶⁵ Equally, the manuscript might have been transferred to Jones’s possession in the 1760s, as Carnac was a noted acquaintance of Jones at this time in England.⁶⁶ We cannot prove this, as there is no firm corroborating evidence. However, the existence of the note in this manuscript indicates that Carnac at some stage came into contact with the manuscript and its owner, who used its sheets to detail the manuscripts in Carnac’s library.

⁶⁵Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 734, n.3.

⁶⁶Franklin, *Oriental*, p. 66.

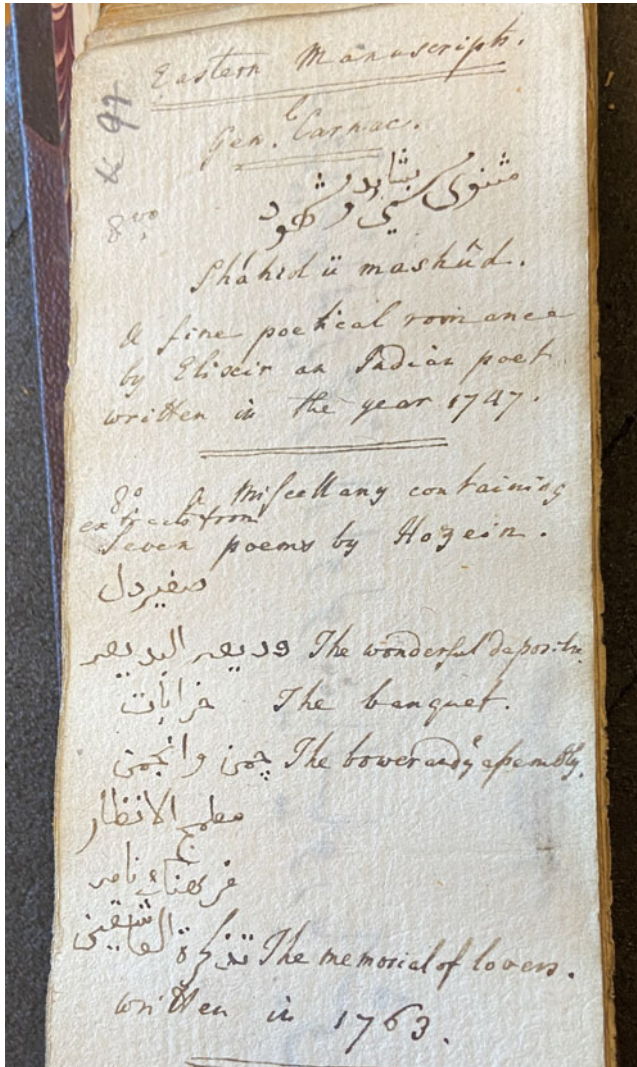


Fig. 9. A list of the Eastern manuscripts in General John Carnac's library.

Source: British Library MS RSPA 109

Moreover, the list was clearly written after the manuscript was assembled, as the list is written very specifically within the small margins of the paper.

Of the definite gifts, some are clearly from close associates of Jones, like John Shore. Francis Gladwin, a long-time acquaintance and co-founding member of the Asiatick Society, was, like Jones, a translator of Persian works, most famously the *Gulistān* of Sa' dī. Gladwin lent Jones two manuscripts; the first manuscript was his copy of Jāmī's *Dīvān*, which he gave to Jones only a day after Jones bulk-bought several manuscripts at the aforementioned auction. This period, late 1783, was, in all senses, an intense period of manuscript collection for Jones, as he bought, commissioned and received manuscripts, only two months after



Fig. 10. Letter from Francis Gladwin to Sir William Jones concerning the contents of the manuscript in which it is appended.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 14

alighting in India. Later, Gladwin sent Jones a letter (Fig. 10), now appended into BL MS RSPA 14, in which he gifts Jones the manuscript in question, deeming it “worthy” of his acceptance, and asks Jones if he can tell the Library (presumably the one of the Asiatick Society) to put Jones down for a copy of Gladwin’s forthcoming publication of the *Asiatick Miscellany* (published in 1785–6), narrowing down the timeframe for this gift to before 1785. This manuscript is a miscellaneous collection of short extracts from other texts, all scientific in nature.

Among the other manuscripts, Gladwin also appears in BL MS RSPA 13. Ghulām Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā’ī (d.circa.1230/1815), Jones notes, wrote this “Free history of the English in India as far as 1782”, and a manuscript copy of it was lent to him by John Shore.⁶⁷ Certainly, the manuscript must have been in Jones’s possession by 1788, for this is when he lent the manuscript to Gladwin, who wrote Jones another letter (Fig. 11), thanking him for some books and noting the return of this manuscript with his observation that the first section, the *Muqaddimah*, or *Introduction*, was “copied verbatim” from the *Ma’āsiri-‘Ālamgīrī*. Jones also notes both his lending the manuscript to Gladwin on 8 March 1788 on f.1v, and also the fact of the introduction’s having been supposedly copied from the previous text, according to Gladwin. In a note on f.ov, Jones notes (Fig. 12), “The first part of this book is copied verbatim, says Mr. Gladwin, from [blank] and the Masiri Alamgiri [sic]”.

⁶⁷W. Jones, Notebook, p. 47.

Wednesday.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for
 Schullens's three Books, and will take great
 care of them.

I return you Ghulam Hussain's
 History with many thanks. The last volume
 is curious, but the first is a great translation
 from Sujin Key, ~~to~~ and the remainder
 from the Rajah's language.

There never the pleasure of
 seeing more of your Treat than what is
 printed.

I am
 With respects
 Dear Sir,
 Yours ever
 Wm. Gladwin

Fig. 11. Francis Gladwin's note to Sir William Jones pointing out his observations regarding the manuscript.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 13

That Jones recorded this transmission and kept the letter for posterity further speaks to his curatorial attitude towards his manuscript collection. That he notes having lent the manuscript is perhaps unsurprising; one would want to keep track of one's possessions, after all. However, the note about Gladwin's reading of the text resembles the process that I noted earlier in the discussion of his embarrassment about the praise poem in BL MS

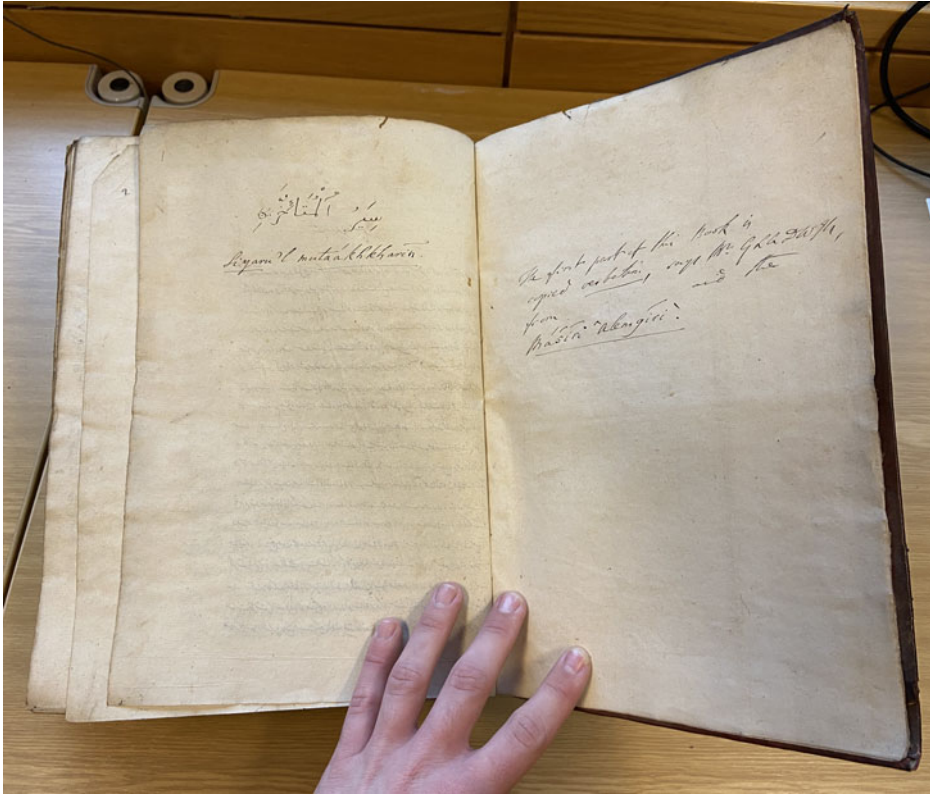


Fig. 12. Sir William Jones notes Gladwin's observations before the beginning of the textblock.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 13

RSPA 107, wherein Jones guides the future readers of his manuscripts in how they read the text and how they see Jones, the collector. Here his eye is firmly kept on posterity, helping future readers of his manuscripts with pointers and bits of information to help stimulate the broader understanding of Persian historiographical literature from the Mughal period; in other words, Jones is telling the future reader who wrote what. The note works to safeguard the intellectual property of Muḥammad Sāqī Musta'idd Khān (d. 1136/1723), the author of the *Ma'āsir*, whose work, according to Gladwin, has been cribbed; no future reader should assume that this first part was authored by Ghulām Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, then, but rather be aware of the mixed contents of the manuscript.

Among the other gifted manuscripts, there are those, such as Matthew Day's, the Revenue Chief in Dhaka,⁶⁸ gift of *Mihr va Mushtarī*, or John Hyde's, a fellow puisne judge, gift of the *Zafarnāmah*, about which we know very little before they were given to Jones. The only indication of previous ownership on the *Zafarnāmah*, for example, is a sales notice

⁶⁸For a caricature portrait of this man, see Robert Dighton, *Matthew Day: A gloomy day, taken on the Steyne at Brighton*, hand-coloured etching, 1803, National Portrait Gallery D13303, available at <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp54698/matthew-day> (accessed 22 April 2020).

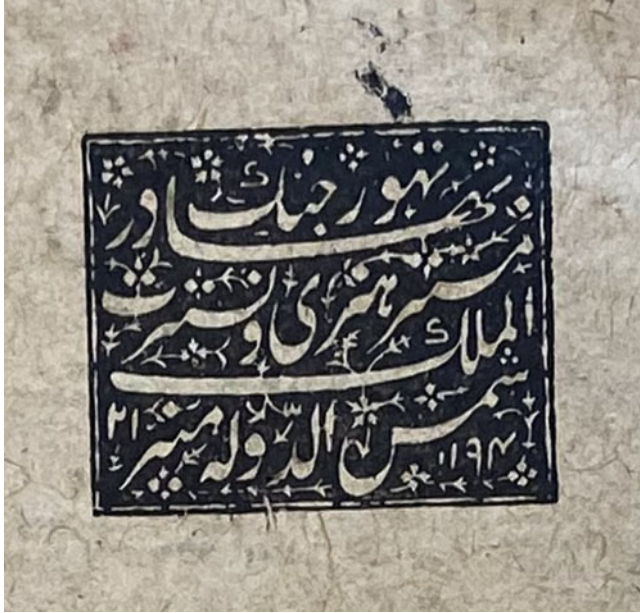


Fig. 13. The Islamic-style seal of Henry Vansittart.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 85

on f.106r that names ‘Ināyat Allāh ibn Muḥibb ‘Alī as owner of the manuscript in the town of Thatta, now located in the province of Sindh in Pakistan, in the year 1077/1666–7, leaving quite a large gap in the manuscript transmission record and providing no indication of how John Hyde procured it.

By contrast, BL MS RSPA 85 and 86, a large two volume copy of the *Hidāyah* by al-Marghīnānī, one of the most authoritative textbooks of the Hanafī law code, has a fascinating history of ownership we can trace through the seal record. This was one of at least two copies of the *Hidāyah* in the Jones collection, the other being Evans lot 195, a printed and translated book.⁶⁹ This two-volume manuscript was acquired by Jones through Henry Vansittart, whose Persian-language seal (Fig. 13) is still visible on f.1r of BL MS RSPA 85. In his notebook, Jones lists the *Hidāyah* in one of several lists of books he wishes to acquire and notes at some later date above this that “Mr. Vansittart has a good copy”, which we might presume is this copy that Jones then acquired from him.⁷⁰ Vansittart was certainly in the practice of lending Jones reading material, as Jones notes that he lent him a copy of *al-Farā’id al-Sirājīyah*.⁷¹

⁶⁹ *Catalogue of Sale*, p. 8

⁷⁰ Jones, Notebook, p. 7

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5 A copy of this text, it would appear, had been owned by a man called Ṣadr al-Dīn, whom Jones lists as the *munshī* (secretary and scribe) to Richard Barwell (d.1804), see W. Jones, Notebook, 2–3. At a later date, Jones added in pencil that Vansittart lent a manuscript of it; whether or not these were the same manuscript is unclear.



Fig. 14. Seal of an official at the court of Farrukh Siyar.

Source: British Library MS RSPA 85

Vansittart was not the only important owner of this two-volume manuscript of the *Hidāyah*, bound in a beautiful red leather European-style Indian binding. Rather, this manuscript appears to have been one of a number in the Jones collection that had passed through the imperial Mughal library, or persons and institutions connected with imperial Indian dynasties.⁷² On f.1r, there are seals from men at the courts of both Farrukh Siyar (d.1131/1719) and Bahādur Shāh (d.1124/1712). The seal from the official at the court of Farrukh Siyar (Fig. 14) was erroneously listed by Dennison Ross and Browne as having been that of Farrukh Siyar himself;⁷³ however, the seal belongs to someone bearing the name Sayyid [-?]d Khān at the court of Farrukh Siyar.

Another such example of a manuscript in the collection coming from an imperial source is Jones's *Kullīyāt-i Jāmī*, BL MS RSPA 46, which includes a note (Fig. 15) from Francis Skelley, the Major of the 74th Regiment of the East India Company forces, whose name is also inscribed on f.1r, which reads:

The Fortress of Bangalor [sic] was stormed and taken by the British troops on the night of the 21st of March 1791—This book (found, the day following, in the palace of Tipoo Sultan [sic]) is respectfully presented to Sir William Jones by his obedient and humble servant Fra. Skelley Maj. 74th Regiment.

This is dated to 22 March 1791 and comes from the camp near Bangalore during the Third Anglo-Mysore War. Tīpū Sulṭān's (d.1213/1799) personal library was not transferred into British hands until 1801, after his death and the end of the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War.⁷⁴

⁷²BL MS RSPA 3 and BL MS RSPA 69 both, for example, have seals bearing names of people attached to the court of Ālamgīr (d.1118/1707). Likewise, BL MS RSPA 32, as already mentioned, bears the seal of Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh of the Quṭb Shāhī dynasty.

⁷³Dennison Ross and Browne, *Catalogue*, p. 62.

⁷⁴For the catalogue of Tīpū Sulṭān's personal library, see Charles Stewart, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Library of the Late Tippoo Sultan of Mysore: To Which Are Prefixed, Memoirs of Hyder Aly Khān, and His Son Tippoo Sultan* (Cambridge, 1809). Ursula Sims-Williams has also written extensively for the British Library Asian and African Studies blog on Tīpū Sulṭān's library, some of which is now held at the British Library. See, for example, Ursula Sims-Williams, "Making his Mark: the Seals of Tīpū Sulṭān" British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog), 5

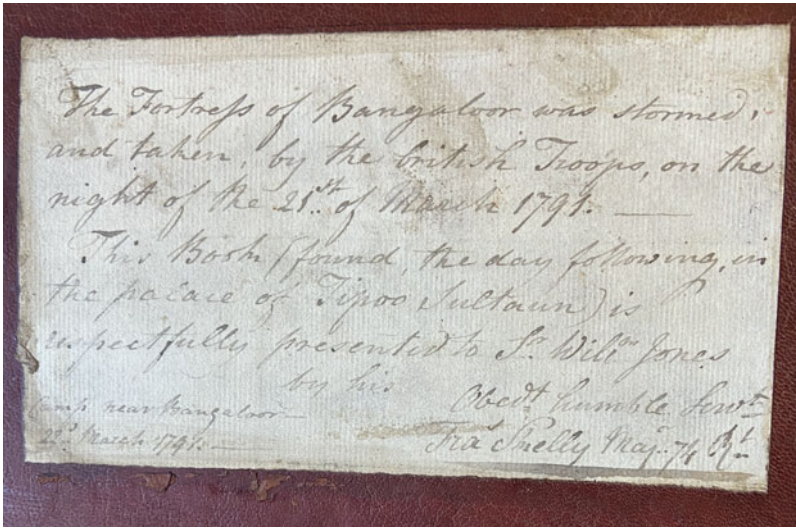


Fig. 15. Letter from Francis Skelley to William Jones appended into his manuscript copy of *Kulliyāt-i Jāmī*.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 46

This manuscript, which originated in his palace and now resides in the Jones collection, ought therefore also to be considered as a manuscript from among the library of Tīpū Sulṭān, albeit a manuscript that does not have the same provenance history when it comes to the transfer from Indian to English hands.

Francis Skelley, the first Major of the Regiment, died in 1793, during the Regiment's operations against Mysore and Tīpū Sulṭān.⁷⁵ Except for this brief exchange, there is no historical record of Skelley and Jones having been acquaintances; this gift, just like BL MS RSPA 107, Jones's copy of al-Mutanabbī's *Dīwān*, was based, it would appear, upon scholastic fame. Of course, Jones was a very well-known mind of the late eighteenth century, in particular as regards Persian and Arabic scholarship, being the president and founder of the Asiatick Society and having already published several translations and commentaries on different aspects of Persian and Arabic literature and law. Skelley clearly thought of Jones as someone to whom this beautifully bound, large and extensive compendium of Jāmī's works would be of interest, which tells us that, beyond his fame as a scholar, Jones was also acknowledged as a collector of manuscripts, who might wish to receive manuscripts from across India and beyond.

Perhaps a further example of this renown for collecting manuscripts and books is the unusual acquisition of a manuscript by Jones in 1784, a gift from Francis Light (d.1794) the founder of the colony of Penang. Light had sent Jones a "rare Balinese religious

April 2018, <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2018/04/making-his-mark-the-seals-of-tipu-sultan.html> on seals or Ursula Sims-Williams, "Some Bindings from Tīpū Sulṭān's Court", British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog), 17 July 2017, <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2017/07/some-bindings-from-tipu-sultans-court.html> on bindings; (both accessed 22 April 2020).

⁷⁵Richard Cannon, *Historical Record of the Seventy-Fourth Regiment (Highlanders), containing an account of the formation of the Regiment in 1787 and of its subsequent services to 1850* (London, 1850), p. 124.

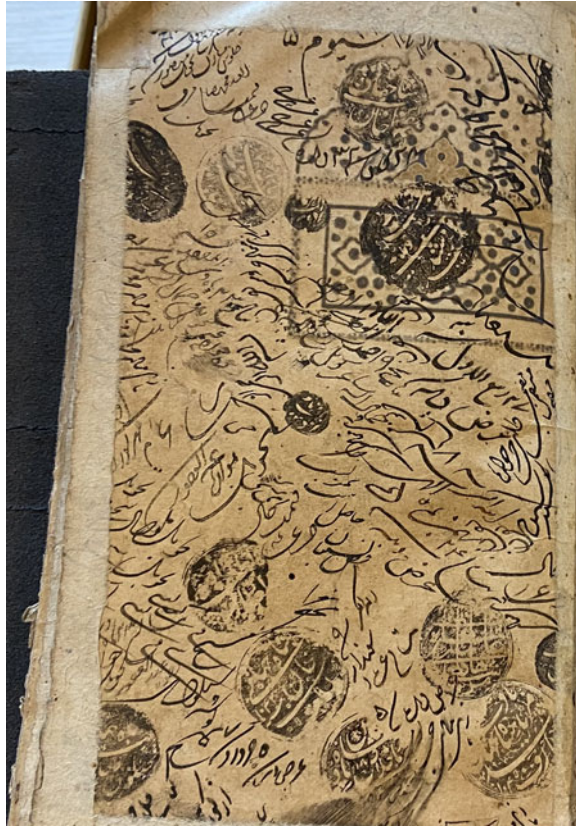


Fig. 16. Page of seals on Sir William Jones's copy of the *Jahāṅīr-nāmah*.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 9

document” according to Garland Cannon.⁷⁶ Written on tree bark, the manuscript was bought at auction by John George Cochrane as Evans lot 455 (see Appendix 3), listed as a Batta Manuscript from Sumatra. Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace the manuscript beyond this sale and so could not say whether the gift was intended for Jones or for the Asiatic Society. However, that Light considered Jones a worthy recipient of this gift in a language that Jones did not study at all highlights his renown as a collector of manuscripts, as someone building a library of manuscript curiosities, as well as acquiring manuscripts for personal scholarship.

BL MS RSPA 9: Reconstructing a manuscript history

On BL MS RSPA 9, Jones's copy of the *Jahāṅīr-nāmah*, there are two seals (Fig. 16), which bear the dates 1042 and 1045AH (1632–3 and 1635–6AD respectively) only five and eight years

⁷⁶W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 689, n.2.

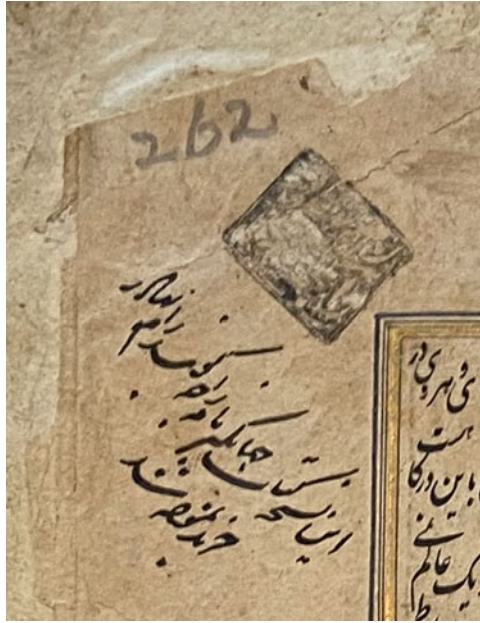


Fig. 17. Seal and purchase note of Rājah Gubind Rām.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 9

after Jahāngīr's (d.1037/1627) death.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, the majority of seals on this manuscript are now partially or wholly illegible.

On f.262r, there is a seal and undated ownership note, both bearing the name Rājah Gūbind Rām Bahādur (d.1788) (Fig. 17); the ownership note states that he purchased the manuscript.⁷⁸ This must have been at some point before 1772, for on f.1v, there is a marginal note (Fig. 18) that explains that the same Rājah Gūbind Rām gifted the manuscript to a certain James Archedekin in October 1772. Archedekin is not a well-known figure; he was a salt merchant in Kolkata in the 1770s.⁷⁹ Presumably, the manuscript moved from Archedekin directly to this Mr. Morrison, for he is the one that gifted it to Jones at an undisclosed date. As for Rājah Gūbind Rām, he would later (in 1775) become the ambassador of the Nawāb Āṣaf al-Dawlah (d.1212/1797) of Awadh to the East India Company until his death.⁸⁰ He was a noted ally of the company and had warm relations with Warren Hastings.⁸¹

⁷⁷BL MS RSPA 9, f. 1r.

⁷⁸BL MS RSPA 9, f.262r.

⁷⁹James Fitzjames Stephen, *Selected Writings of James Fitzjames Stephen: the story of Nincomar and the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey*, (ed.) Lisa Rodensky (Oxford, 2013), i, p. 64.

⁸⁰Alan M. Guenther, "Seeking Employment in the British Empire: Three Letters from Rajah Gubind Ram Bahādur", *Fontanus* 12 (2010), p. 130.

⁸¹Joshua Ehrlich, "The East India Company and the Politics of Knowledge" (unpublished PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 2018), p. 63, available at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:39947190> (accessed 23 April 2020).

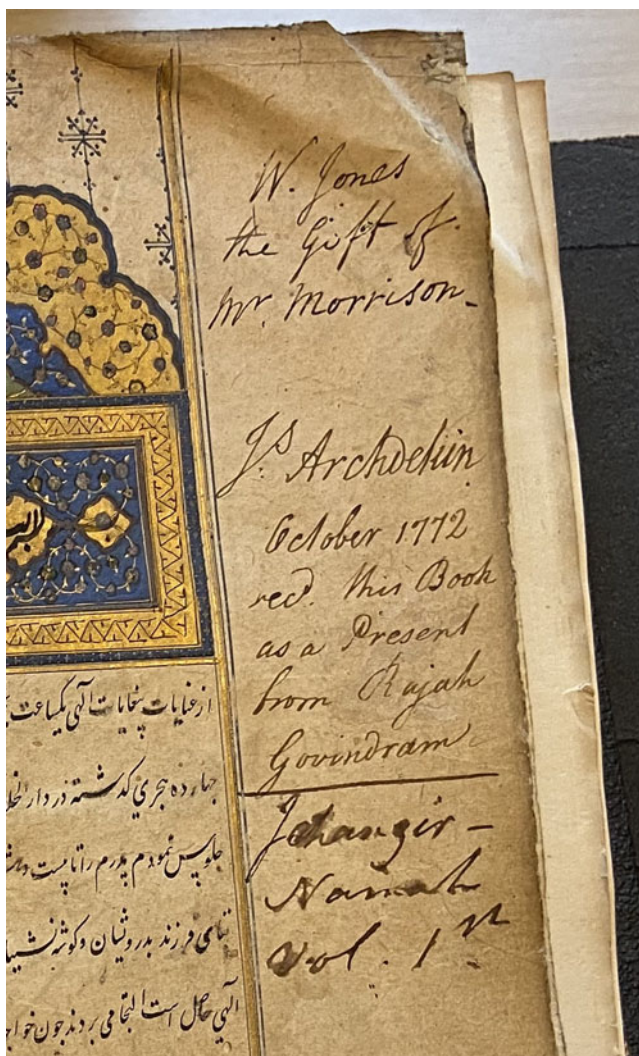


Fig. 18. Ownership notes on Sir William Jones's copy of the *Jahāngīrnāmāh*.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 9

Mr Morrison could well be identified as Major John Morrison (d. after 1792), a poorly remembered figure of eighteenth-century Indian history, who came to London in 1773 to strike a bargain on behalf of Shāh 'Ālam II, acting for him as his “plenipotentiary”.⁸²

⁸²See Evan Cotton and H. Pattullo “The Melville Papers: Letters from Major John Morrison relative to Bengal and Persia”, *Journal of The Royal Central Asian Society* 17, 4 (1930), in particular pp. 507–508 and pp. 513–517 for his connection to Jones. See also John Hayhurst, “Major Morrison: Loyal British Servant or Political Mercenary?”, British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog), 22 May 2014, <https://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2014/05/major-morrison-loyal-british-servant-or-political-mercenary.html> (accessed 23 April 2020). In this blog, Hayhurst discusses Morrison's life in the 1780s and early 1790s when, still in the employ of Shāh 'Ālam, Morrison journeyed to Iran in 1786 to try and strike a pact between Shāh 'Ālam and Ja'far Khān Zand (d.1203/1789), at the time one of the contenders to the Persian throne and later Shāh of Iran. Hayhurst mentions a letter sent from Morrison to Lord Grenville in 1792, the latest date found connected to Morrison.

Certainly, Morrison was acquainted with Jones, for Jones translated the “letter of credence” which was sent by Shāh ‘Ālam to the British government.⁸³ If that is the case, Morrison, who left India at the very end of 1772 would have had to have obtained the manuscript almost immediately from Archedekin before giving it to Jones, presumably before Jones travelled to India in 1783. It is worth emphasising in this reconstruction of a possible timeline for the manuscript’s transmission between figures, that Jones (unusually) does not note the date of his accepting the gift, meaning that it is very possible that Jones did own the manuscript before his trip, as we have already shown he clearly owned a small collection of manuscripts by that point. Whether or not this timeline is exactly correct, the fact that Archedekin, a salt merchant otherwise seemingly unconnected to the world of scholarship and manuscript acquisition, received this manuscript “as a present” from Rājāh Gūbind Rām in the first place speaks to the worth attached to manuscripts as a commodity to be traded as gifts. Why the manuscript was traded, possibly almost immediately, between Archedekin and Morrison is, however, unclear; perhaps Archedekin was not himself interested in manuscripts.

Important to note is that this manuscript may be one of a set, not all of which ended up in the Jones collection. Below Archedekin’s note, there is another note, which states this is the first volume of the text; this explains why the manuscript ends “abruptly”, as noted by Dennison Ross and Browne.⁸⁴ As the manuscript contains about half the text, it might safely be assumed there is a second volume of the text that did not make it into Jones’s possession. Perhaps it was never owned by Archedekin, or perhaps it was kept by him or by Morrison. Here again we have a further example of the types of limitations placed upon Jones’s scholarship by the very physical constraints of working with partial and incomplete manuscript copies of texts.

Gifts to the Asiatick Society

Among Jones’s collection of materials, or rather materials which bear marks of having been used by Jones, there are two manuscripts that were originally gifts to the Asiatick Society, rather than gifts donated to Jones personally, which suggests that Skelley’s gift was indeed to Jones as a book collector, rather than to Jones as President of the Asiatick Society. The first, Mīrzā Zayn al-Dīn’s *Dīvān*, has been discussed in detail by James White.⁸⁵ This manuscript, now residing in the John Rylands Library as Persian MS 219, contains a manuscript note in Jones’s handwriting that says that the manuscript was presented by the poet himself, who was, incidentally, a personal acquaintance of Jones, to the Governor-General, at the time John Macpherson, on 21 May 1785.⁸⁶

Of the manuscripts sold as part of the personal collection of Lady Jones in 1831 on the other hand, there is one that was actually a gift to the Asiatick Society, this time by Thomas

⁸³Cotton and Pattullo, “Melville Papers”, pp. 513–517.

⁸⁴BL MS RSPA 9, f.1v; Dennison Ross and Browne, *Catalogue*, p. 6.

⁸⁵See James White, “On the Road: The Life and Verse of Mir Zeyn al-Dīn ‘Eshq, a Forgotten Eighteenth-Century Poet”, *Iranian Studies*, published online 12 August 2019, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00210862.2019.1642738?scroll=top&needAccess=true> (accessed 22 April 2020).

⁸⁶W. Jones, Notebook, p. 2–3; John Rylands Library, Persian MS 219, f.1r.

Law (d.1834), himself a member of the “Club” listed by Jones in his notebook.⁸⁷ This manuscript, a copy of the medical encyclopaedia *Zakhīrah-i Khvārazmshāhī* now listed as Persian MS 192 at the John Rylands library, was not, therefore, a gift to Jones per se. That this manuscript was included in the sale of Lady Jones’s library might indicate that what were originally gifts to the Society that were in Jones’s personal possession when he died were, perhaps erroneously, shipped back to England with his effects after his death.

This particular manuscript also bears an important testament to the auction of Jones’s library, which is worth mentioning here. In this manuscript, and also in Persian MS 187, Jones’s copy of Vahshī’s (d.991/1583) *Shūrīn va Farhād*, there is a note by Samuel Hawtayne Lewin, whose manuscript collection was largely bought by Nathaniel Bland, and from Bland these two manuscripts wound their way into the John Rylands Collection.⁸⁸ Lewin’s note states that he purchased the manuscript(s) in 1831 at the sale of Jones’s library. However, in the ledger of sale, kept at the Royal Asiatic Society, the buyer is listed as John George Cochrane.⁸⁹ Cochrane was a bookseller by trade, and later the first librarian of the London Library.⁹⁰ Cochrane must have acted here as a kind of intermediary. Either Cochrane was purchasing the books which were immediately sold to Lewin, or, perhaps more likely given the wording of the manuscript note which suggests Lewin bought the manuscript directly from the auction, Cochrane was working on a commission from Lewin to purchase the manuscripts. This suggests that other manuscripts, listed as having been bought by him, may have been bought instead on commission for other collectors, rendering the task of tracking them down slightly more challenging.

Jones’s Indian, Arab and Persian Network

As a puisne judge on the Bengal High Court, Jones was in contact with a vast number of Indian, and indeed Arab and Persian, functionaries of the legal system, namely pandits and *mavlāvīs*, those men tasked with interpreting Islamic and Sanskrit legal sources for the judges.⁹¹ Beyond this network of court officials, Jones also met and developed personal relationships with many men, about whom he writes notes in his notebook. Sometime it is hard to say for sure if the bare bones of the name given in a manuscript is exactly the same as the name given in his notebook; for example, Persian MS 267, Jones’s copy of Jāmī’s *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā*, sold at the auction as Evans lot 434 (see Appendix 3), and now housed at the John Rylands library, was written by an ‘Abd al-Raḥīm.⁹² This ‘Abd al-Raḥīm might tally with

⁸⁷W. Jones, Notebook, p. 25.

⁸⁸See Ursula Sims-Williams, “The strange story of Samuel Guise: an 18th-century collection of Zoroastrian manuscripts”, *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 19 (2005), p. 204, for a different collection of Persian manuscripts that also passed between these two figures.

⁸⁹*Catalogue of Sale* (MS), p. 20.

⁹⁰See William Baker, “The early staffing of the London Library: a note on John George Cochrane and others”, *Library Review* 38, 3 (1989), pp. 36–41

⁹¹This is a subject that has been discussed at length by biographers of Jones and scholars of his legal work. See, for example, Rosane Rocher, “Weaving Knowledge: Sir William Jones and the Pandits”, in *Objects of Enquiry*, (ed.) Cannon, pp. 51–81 Rosane Rocher, “The Career of Rādhākānta Tarkavāgīśa, an Eighteenth-Century Pandit in British Employ”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109, 4 (1989), pp. 627–633; Abhijit Mukherji, “European Jones and Asiatic Pandits”, *Journal of the Asiatic Society* 27 (1985), pp. 43–58.

⁹²*Catalogue of Sale*, p. 17; Kerney, *Catalogue*, p. 100.

the ‘Abd al-Raḥīm in Jones’s notebook, recommended to him by a Mr G. Williamson.⁹³ Two of these men in his circle of acquaintances in particular were important for the transfer of physical copies of manuscripts from their personal collections to the Jones collection: ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān (d.circa.1208/1793–4) and Sayyid Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān (fl.1201/1786–7).

‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān is well known to historians of the East India Company’s interactions with Indian officials.⁹⁴ ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān was, according to Jones, “chief magistrate at Benares [Varanasi] skilled in Persian, a good poet [whose *takhalluṣ* (pen-name) was] *khalīl*, author of a large work on the lives of the Persian poets from Bahram Gur to Hazein [sic]; a vast collection of 15 volumes in folio”, this being the *Ṣuḥuf-i Ibrāhīm*.⁹⁵ Later in his notebook, ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān is mentioned as being the host of Ghulām Ḥusayn, the author of *Siyar al-Muta’akhhirīn*.⁹⁶ Beyond the notebook, Jones mentions ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān in his letters, telling Warren Hastings of a morning spent in his company, wherein his “manners and conversation gave me great pleasure”.⁹⁷

‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān gave Jones his copy of *Tuḥfat al-Hind*, an encyclopaedic work on Indian music in the time of ‘Ālamgīr, now under shelf mark BL MS RSPA 79. The manuscript bears his seal and then next to the seal on f.1r an ownership note that explicitly references ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān giving the manuscript to Jones in 1784. This book is presumably the manuscript that Jones mentions in his letter to Hastings, “which my ardent curiosity prompted me to run over”. The manuscript is of particular value among the Jones collection because on almost every page there are long annotations in Jones’s hand, attesting to this “ardent curiosity” with which he read the text. We might also presume that ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān gave Jones BL MS RSPA 80, usually entitled *Forms of Oaths Held Binding by the Hindus*. The manuscript is alleged to have been written by ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān and would have been an important tool in Jones’s quest to find forms of oaths upon which (he believed) Hindus would swear and then tell the truth, something about which Jones speaks at length in his letters.⁹⁸

About Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān we know somewhat less; certainly, Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān does not appear to have held any official function in the Indian state apparatus, unlike ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān. There is a seal that appears on six manuscripts in the Jones collection (see Fig. 19),

⁹³W. Jones, Notebook, pp. 2–3. This, like so much about Jones’s network of Indian colleagues, cannot be proved with any certainty. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm appears several times in the Notebook and will be spoken about in some detail later in this article. Incidentally, much later in his Notebook, in 1788, Jones also notes that he met a different Mīr ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, a traveller from Resht, who dined with Jones on 30 August, W. Jones, Notebook, p. 115.

⁹⁴See, for example, F. Lehmann, “ALĪ EBRĀHĪM KHĀN,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* I, 8, pp. 860–861; Shā’istah Khān, *A Biography of ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān (circa 1740–1793): a Mughal noble in the administrative service of the British East India Company* (Patna, 1992); Nandini Chatterjee, “Hindu city and just empire: Banaras and India in ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān’s legal imagination”, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 15, 1 (2014), published online at <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/542521> (accessed 22 April 2020)

⁹⁵W. Jones, Notebook, p. 27.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁹⁷W. Jones, *Letters*, pp. 658–659.

⁹⁸W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, pp. 622, 677, 684 and *passim*. This has also been surveyed by Roseane Rocher in Rocher, “Weaving”, pp. 54–56, and by Gillian Evison in Evison, “Sanskrit”, pp. 126–130. Evison makes the important observation that Jones, just like the rest of the British administration, failed to understand the intricacies of the methods and practices of the Sanskrit–Hindu legal system and that this failure led to the distrust Jones felt for the court pandits.

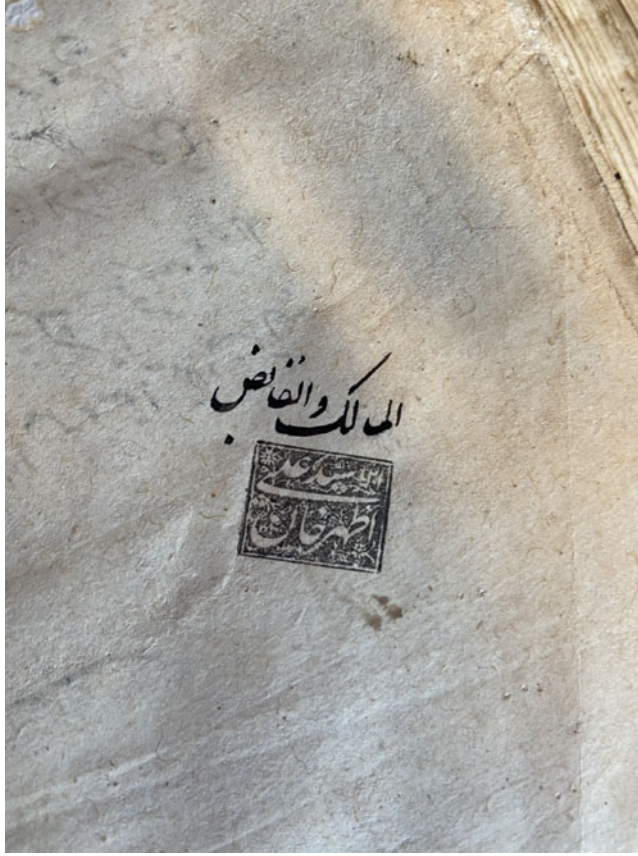


Fig. 19. Seal of Azhar 'Alī Khān, Jones's personal acquaintance.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 19

bearing the name “Sayyid Azhar 'Alī Khān” in the year 1201AH, corresponding to 1786-7, therefore during Jones's time in India. These six manuscripts are as follows:

This is a varied collection of manuscripts; they date largely from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and cover a wide range of topics and authors. That all the manuscripts

Table 3. Manuscripts bearing the seal of Azhar 'Alī Khān.

Shelf Mark	Author	Title	Subject
BL MS RSPA 5	Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Āmilī	<i>Jāmi'-i 'Abbāsī</i>	Islamic Law
BL MS RSPA 19	Muḥammad Mu'min ibn Muḥammad Zamān al-Tunakābunī	<i>Tuḥfat al-Mu'minīn</i>	Medicine
BL MS RSPA 42	Amīr Khusraw	<i>Dīwān-i Amīr Khusraw</i>	Poetry
BL MS RSPA 52	Ṣā'ib	<i>Dīwān-i Ṣā'ib</i>	Poetry
BL MS RSPA 54	'Urfī, Shāpūr and Naẓīrī	<i>Dīwān</i>	Poetry
BL MS RSPA 61	Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī	<i>Anvār-i Suhaylī</i>	Fables

bear the same seal from within the time period that Jones lived in Calcutta and, given the personal connection between the two men attested in the notebook and discussed below, it seems likely that Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān collected the manuscripts for Jones, impressing his seal upon them in his role as middleman, or that he gave them to Jones from his personal collection at some point during or after 1786–7. Either way, just as with BL MS RSPA 21, gifted to him by I’tiṣām al-Dīn, the personal connection is unattested to by Jones in the manuscripts, notably unlike his *modus operandi* with the gifts he received from European contacts.

In Jones’s notebooks, Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān plays a prominent role among his coterie of local friends and acquaintances, appearing several times. Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān was Jones’s Persian *munshī*, working as his secretary; the son of Nādir Shāh’s (d.1160/1747) physician, Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān was one of the first local informants that Jones had about Persian book culture in India.⁹⁹ In the notebook, Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān is also seen recommending men and books to Jones; he recommends, for example, ‘Abd al-‘Alī and his son, Muḥammad Vā’iẓ, to Jones for their work in law.¹⁰⁰ ‘Abd al-‘Alī, a resident of Hooghly, was apparently “one of the first in India” on matters of divinity and law and “eminent in every branch” of learning.¹⁰¹ Likewise, Muḥammad Arshad was recommended to Jones by Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān, because he was a “learned geometrician” who hailed from Delhi.¹⁰² Jones’s scholarship, just as his ability to seek out new contacts among the local Indian academic community, was dependent to a great extent on the operations of acquaintances like Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān, whose own networks and acquaintances are those ones that Jones was able to meet. As with manuscripts, Jones’s knowledge of Indian learning was dependent on the limitations of his time and place, in this instance the extent of already existing networks of people engaging in Persian and Arabic literary culture in north-eastern India over an 11-year window.

Of the books that Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān recommended to Jones but did not give him personally, there is also a text Jones calls *Ṣaḥīfah-’i Kāmīlah*, which he praises as “very eloquent” and which William Chambers (d.1793) supposedly owns; this title is later included in his list of “Arabick reading” in the notebook.¹⁰³ This *Ṣaḥīfah-’i Kāmīlah* would appear to correspond to BL MS RSPA 112, Jones’s copy of al-‘Āmilī’s (d.1030/1621) *al-Kashkūl*. Jones’s title page of the manuscript reads, “Caschūl: an Arabick Miscellany by Baha’u ’ddin al-‘Aamil [sic]”;¹⁰⁴ on the same folio, Jones has written “al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmīlah” (Fig. 20) and underneath written, “An elegant moral work in Arabick”, suggesting this was a name by which Jones knew the text.¹⁰⁵ The notebooks further attest to Jones’s regard for al-‘Āmilī’s work, for the author and his works come up more often than any other non-legal text or writer.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹Jones mentions his Persian *munshī* in W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 637 in a letter to the second Earl Spencer, calling him “my Persian” and noting that he and “my Arab” (al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī) had just left the room so he could continue writing his letter. See also, W. Jones, Notebook, pp. 2–3.

¹⁰⁰W. Jones, Notebook, p. 14–15.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, pp. 14, 43.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 53.

¹⁰⁴BL MS RSPA 112, f.1r.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, f.1r (pages before foliation).

¹⁰⁶He mentions several of al-‘Āmilī’s works in W. Jones, Notebook, pp. 45–46, 52–53.

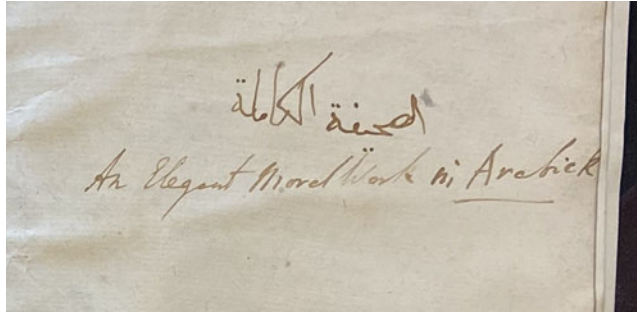


Fig. 20. Sir William Jones annotates his copy of al-‘Āmilī’s *al-Kashkūl*.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 112

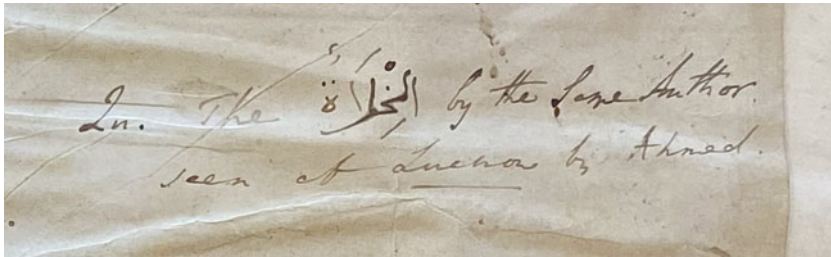


Fig. 21. Sir William Jones annotates his copy of al-‘Āmilī’s *al-Kashkūl*, noting where he can find al-‘Āmilī’s *al-Mikhlāh*.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 112

In the same manuscript, he has also noted (Fig. 21) that, “The *al-Mikhlāh*, by the same author, [was] seen at Lucknow by Ahmed [sic]”.¹⁰⁷ This Aḥmad also appears in his notebooks, again as a mononym, as one of the 23 *mavlavīs* attached to the court.¹⁰⁸ Elsewhere in the notebook, there is also a note about a Muḥammad or Aḥmad *mavlavī*, of whose name Jones seems unsure, who is the brother of a Majd al-Dīn and who had been the preceptor to Ghāzī al-Dīn (Fīrūz Jang) (d.1165/1752), the son of Niẓām al-Mulk Āṣaf Jāh (d.1161/1748).¹⁰⁹ Just as with the notes in his notebook and manuscripts regarding the musical tracts he had heard about in Lucknow, here we see Jones noting within the manuscripts themselves the existence of works by the same author, their location and his contacts who have managed to view these manuscripts, possibly with a view to procuring them himself. We might also suggest that it was possibly the same Aḥmad who travelled to Lucknow that saw the musical tracts. This form of manuscript note, whilst uncommon in the Jones collection, does attest to the *process* of manuscript collection and acquisition and the

¹⁰⁷BL MS RSPA 112, f.ii.v.

¹⁰⁸W. Jones, Notebook, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹W. Jones, Notebook, p. 3. Should this be correct, this would make the man exceedingly old; Jones may have mixed up Ghāzī al-Dīn with his son, the grandson of Niẓām al-Mulk Āṣaf Jāh, also called Ghāzī al-Dīn, who was born in 1148/1736 and who died 1215/1800.

requirements that the process necessitated, namely the awareness of where copies of each text existed. Furthermore, this type of note attests to both his reliance on his acquaintances and contacts, but perhaps more importantly the difficulty experienced by Jones in acquiring all the books he wanted and the very material limitations that prevented him from expanding his collection, here this being the physical lack of a manuscript copy of the text in the vicinity.

Mīr Ḥusaynī

There are two books in the Jones collection which, to some extent, stumped Dennison Ross and Browne when they were cataloguing.¹¹⁰ These are BL MS RSPA 4 and BL MS RSPA 95, respectively entitled *Farāyīz-i Muḥammadī* and *al-Maṭālib al-Ḥusaynī[yah]*;¹¹¹ the two manuscripts were both written on a rough woven paper in the same thick, inelegant *nasta'liq* hand. *Al-Maṭālib al-Ḥusaynīyah* was authored by Afāz al-Dīn Muḥammad, known as Mīr Ḥusaynī, whilst the other, *Farāyīz-i Muḥammadī*, was authored by Muḥammad Vālī at the request of this same Mīr Ḥusaynī. Both tracts are named after Ḥusaynī and both deal with aspects of Islamic theology and law.

Farāyīz-i Muḥammadī, authored in 1193/1779, is a short treatise on Islamic laws of inheritance, a particular interest of Jones's scholarship in India, and is based on *al-Farā'id al-Sirājīyah*, a tract on the same subject by Sirāj al-Dīn al-Sajāvandī (d. circa. 600/1203) that was itself translated (and abridged considerably) into English by William Jones in 1792.¹¹² Interestingly enough, Jones's library does not include a copy of *al-Sirājīyah*, but rather three copies of *al-Farā'id al-Sharīfīyah* (BL MSs RSPA 1, 2 and 92) by Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī; Jones obviously did have access to *al-Farā'id al-Sirājīyah*, and, as already mentioned, Henry Vansittart had a copy of it and lent it to Jones, as is noted in the notebook.¹¹³ The other manuscript connected to Mīr Ḥusaynī, *al-Maṭālib al-Ḥusaynīyah*, dated 1199/1784–5, is a very short theological treatise composed of disquisitions (*maṭālib*) on five aspects of Shia theology, these being: the nature of the divine, the mission of the prophets, the imamate, burial and the Day of Resurrection. This is followed by a conclusion which discusses, among other things, the ten commandments.¹¹⁴ Mīr Ḥusaynī's contributions to eighteenth-century Shia thought await further, critical study, as there has been no academic scholarship on either manuscript or text until this point.

Furthermore, this Mīr Ḥusaynī has long remained unidentified. However, on reading Jones's notebooks, there is a character who appears numerous times whom Jones identifies as Ḥusaynī. Could this be the same Ḥusaynī who authored or requested these texts to be authored? The mysterious mononym Ḥusaynī comes to Jones "highly recommended" by his Arabic secretary, al-Ḥājī 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī.¹¹⁵ Ḥusaynī himself recommends that

¹¹⁰See Dennison Ross and Browne, *Catalogue*, pp. 2–3, p. 65.

¹¹¹Dennison Ross and Browne refer to it as *al-Maṭālib al-Ḥusaynī*, but the correct Arabic should be read *Husaynīyah*; compare Dennison Ross and Browne, *Catalogue*, p. 65 with Brockelmann, "Chapter 7. India", in *Second Supplement of Brockelmann in English: The History of the Arabic Written Tradition Online* (Leiden, 2018), available at <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brockelmann-in-english> (accessed 22 April 2020).

¹¹²See W. Jones and A. M. Jones, *Works*, viii, pp. 199–324.

¹¹³W. Jones, *Notebook*, pp. 4–5.

¹¹⁴A later reader has helpfully annotated the manuscript in pencil, marking off the individual sections.

¹¹⁵W. Jones, *Notebook*, pp. 12–13 and again on p. 14.

Jones purchase copies of *al-Fatāwā 'l-ʿĀlamgīriyah*, the *Sirājīyah* and the *Sharīfiyah*.¹¹⁶ Ḥusaynī also appears in the list of *maulavīs* of the court.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, in a list of “learned men of Calcutta”, Jones lists Ḥusaynī and notes his aptitude for mathematics, law and grammar.¹¹⁸ Ḥusaynī was clearly an important and esteemed contact that Jones met with frequently and with whom he presumably discussed both practical matters of book collection (hence the recommendations) and the subject matter of inheritance and Islamic Law (hence the subject matter of the recommendation). Indeed, if Ḥusaynī “greatly” recommended the *Sirājīyah* and *Sharīfiyah* to Jones, it is interesting that, if we assume they are the same person, he also, at another time before Jones’s arrival, might have been responsible for having a book composed which is itself based on the *Sirājīyah* (BL MS RSPA 4).

At this point, we cannot make a positive identification of Ḥusaynī. Jones only identifies him as Ḥusaynī throughout his notebook and does not refer to him in his letters; moreover, Jones does not appear to have read or engaged (in any great detail) with the manuscripts, as they bear no traces of his typical types of marginal note. Complicating the matter somewhat, in the *Catalogue Raisonné* of the Buhar Library, the authors briefly mention a man called Muḥammad Afāz al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, who requested that his nephew, Sayyid Qāsim ‘Alī, write a tract on the correct reading of the Qur’an, entitled *Ruq’ah-i Qārī* in 1196/1781.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, Brockelmann lists Muḥammad Afāz al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī, spelt as per Dennison Ross and Browne, and refers to Jones’s copy of *al-Maṭālib al-Husayniyah* (at the time under shelf mark Ind.Off. RB95) in the section on Indian Shia legal texts in his Supplement to the *History of Arabic Literature*, written around the same time as the *Catalogue* of Jones’s works was published.¹²⁰ The author’s name is written in the introductory section in BL MS RSPA 95; the name (Fig. 22) is difficult to read for certain, not clearly Ḥasanī or Ḥusaynī.

It seems unlikely that there were two men in Bengal in the 1780s requesting Shia theological and legal texts be written with almost the same name down to one letter difference in Arabic script; it would seem more likely that one is a misreading. Following Brockelmann, Dennison Ross and Browne’s use of Ḥusaynī, I would suggest that we ought to see these three works, including the one in the Buhar Library, as written by or for this one man, Mīr Ḥusaynī and that this Mīr Ḥusaynī, who flourished in Bengal in the 1770s and 80s, was possibly the Ḥusaynī mentioned in Jones’s notebooks, meaning he would have acquired them probably through a personal connection. Given that these two legal and theological texts are totally unknown outside of the Jones collection, and that both manuscripts are of texts which are personally connected to the author and scholar, called in the manuscript Mīr Ḥusaynī, either being authored at his request or by him personally, and, crucially, that both manuscripts are written in the same handwriting, on the same paper, the manuscripts likely came to Jones together from the same source. Could this be the Ḥusaynī from the

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 41.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹¹⁹ Raḍavī et al., *Catalogue Raisonné of the Persian Manuscripts in the Bâhâr Library* (Calcutta, 1921), 1, p. 119 (No. 156).

¹²⁰ Carl Brockelmann, “Chapter 7. India”, Book Three of Second Supplement, *History*, available at <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brockelmann-in-english> (accessed 22 April 2020)

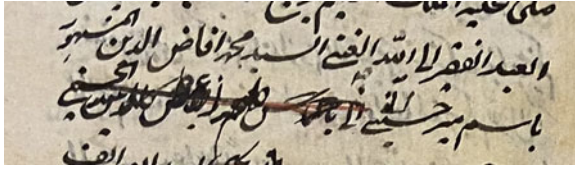


Fig. 22. The name of the author of MS RSPA 95.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 95

notebook? Were these manuscripts a personal gift from the scholar and author to Jones? Such a positive identification will, however, require further scholarship to advance our knowledge of this figure and his work.¹²¹

Other Middlemen

Despite the availability of books at market and among his networks in India itself, Jones also appears to have acquired books from across the Hijaz, Iraq and maybe Iran. In his notebook, Jones makes two important notes regarding his collection practice and his reliance, to some extent, on the pilgrimage and trading practices of Muslim acquaintances, who travelled from India across to Iraq and the Hijaz.

‘Abd al-Majīd, a merchant and native of Isfahan, is described in a list of his new acquaintances in India, all of whom Jones describes in varying terms, detailing either their profession, how he knows them or their proficiency in Arabic and Persian scholarship. For example, among his other acquaintances, there was a Majd al-Dīn, who has been in the service of Sa‘adāt ‘Alī Khān II (d.1229/1814), the brother of Āṣaf al-Dawlah; Diyānat Allāh, “an old man of good character”; and indeed Mīrẓā Zayn al-Dīn, “a poet who has written 100,000 couplets”.¹²² ‘Abd al-Majīd was of importance to Jones not just because he was a merchant from Isfahan, but also because he was “going to Basra and Baghdad [and] will buy books for me”.¹²³ This note was added later, scrawled above the previous description of ‘Abd al-Majīd in a thinner pen than that used to write the name, telling us Jones wanted to note down the offer made to him to remind him of the potential source of manuscripts.

‘Abd al-Majīd was, indeed, not the only local acquaintance to travel across swathes of territory, having offered to buy book for Jones. A man called Ḥājī Ghulām ‘Alī, the “preceptor” to Mubārak al-Dawlah (d.1208/1793), then the Nawāb of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, was staying with Mīrẓā ‘Abd al-Raḥīm on 19 January 1784, who was one of Jones’s acquaintances.¹²⁴ This Mīrẓā ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Iṣfahānī had himself been “recommended” to Jones by none other than his acquaintance, ‘Abd al-Majīd.¹²⁵ The recommendation appears

¹²¹Unfortunately, due to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, I have been unable to consult Bodleian MS Elliott 395, a copy of the *Makhzan al-gharā’ib*, which, according to Sachau, contains one figure named only Mīr Ḥusaynī who might also be a potential candidate for the Mīr Ḥusaynī who authored these texts; see A. F. L. Beeston et al., *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindūstānī, and Pushtū manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Oxford, 1889–1953), p. 328. I thank James White for the suggestion to look in this catalogue for the reference.

¹²²W. Jones, Notebook, pp. 3–4.

¹²³*Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 18.

to have been for a position of some kind as a *mawlavī* on the High Court in Bengal, as Jones lists the recommendation among several others after having listed the actual *mawlavīs* by name.¹²⁶ Ḥājī Ghulām ‘Alī, otherwise it would seem unknown to Jones, offered to procure books for him on his way to Mecca and back again, where he was undertaking his second pilgrimage.¹²⁷

Whether or not these men actually did procure books for Jones is uncertain. Their seals and ownership notes do not appear in any of his manuscripts, nor does Jones note his receipt of manuscripts from these sources. However, as the vast majority of his manuscripts do not have a clear or explicitly referenced passage of ownership, and, perhaps more importantly, as Jones did not note his receipt of any manuscripts from non-Europeans, we might suggest that this was indeed one way in which he acquired manuscripts. Furthermore, the notes above attest to the interlocking nature of his networks in India and his reliance upon them for meeting people and acquiring books. Without ‘Abd al-Majīd there would have been no Mīrzā ‘Abd al-Raḥīm and without him, no Ḥājī Ghulām ‘Alī.

The Seal Record: Previous Owners of Note

Among the Jones collection at the British Library, there are several manuscripts which, although we cannot affirmatively trace Jones’s acquisition of them, bear important or notable previous owners and are worthy of a brief discussion here.¹²⁸ Perhaps the most notable of the seals on any of the Jones collection are seals suggesting that BL MS RSPA 94, Jones’s copy of *Sharḥ ‘Aqā’id al-Nasafī*, had previously belonged to a servant of Dārā Shikūh (d.1069/1659) (whose seal is visible in Fig. 23) and was transferred into the Mughal imperial library.¹²⁹ How Jones acquired the manuscript is unknown, but it certainly had passed through illustrious hands on its way to him.

BL MS RSPA 96, Jones’s copy of a part of al-Mas‘ūdī’s (d.345/956) *Murūj al-Dhahab* also has an interesting manuscript history. This manuscript, with a beautiful double-page *sarlawḥ* which notes the scribe as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Issā al-‘Aqrāwī, presumably from Akre in modern-day Iraqi Kurdistan, and dated to Ṣafar 1075/September 1664, was previously owned by the scholar Aḥmad ibn ‘Āmir al-Sa‘dī al-Ḥaḍramī (Fig. 24) according to an ownership note on f.iir.¹³⁰ The manuscript then presumably travelled to India before Jones, as there is a seal from an otherwise unknown Qivām al-Dīn Khān with the date 1176/1762–3 on f.ir.¹³¹ Among the other interesting seals which indicate previous ownership of manuscripts, there are, for example, two seals on BL MS RSPA 3, Jones’s copy of

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹²⁸ For a discussion of the seals and previous owners of Jones’s copy of *al-Fatāwā ‘l-‘Ālamgīrīyah*, see Jonathan Lawrence, “Sir William Jones’s Manuscript Copy of *al-Fatāwā ‘l-‘Ālamgīrīyah*”, British Library, Asian and African Studies (blog), 20 April 2020, <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2020/04/sir-william-jones-manuscript-copy-of-al-fatawa-al-alamgiriyah.html> (accessed 22 April 2020),

¹²⁹ BL MS RSPA 94, f.82v.

¹³⁰ BL MS RSPA 96, f.iir.

¹³¹ Khān, an honorific of Turkish origin, is a surname most commonly associated with Indian Muslims and is not used to any great extent in Arabic as a name. See J. A. Boyle, “Khān”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam (Second Edition)*, available at https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/khan-SIM_4183?s.num=1&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopaedia-of-islam-2&s.q=khan (accessed 22 April 2020).



Fig. 23. The seal of Dārā Shikūh's servant, [Muḥ]ammad M[ī?].

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 94

Ashī‘at al-Lama‘at fī sharḥ al-mishkāt, which come from Ṣālīḥ Khān and Ṣubḥ Khān, both servants of ‘Ālamgīr.¹³²

Another curious manuscript of the Jones collection is BL MS RSPA 113, which is covered with seals (Fig. 25), almost all of which, apparently, are from the same man, the author and scribe of the manuscript. This is Jones's copy of *Ṭayf al-Khayāl fī munāẓarat al-‘ilm wa-l-māl*, authored by Mu‘min ‘Ali Khān (fl.1074–1130/1663–1718), otherwise known as Muḥammad Mu‘min ibn al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Qāsim al-Jazā‘iri ‘l-Shīrāzī. Born in Shiraz, Muḥammad Mu‘min grew up in Khuzestan and moved, according to Āqā Buzurg al-Ṭīhrānī, to India at the end of Rabī‘ al-Awwal 1102/January 1691, where he took on the name of Mu‘min ‘Ali Khān, the name on the vast array of seals on the manuscript (Fig. 25). Carl Brockelmann also mentions Mu‘min ‘Ali Khān and this text, with a slightly fuller biographical description of Mu‘min ‘Ali Khān in the Supplement, wherein he lists this manuscript

¹³²BL MS RSPA 3, f.xr.



Fig. 24. The scribe's signature and ownership note of Aḥmad ibn 'Amīr al-Sa'dī al-Ḥaḍramī.
Source: British Library, MS RSPA 96

along with several other copies.¹³³ Furthermore, Alphonse Mingana mentioned another manuscript at the John Rylands Library, Arabic 675 [398], called *Khizānat al-Khayāl*, which provides some biographical information, namely that he went to India and was appointed by 'Ālamgīr as the chief tutor to his favourite grandson Jahāndār, later to become Jahāndār Shāh (d.1125/1713).¹³⁴

Jones's copy of *Tayf al-Khayāl* is a vast cornucopia of material waiting to be edited and studied; certainly, given the fact there are five different types of seal (Fig. 25), all relating to the same man, the author and scribe of the text, which cover the manuscript, and that

¹³³See Brockelmann, Chapter 6 "Iran and Tūrān" in Book Three of Volume II and Chapter 5 "Iran and Tūrān" in the Book Three, Second Supplement, both in *History*, available at <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brockelmann-in-english> (accessed 22 April 2020); see also Āqā Buzurg al-Ṭihirānī, *al-Dharī'ah ilā taṣānīf al-Shī'ah* (Beirut, 1983), iv, pp. 208–210 for a long biographical sketch of the author. For a smaller biographical sketch that includes several poems and a long list of works (albeit missing *Tayf al-Khayāl*), see Muḥsin al-Amīn al-Ḥusaynī al-'Āmilī *A 'yān al-Shī'ah* (Beirut, 1983), x, p. 45.

¹³⁴See Alphonse Mingana, "A Page of Indian History", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 8 (1924), pp. 150–153, available at <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m1144&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF> (accessed 22 April 2020).



Fig. 25. A selection of the seals on BL MS RSPA 113 almost all of which refer to the author and scribe of the manuscript, Muḥammad Mu'min ibn al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Qāsim al-Jazā'irī 'l-Shūrāzī.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 113.

these seals refer to him as both the *fidvī* (servant; someone who has sworn loyalty to someone else) of Jahāndār Shāh and Bahādur Shāh, Jahāndār Shāh's father, and inform us he was awarded the title/role *Ḥakīm al-Mamālik* (lit. Doctor of the Realms) at the Mughal court, the manuscript, even just from a purely codicological point of view, can provide rich details about the career progression of a single Iranian immigrant to India. Certainly, this individual manuscript, which also preserves a long autobiographical *waqf* (trust) notice written by the author, deserves much more sustained scholarly attention, both as historical record and also as a piece of Arabic literature, authored by an Iranian émigré in India in the eighteenth century.

As the text and its author are not particularly well known, there seems little chance that Jones would have heard about it in England or been informed it was a text worth acquiring from a European scholar or acquaintance. However, the text must have been considered as important within Jones's network of local scholars and friends; in Jones's notebook, where he usually listed such recommendations and information as his local acquaintances provided him, he listed the *Tayf al-Khayāl* at the end of his list of his "Arabick books". This list is not the same as his "Order of Arabick Reading", but rather just a list of books, most of which he did acquire and are part of the Royal Society collection, like this one. That he acquired most of these, but not all, might suggest this is a kind of wish list of manuscripts that he hopes to acquire. We might presume that this manuscript, like so many other texts, was suggested to Jones by his local connections and possibly even provided for him by them, especially as the notebook elsewhere frequently records his connections recommending books and guiding his acquisition choices.

Commissions

Jones did not only acquire manuscripts through the above methods, but also was an active commissioner of manuscripts, in Arabic and Persian and indeed, perhaps chiefly, in Sanskrit. For his Arabic manuscripts, Jones consistently employed al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī, a native, according to his letters, of the Hijaz, having been born in Medina and educated in Mecca.¹³⁵ Al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī also comes up frequently in Jones’s notebooks, described as his “Arabic *munshī*”, for he recommends several people to Jones, including Ḥusaynī. Al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī also, it would appear, was familiar with Persian, given that in BL MS RSPA 108, the *Dīwān* of poems and saying attributed to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d.40/660), there are Persian glosses, titles and section headings between the poems and sections. These manuscripts were all written in a script bearing traces of both *naskh* and *thuluth* styles (see Fig. 26).

As for the Persian manuscripts, Jones notes in the *Maṣnavī*, that it was composed by ‘Izz al-Dīn, who is listed as a “maulvi” in Jones’s notebook.¹³⁶ The elegant black *nasta‘liq* certainly appears to be the same across the manuscripts. Unlike al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī, ‘Izz al-Dīn does not leave such detailed colophons, meaning there is very little biographical information to present in this article. Important to note is that ‘Izz al-Dīn was not concurrently Jones’s Persian *munshī*, this being Aẓhar ‘Alī Khān, unlike al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī, who was both Jones’s Arabic *munshī* and the scribe of the below manuscripts.

About these manuscripts, there are only a short number of observations. Notably, the “mixed contents” of BL MS RSPA 110 is a manuscript of two texts bound together. The first text is that written by al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī and is the *dīwān* of al-Mutalammis (d. circa.580), the pre-Islamic poet. The rest of the manuscript is another commentary on the *Mu‘allaqāt*, this time in Persian. The scribe of this particular commentary of the *Mu‘allaqāt* is unknown; indeed, this could be the work of al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī. Furthermore, BL MS RSPA 106, as previously stated, is a copy of BL MS RSPA 117. The copy of *al-Farā‘id al-Sharīfīyah* (BL MS RSPA 92) is not a complete edition, being the section between *Kitāb al-Buyū‘* (on sales) and *Kitāb al-Farā‘id* (on obligatory religious duties). Finally, BL MS RSPA 101 had erroneously been identified before as a copy of *al-Kāfīyah* “with a commentary by Jāmī”. The text, however, is none other than Jāmī’s *Fawā‘id wāfīyah bi-ḥall mushkilāt al-Kāfīyah*.¹³⁷ Jones himself was mistaken on this, and wrote a note in which he calls the text “Al-Cāfīyah: A grammar of the Arabic Language by Ibnu’l-Ḥājjib with a Commentary by Mullā Jāmī”. Likely this is a result of his understanding of what a commentary on a text actually was in this literary tradition, assuming it to be a copy with notes, rather than an explanation of the text and its “problems” (*mushkilāt*) accompanied by their “solution” (*ḥall*).

Al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī left relatively long colophons (see, for example, Fig. 26) in most of these manuscripts, usually stating the date, acknowledging himself as Ḥājj al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī, and respectfully noting Jones as the man who commissioned the manuscript to be written, mentioning in each colophon Jones’s legal position. Whilst Jones rather disparagingly refers to al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī

¹³⁵W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 802.

¹³⁶BL MS RSPA 36, f.1r; W. Jones, *Notebook*, p. 29.

¹³⁷BL MS RSPA 101, f.1v; in the introductory paragraph, the author notes the full title.

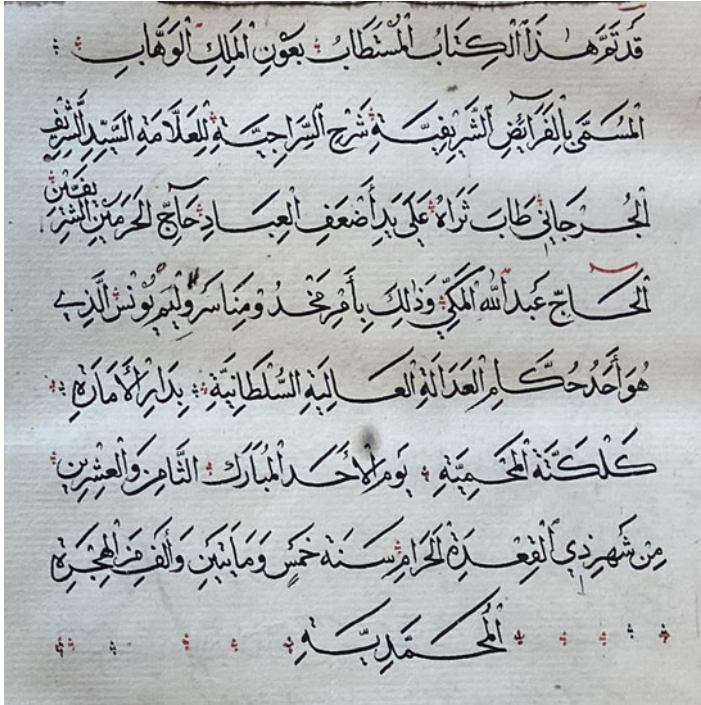


Fig. 26. A sample colophon written by al-Hājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 92

as a “wild native” from Mecca, portraying him through a heavily orientalised image of the rugged poet of the desert, which might have matched Jones’s impressions of the pre-Islamic poetry he enjoyed so much, al-Hājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī was clearly rather more than just a scribe.¹³⁸ I have already noted that he was multi-lingual, able to write scholarly notes in Persian as well as Arabic. Moreover, his version of the *Maqāmāt* (BL MS RSPA 111), for example, is replete with scholarly annotations which explain the meaning of more complex words in the famously devilish Arabic of the original. Just as Jones regularly ignores noting the receipt of gifted manuscripts from his Indian acquaintances and networks, he does not acknowledge al-Hājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī as anything more than a scribe and secretary, despite the obviously scholarly labour he includes in his manuscript editions.

As for 'Izz al-Dīn, there is very little information at all about this character from Jones’s network. In his prefatory remarks to the edition scribed for him of the *Maṣnavī*, Jones writes the following note:¹³⁹

¹³⁸W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 637. This is a topic which I have discussed with James White in personal communication, whom I thank for his insights.

¹³⁹BL MS RSPA 35, f.1r.

Table 4. Commissions in Persian in the hand of 'Izz al-Dīn.

Shelfmark	Title	Author
BL MS RSPA 24-7	<i>Shāhnamah</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī
BL MS RSPA 35-40	<i>Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī</i>	Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī
BL MS RSPA 62-7*	<i>Būstān-i Khayāl</i>	Muḥammad Taqī (<i>Khayāl</i>)
BL MSS EUR C274	<i>Dīvān-i Khusraw</i>	Nāsir Khusraw
John Rylands Persian 187	<i>Farhād va Shūrīn</i>	Vahshī Bāfqī

Table 5. Commissions in Arabic in the hand of al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī with date, if known.

Shelfmark	Date (if known)	Title	Author
BL MS RSPA 82	Undated	<i>al-Qur'ān</i>	N/A
BL MS RSPA 83-4	Undated	<i>Mukhtaṣar al-Qudūrī</i>	al-Qudūrī
BL MS RSPA 92	29/07/1791	<i>al-Farā'id al-Sharīfīyah</i>	Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī
BL MS RSPA 93	Undated	Miscellany of Islamic Law	Multiple
BL MS RSPA 101	25/12/1792	<i>Fawā'id waḥfīyah bi-hall mushkilāt al-Kāfīyah</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī
BL MS RSPA 105	26/01/1786	<i>Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt</i>	N/A
BL MS RSPA 106	02/11/1788	<i>Kitāb al-Ḥamāsah</i>	Abū Tammām
BL MS RSPA 108	13/10/1787	<i>Dīvān Ali</i>	'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib
BL MS RSPA 110	1786	Mixed Contents	al-Mutalammis
BL MS RSPA 111	04/06/1790	<i>Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī</i>	al-Ḥarīrī

Written by Maulavī Aāzzu'ddīn [sic] began 21 Jan 1790. Began 21 Jan. 1790 25S.R. a month, asked; 30S.R. given.

This note indicates the value he placed on the craft, willing as he was, as we have seen, to spend large sums on acquiring his manuscript library. Likewise, in a similar vein to the note discussed earlier in BL MS RSPA 31, this note speaks to the future users of this manuscript edition, to whom Jones is displaying rather proudly his generosity in payment and the ability he had to spend on books. That he commissioned so many texts in both Persian and Arabic, not to mention the substantial commissions he made in Sanskrit (see Appendix 2), provides very firm evidence for Jones's earnest desire to fulfil the statement he made to Edmund Burke referenced at the beginning of this article, to spend "the greater part of my savings in purchasing Oriental books" and to return from India with an array of manuscripts which might be used by future generations of scholars to expand European knowledge of Arabic and Persian literature.

An Epilogue: Jones's Marginal Notes and the Practice of Reading

In this article, I have traced the methods by which Jones acquired a large, scholarly library of Arabic and Persian manuscripts, both in England and in India, and reconstructed some of the networks of both Europeans and Iranians, Arabs and Indians who were integral in procuring these manuscripts. The manuscripts require a much more sustained study than I have been able to give here; in particular, the manuscript notes and marginal additions ought to be the next focus of study for those with an interest in Jones's manuscripts. The manuscripts are covered in Jones's annotations. These range in style; the most obvious one, which I have

discussed above, is the ownership note and the notes of manuscript transmission, which formed the backbone of this article. There are many more types of manuscript annotation in this collection. From the simple signing of a name, which occurs in most manuscripts (usually, and fairly pointedly, inside the *'unvān*) to the writing out of poetic metre, snippets of poetry or extracts of other, possibly unrelated, texts, Jones covers his manuscripts with traces of his reading, the very physical process of engaging with the manuscript copy of the text.

Such notes as one finds on his legal manuscripts, like BL MS RSPA 92 or BL MS RSPA 1, primarily translations, transliterations and reading notes, are the standard fare of codicological studies into marginalia and reading. They provide details of when he read the manuscript, where this took place, how many times. They also tell us that he, perhaps, looked up certain words or wrote down an explanation for a concept.¹⁴⁰ Some folios are covered in sums and chains of peoples' names; given the subject matter (Islamic laws of inheritance), we can see through these sums and family trees (Fig. 27) that Jones interacted sincerely with the text as a piece of legal scholarship and as a sort of textbook, practising how he might adjudicate decisions based on the contents of the work.¹⁴¹

His study of literary texts, just like his study of legal texts, is largely an exercise in understanding the contents of the text in a formal sense, based on what sorts of notes he makes. As can be seen in his many annotations to BL MS RSPA 106, for example, Jones most often annotates literary texts with a graphic representation of the poetic metre, translations and transliterations, as well as some biographical information and occasional notes about the different authors of composite texts.¹⁴² For example, in BL MS RSPA 103, which again bears hallmarks of his technical style of reading Arabic literary texts, he diligently notes which sections were authored by al-Tibrīzī (d.502/1109) and which sections were written originally by others.¹⁴³

A similar type of manuscript note can be found, for example, in BL MS RSPA 20, one of his copies of the *Farhang-i Jahāngīrī*.¹⁴⁴

Farhang-i Jehāngīrī by Jemāluddīn Husain Anjū complete. The gift of Charles Roddam Esq. 16th February 1788 to W. Jones. Many corrections of this valuable work and many additions to it may be found in the *Sirāju'lloḡhah* by Sirājud'dīn Arzū and in the *Majma'u'lloḡhah* [sic]

We might compare this style of notetaking to the note he made in his copy of BL MS RSPA 13 mentioned earlier, in which he alerted the (future) reader to Gladwin's observations about the nature of the contents. These notes portray a fairly traditional, almost philological, conception of the contents of the manuscript and to questions of authorship, text creation and intellectual property. Representative of Jones's approach to texts, these notes can be used to infer a great deal about his scholarship and his methods of reading. Jones, the reader, was preoccupied, it would appear, with the formal and technical understanding of the text, with the nature of the 'correct' edition of a manuscript and with questions of the authorship and process whereby the text was created. Furthermore, the "corrections" mentioned in his note in BL MS RSPA 20 attest to his desire to inform future readers of the contents of the

¹⁴⁰See BL MS RSPA 92 and BL MS RSPA 1 *passim*.

¹⁴¹See, for example, the folios in BL MS RSPA before the beginning of the textblock.

¹⁴²BL MS RSPA 106 *passim*.

¹⁴³BL MS RSPA 103 *passim*.

¹⁴⁴BL MS RSPA 20, f.1r.

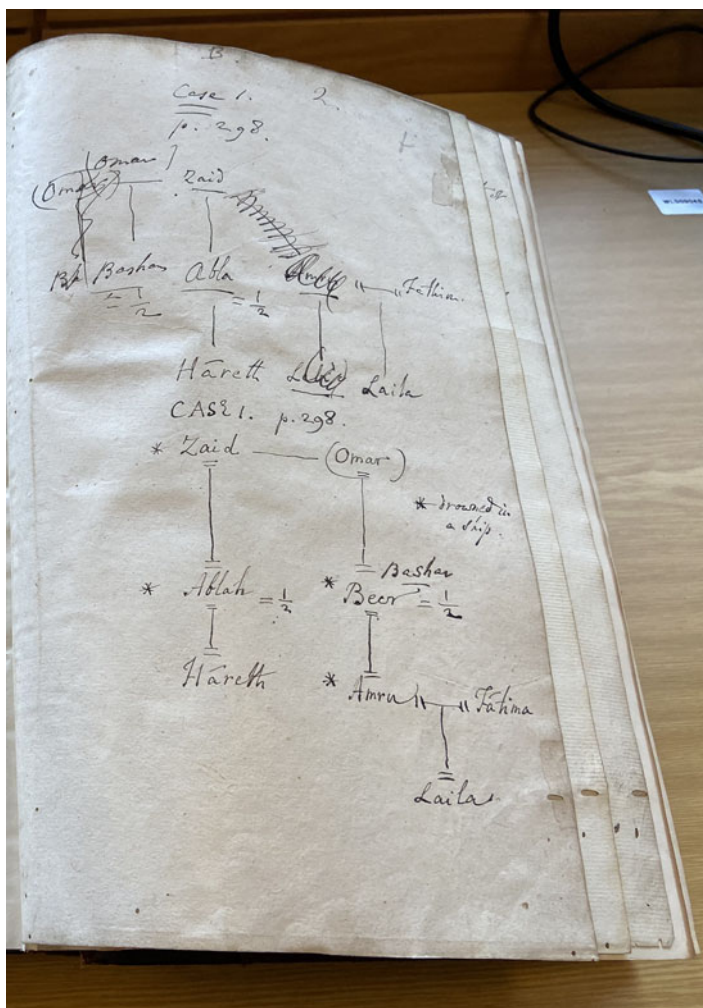


Fig. 27. An exemplary family tree based on the contents of the manuscripts.

Source: British Library, MS RSPA 1

manuscripts and the potential pitfalls of the text, imprinting *his* reading and *his* understanding of the text into the very book itself.

By contrast, there are very occasional notes that portray Jones's personal reaction to the text at hand, as a reader engaging with literature. The most well-known of these, perhaps, is his long, regularly reprinted, note about Rūmī:¹⁴⁵

So extraordinary a book as the *Mesnavi* was never, perhaps, composed by man: it abounds with beauties and blemishes equally great; with gross obscenity and pure ethicks; with exquisite strains of poetry and flat puerilities; with wit and pleasantry mixed with dull jests; with ridicule on all established religions, and with a vein of sublime piety: it is like a wild country in a fine climate,

¹⁴⁵BL MS RSPA 35, f.iiiv; see, for example, W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 735, n. 1.

overspread with rich flowers and with the ordure of beasts. I know of no writer to whom the Maulavi can be compared except our Chaucer and Shakespeare.

This is one of a number of notes found throughout manuscripts owned by Jones that tell the reader how he *felt* about the text and/or manuscript and what impressions were left on him in the reading of it. Other examples include his annotating a poem in BL MS RSPA 109 with the note, “bellissima”, or his note on BL MS RSPA 106 about how much he values the manuscript that was copied for him from the tracing made of Pococke’s copy of the *Ḥamāsah*.¹⁴⁶ These notes are in no way analytical; they are in many ways reflective of either his immediate reaction to the text, a subjective appraisal of a poem, or of the value of the manuscript, both sentimental and real. There are also associational annotations made in his reading of the materials, such as when he writes out a quatrain of Kavkabī’s poetry (d.939/1532–3) and its translation at the beginning of BL MS RSPA 32, his copy of Niẓāmī’s *Makhzan al-Asrār* and other notes that have seemingly little to no relationship to the text at hand.¹⁴⁷

A greater attention to the placement of these notes, the poems he chooses to note his reaction to, and the themes, images and literary techniques he appreciates through these notes, require much greater, sustained study, in order to understand and think about Jones as a reader of Arabic and Persian literature: what types of literature did he read and enjoy? How did Jones grasp the material in front of him, using the interpretative tools available to him? What did Jones make of questions of authorship, text-creation and literary history? How is Jones’s reading of Arabic and Persian literature reflective of eighteenth-century academic methodologies of approaching texts and literature, particularly non-European literature? How can Jones’s notes help modern scholars appreciate the ways in which manuscripts, and the texts they contained, were being read and enjoyed in Bengal by British officials and, perhaps more importantly for the field as a discipline, by scholars and academics in the eighteenth century?¹⁴⁸ Jones’s reader notes are rich sources of valuable information about reading practices in the eighteenth century generally and, importantly, how he approached texts from a literary tradition that was alien to his own.

Conclusions

This article has concentrated on the processes by which Sir William Jones assembled his collection of manuscripts, centring the physical evidence found within the manuscripts once owned by Jones to advance a detailed picture of the ways in which Jones collected and acquired manuscripts between England and Bengal in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In doing so, it has been important to regard the Persian and Arabic language collection holistically, incorporating manuscripts both from the Royal Society collection of Persian and

¹⁴⁶BL MS RSPA 109, f.44r and BL MS RSPA 106, f.1r.

¹⁴⁷BL MS RSPA 32, f.1v; another, perhaps more unusual, note of a seemingly unrelated text is the copied-out extract about the donkeys of Basra from Pietro Della Valle’s “Lettere da Basra” in BL MS RSPA 92, f.165v. In his letters, Jones notes that he was reading Della Valle’s *Viaggi* in 1791 at about the same time as this manuscript was produced, W. Jones, *Letters*, ii, p. 884.

¹⁴⁸On learning Arabic in the early-modern period, see Mordechai Feingold, “Learning Arabic in Early Modern England”, in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, (ed.) Jan Loop et al. (Leiden, 2017), pp. 33–56, and on the use of literature as a learning method, see Jan Loop “Arabic Poetry as Teaching Material in Early Modern Grammars and Textbooks”, pp. 230–251, in the same volume.

Arabic manuscripts, now housed at the British Library, and also the manuscripts held in other collections of the British Library, in the John Rylands library and the Bodleian library, in order to portray the breadth of collection practices and discuss the afterlives of those manuscripts that do not form part of the Royal Society Jones collection.

There remain many gaps in our knowledge as regards Jones's collection practices. Most obviously, this article has not touched with any great specificity on his Sanskrit (see Appendix 2) or Chinese manuscripts (see footnote 9). Moreover, we have still not located all of Jones's manuscripts; the whereabouts of many of the manuscripts bought at the auction of Jones's library in 1831, like the Batta manuscript on bark, are no longer known or, where the manuscripts themselves are known, these are not known as Jones manuscripts. Even within the Royal Society Persian and Arabic collection, the principal focus of this article, there are gaps in our knowledge. Jones did not note either the date or the method of his acquisition on many manuscripts and some do not contain any marginal comment at all registering his ownership of them or even his having read them (see Appendix 1). These manuscripts themselves may also not be dated or may contain, like BL MS RSPA 14, or BL MS RSPA 55, such varied excerpts of writing in different hands that we cannot state how or why they were compiled. For instance, BL MS RSPA 98, his copy of al-'Utbī's (d. either 427/1036 or 431/1040) *al-Tārīkh al-Yamīnī*, is a good example of a manuscript about which we can say very little beyond the title of the text and its author (see Appendix 1 for the full Persian and Arabic collection with acquisition information). Furthermore, the manuscripts attributed to Mīr Ḥusaynī and Mu'min 'Alī Khān continue to await academic scholarship, which might be able to advance our understanding of Shia literature and thought in Bengal, and also Shia thought *expressed in Arabic*, in the eighteenth century.

However, with this sustained focus on his large manuscript collection, alongside using his notebooks and letters for further evidence, we can reconstruct many of the processes through which Jones acquired manuscripts and furthermore reconstruct Jones's interwoven networks of acquaintances upon whom he relied to amass his manuscript collections. It becomes clear through the study of the manuscripts, and the internal evidence they can provide for the ways in which they moved and entered Jones's possession, that in his pursuit of Persian, Arabic (and Sanskrit) scholarship, the contacts he made and the colleagues he gained whilst in Bengal proved invaluable in his hunt for texts, even if he does not note this on the manuscripts themselves. It is hoped that this article has been able to provide the background information necessary to develop our understanding of Jones's collection of manuscripts, how they can be used for evidence of scholarly communities in eighteenth century India. Furthermore, this article has emphasised that Jones's scholarship was shaped, influenced and limited by the practical conditions of his life in Bengal, namely the networks of scholars and thinkers he encountered and the availability or not of manuscripts and copies of texts for him to study. These practical conditions and considerations must be taken into account in any future study of these manuscripts and Jones's reading of them.

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Appendix 1

Table 6. The Persian and Arabic Manuscripts of Sir William Jones in the Royal Society collection.

RSPA Number	Title	Author	Scribe	Date AD (if known)	Owners (seals, notes and dates if known)	Jones Acquisition
1	<i>al-Farā'id al-Sharīfīyah</i>	Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī			Warren Hastings	Gift – Warren Hastings
2	<i>al-Farā'id al-Sharīfīyah</i>	Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī				
3	<i>Ashī'at al-Lama'āt fī sharḥ al-mishkāt</i>	'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Sayf al-Dīn al-Dihlavī al-Bukhārī			Şālīḥ Khān and Şubḥ Khān	
4	<i>Farāyīz-i Muḥammadī</i>	Muḥammad Vāli	Same as MS RSPA 95			Presumed Personal Connection
5	<i>Jāmi'-i 'Abbāsī</i>	Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Āmilī	Rizā Malik	29/04/1663	Azhār Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786–7	Personal Connection
6	<i>Tarjumah-'i Risālah-'i Mufāzzal</i>	Mufāzzal ibn 'Umar		18/10/1756		
7	<i>Zafarnāmah</i>	Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī	Composite		'Ināyat Allāh ibn Muḥibb 'Alī in 1077/1666–1667	Gift – John Hyde
8	<i>Mir'āt-i Sikandarī</i>	Sikandar ibn Muḥammad 'Arab Manjhū ibn Akbar				
9	<i>Jahāngīrnāmah</i>	Jahāngīr			Rājah Gūbind Bahādūr and James Archedekin; many seals	Gift – (John?) Morrison
10	<i>Bahādurshāhnāmah</i>	Mīrzā Muḥammad Dānishmand Khān	Luṭf Allāh		Muḥammad Khān Muẓẓafar (seal)	
11	<i>Tārīkh-i Jahānkushā-yi Nādīrī</i>	Muḥammad Mahdī Astarābādī ibn Muḥammad Naşīr	Muḥammad Rizā Ḥusayn al-Māzandarānī	12/09/1788		
12	<i>Mujmil al-Tārīkh ba'd-i Nādīriyah</i>	Abū 'l-Ḥasan Ibn Muḥammad Amīn Gulistānah				
13	<i>Siyar al-Muta'alekhiṛīn</i>	Ghulām Ḥusayn Khān Tabāṭabā'i				Loan – John Shore
14	Mixed Contents		Composite			Gift – Francis Gladwin

(Continued)

Table 6. Continued.

RSPA Number	Title	Author	Scribe	Date AD (if known)	Owners (seals, notes and dates if known)	Jones Acquisition
15	<i>Lawā'ih al-Qamar</i>	Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Bayhaqī al-Kāshifī		03/03/1773		
16	<i>Kifāyat al-Ta'lim</i>	Muḥammad ibn Mas'ūd al-Ghaznavī		27/09/1624		
17	<i>Zij-i Sulṭānī</i>	Ulugh Bīg				
18	<i>Sharḥ-i Zij-i Jadid-i Sulṭānī</i>	'Abd al-'Alī Ibn-Muḥammad al-Bīrjandī	Fīz Allāh	20/08/1665		
19	<i>Tuḥfat al-Mu'minīn</i>	Muḥammad Mu'min ibn Muḥammad Zamān al-Tunakābunī		07/05/1737	Azhār Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786–7	Personal Connection
20	<i>Farhang-i Jahāngīrī</i>	Mīr Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥasan Injū Shīrāzī 'Azud al-Dawlah				Gift – Charles Roddam
21	<i>Farhang-i Jahāngīrī</i>	Mīr Jamāl al-Dīn ^			I'tiṣām al-Dīn Khān	Personal Connection (from before India)
22	<i>Favā'id-i Ghanīyah</i>	'Alī ibn Mubārīz Dilkhān				
23	<i>Shāhnāmah</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī	Faṭḥī ibn Khwājah Shāh Maḥmūd			
24	<i>Shāhnāmah (1/4)</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī	Unsigned; 'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
25	<i>Shāhnāmah (2/4)</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī	As above			As above
26	<i>Shāhnāmah (3/4)</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī	As above			As above
27	<i>Shāhnāmah (4/4)</i>	Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī	As above			As above
28	<i>Yūsuf va Zulaykhā</i>	(Abū 'l-Qāsim Firdawsī?)			John Shore	Probably gift – John Shore
29	<i>Dīvān-i Anvarī</i>	Awḥad al-Dīn Anvarī	Fāṣil		Mīr Abū 'Alī Khān Bahādur 1172/1758–9	Purchase
30	<i>Khamsah-i Niẓāmī</i>	Niẓāmī Ganjavī				
31	As above	Niẓāmī			Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir	Purchase
32	<i>Makhzan al-Asrār</i>	Niẓāmī		09/05/1609	Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh	Purchase
33	<i>Pand-nāmah-i 'Aṭṭār</i>	Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār	Unsigned; 'Izz al-Dīn	01/11/1783		Commission

34	<i>Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī</i>	Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī		1620		
35	<i>Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī</i> (1/6)	Rūmī				
36	As above (2/6)	Rūmī	Unsigned; 'Izz al-Dīn	1790–2		Commission
37	As above (3/6)	Rūmī	As above	1790–2		Commission
38	As above (4/6)	Rūmī	As above	1790–2		Commission
39	As above (5/6)	Rūmī	As above	1790–2		Commission
40	As above (6/6)	Rūmī	As above	1790–2		Commission
41	<i>Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī</i> (volume one only)	Rūmī				
42	<i>Divān-i Amīr Khusrāw Dihlavī</i>	Amīr Khusrāw Dihlavī			Rām Anīz 1169/1756, Sulaymān 1176/ 1762–3, Maḥmūd, Aẓhar Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786–7	Personal Connection
43	<i>Mīhr va Mushtāī</i>	Muḥammad 'Aṣṣār Tabrīzī				Gift – Matthew Day
44	<i>Divān-i Qāsim-i Anvār</i>	Qāsim-i Anvār				Purchase
45	<i>Divān-i Kātibī</i>	Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh Kātibī		28/09/ 1484	Illegible seals	Purchase
46	<i>Kullīyāt-i Jāmī</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī		03/1534	Tīpū Sulṭān	Gift – Francis Skelley
47	<i>Divān-i Jāmī</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī		28/12/ 1564	Five seals. (S?)amnat Khān, dated 1130/ 1717–8 only legible one.	Gift – Francis Gladwin
48	<i>Divān-i Jāmī</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī		04/1576		
49	<i>Silsilah-i Zahab</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī	Shāh Maḥmūd Nīshabūrī Nūrbakhshī	04/1544	Twelve illegible seals	
50	<i>Tuḥfat al-Aḥrār</i>	'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī				
51	<i>Kullīyāt-i 'Urḩī</i>	Muḥammad 'Urḩī Shīrāzī			Effaced seals	Purchase
52	<i>Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣā'ib-i Tabrīzī</i>	Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣā'ib-i Tabrīzī			Aẓhar Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786–7	Personal Connection
53	<i>Bahrām va Gulandām</i>	Amīn al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṣāfi				
54	<i>Divāns of 'Urḩī, Shāpūr and Naẓrī</i>	Mixed	'Alī Naẓī Ibn 'Abd al-Qādir	06–1669	Aẓhar Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786–7	Personal Connection
55	Miscellaneous Anthology	Mixed	Mixed			

(Continued)

Table 6. Continued.

RSPA Number	Title	Author	Scribe	Date AD (if known)	Owners (seals, notes and dates if known)	Jones Acquisition
56	<i>Asār-i Ma'navī va Anvār-i Maḡhnavī</i>	Mu'īn al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh Ghulām al-Khwīshagī al-Chishtī		08/01/1721	Ghulām Shīv 1157/1744-5 ¹⁴⁹	Purchase
57	<i>Sharḥ-i Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ</i>			30/01/1709		Purchase
58	<i>Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah-i Burdah</i>	Muḥammad Ghayūr Qādirī (Muḥammad Bāyazīdī)		09/10/1659		
59	<i>Jawāmi' al-Ḥikāyāt</i>	Sadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Awfī			al-Ḥājī Muṣṭafā 1179/1765-6AD	
60	<i>Bahār-i Dānish</i>	'Ināyat Allāh Kanbū Lāhūrī		16/10/1783		
61	<i>Anvār-i Suhaylī</i>	Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī	Muḥammad Sa'īd		Aẓhar Khān Sayyid 'Alī 1201/1786-7	Personal Connection
62	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 1/7</i>	Muḥammad Taqī al-Ja'farī Khayāl	Unsigned; 'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
63	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 2/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
64	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 3/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
65	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 4/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
66	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 5/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
67	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 6/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
67*	<i>Bustān-i Khayāl 7/7</i>	Khayāl	'Izz al-Dīn			Commission
68	<i>Majma' al-Ṣanā'ī'</i>	Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ṣiddīqī al-Ḥusaynī Jiyūyī		09/04/1716		
69	<i>Hazār Dhrupad</i>	Nāyak Bakhshū			Qābil Khān in the court of 'Ālamgīr 1109/1697-8	
70	<i>Shams al-Aṣuūt</i>	Ras Baras	Faṭḥ'alī b. Mihr Allāh	27/07/1786		

¹⁴⁹The ownership note states that Ghulām Shīv bought it on the 9th of Muḥarram of the 27th year of Muḥammad Shāh's reign (r.1719-1748), 1158AH, meaning he bought the manuscript on 11 February 1745, BL MS RSPA 56, f.1r.

71	<i>Rāg Darpan</i>	Faqīr Allāh				
72	<i>Tarjumah-i Pārjātak</i>	Mīrzā Rawshan Zāmīr		15/06/1688		
73	Persian translation of the <i>Sīr Bhāgavat</i> in two volumes			26/01/1785		
74	Persian translation of the <i>Sīr Bhāgavat</i> in one volume			17/10/1775	Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Walad-i ‘Alī al-Shā[h?]	
75	Persian translation of the <i>Rāmāyana</i>					
76	Persian translation of <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>					
77	Persian translation of the <i>Shīva-Uparpuāṇa</i>					
78	<i>Tuḥfat al-Hind</i>			1768–9	‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān 1183/1769–70	Gift – ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān
79	<i>Mīr ‘āt al-Masā’il Muḥammad Shāhī</i>					
80	<i>Forms of Oaths held binding by the Hindus</i>	‘Alī Ibrāhīm Khān				Personal Connection
81	Narrative of the Proceedings of.... ¹⁵⁰					
82	<i>Qur’ān</i>		al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī			Commission
83	<i>Mukhtaṣar al-Qudūrī</i>	Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Qudūrī	al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī			Commission
84	<i>Mukhtaṣar al-Qudūrī</i>	al-Qudūrī	al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī			Commission
85	<i>al-Hidāyah v.1</i>	Burhān al-Dīn al-Marghīnānī			Official at the court of Farrukh Siyar; official at the court of Bahādur Shāh; Quṭb al-Dīn Ḥusayn Khān; Henry Vansittart (1164/1750)	Lent – Vansittart
86	<i>al-Hidāyah v.2</i>	As above			As above	As above

(Continued)

¹⁵⁰The ownership note states that Ghulām Shīv bought it on the 9th of Muḥarram of the 27th year of Muḥammad Shāh’s reign (r.1719–1748), 1158AH, meaning he bought the manuscript on 11 February 1745, BL MS RSPA 56, f.1r.

Table 6. Continued.

RSPA Number	Title	Author	Scribe	Date AD (if known)	Owners (seals, notes and dates if known)	Jones Acquisition
87	<i>al-Fatāwā al-‘Ālamgīriyah</i> 1/5				‘Abd al-Ḥaqq at the court of ‘Ālamgīr 1103/1692-3; Ḥāfiẓ Mas‘ūd Khān 1162/1748-9; Sayyid Muḥammad Anwār ibn Sayyid Muḥammad Ghawth 1196/1782	
88	<i>al-Fatāwā al-‘Ālamgīriyah</i> 2/5		Muḥammad Muqīm al-Lāhūrī		Muḥammad Abū al-Faṭḥ Akram al-Dīn 1107/1695-6; Ḥāfiẓ Mas‘ūd Khān 1162/1748-9; Sayyid Muḥammad Anwār ibn Sayyid Muḥammad Ghawth 1196/1782	
89	<i>al-Fatāwā al-‘Ālamgīriyah</i> 3/5		As above		As above	
90	<i>al-Fatāwā al-‘Ālamgīriyah</i> 4/5		As above		As above	
91	<i>al-Fatāwā al-‘Ālamgīriyah</i> 5/5		As above		As above	
92	<i>al-Farā‘id al-sharīfiyah fī sharḥ al-sirājiyah</i>	al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī, ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad	al-Ḥājī ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī	29/07/ 1791		Commission
93	<i>Miscellany of Islamic Law</i>		al-Ḥājī ‘Abd Allāh al-Makkī			Commission
94	<i>Sharḥ ‘Aqā‘id al-Nasaḥī</i>	al-Taftāzānī, Mas‘ūd ibn ‘Umar			Qābil Khān; other unidentified seals from the courts of Dārā Shikūh and ‘Ālamgīr	
95	<i>al-Maṭālib al-Ḥusayniyah</i>	Muḥammad Afāẓ al-Dīn Mīr Ḥusaynī		1784-5		Presumed Personal Connection
96	<i>Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma‘ādin al-jawhar</i>	al-Mas‘ūdī	‘Abd Allāh ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Issā al-‘Aqrāwī	04/09/ 1664	Aḥmad ibn ‘Āmir al-Ḥaḍramī; Qivām al-Dīn Khān 1176AH/1763AD	
97	<i>Sukkaradān al-sulṭān</i>	Ibn Abī Ḥajalah		09/12/ 1670		
98	<i>al-Tārīkh al-Yamīnī</i>	Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-‘Utbī				
99	<i>al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ</i>	Majd al-Dīn al-Firūzābādī		29/06/ 1662	Khvājah Abū Sa‘d Khān 1165/1752 and Mu‘azzam Mukarram 1113/1701	Gift – John Shore

100	<i>al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ</i>	Majd al-Dīn al-Firūzābādī	██████████	31/03/ 1602	██████████	Gift – Francis Balfour
101	<i>Fawā'id wāfiyah bi-hall mushkilāt al-Kāfiyah</i>	Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī	Hājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	25/12/ 1792	██████████	Commission
102	<i>al-Khulāṣah al-alfiyah</i>	Ibn Mālik, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh	██████████	19/05/ 1717	██████████	██████████
103	<i>Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt</i>	Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā al-Tibrīzī	██████████	17/06/ 1768	██████████	██████████
104	<i>Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt</i>	Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Naḥḥās	Badr al-Dīn ibn Sayyid Ḥusayn walad Sayyid Muḥammad Rafī' al-Ḥassanī al-Makhāwī al-Yamanī	16/02/ 1784	██████████	██████████
105	<i>Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt</i>	██████████	al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	26/01/ 1786	██████████	Commission
106	<i>Kitāb al-Ḥamāsah</i>	Abū Tammām	al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	02/11/ 1788	██████████	Commission
107	<i>Dīwān Abī al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī</i>	Abū al-Ṭayyib Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Mutanabbī	Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥamawī	10/03/ 1664	Sayyid Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḥājj 'Alī al-Ḥaqq 1130/1717; Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ḥamawī ibn Muḥayyid 'Alī 1188/ 1769; 'Abd al-Rahmān Beg	Gift – 'Abd al-Rahmān Beg
108	<i>Dīwān 'Alī</i>	'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib	al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	13/10/ 1787	██████████	Commission
109	Anthology of Arabic and Turkish poetry	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	Possible personal connection – John Carnac
110	Mixed Contents	al-Mutalammis and mixed	al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	██████████	██████████	Commission
111	<i>Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī</i>	al-Ḥarīrī	al-Ḥājj 'Abd Allāh al-Makkī	04/06/ 1790	██████████	Commission
112	<i>al-Kashkūl</i>	Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-'Āmilī	██████████	01/11/ 1668	██████████	██████████
113	<i>Ṭayf al-Khayāl</i>	Muḥammad Mu'min ibn al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Qāsim al-Jazā'irī	Muḥammad Mu'min ibn al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Qāsim al-Jazā'irī	13/02/ 1705	Muḥammad Mu'min ibn al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Qāsim al-Jazā'irī	██████████
114	<i>al-Shifā'</i>	Ibn Sīnā	██████████	24/02/ 1637	██████████	██████████

(Continued)

Table 6. Continued.

RSPA Number	Title	Author	Scribe	Date AD (if known)	Owners (seals, notes and dates if known)	Jones Acquisition
115	<i>Mūqīḏ al-Ghāfilīn min Qiblat al-‘Arīfīn</i>	‘Alī Dāmin al-Muntaẓir				
116	<i>Qaṣīdat al-Burdah</i>	Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd al-Shanhāǧī al-Būṣṭarī				
117	<i>Kitāb al-Ḥamāsah</i>	Abū Tammām	Mīrzā			Commission – before India
118 ¹⁵¹	Urdu translation of Sa‘īd’s <i>Gulistān</i>	Sa‘īd				

¹⁵¹This is the only Urdu manuscript in the collection.

Appendix 2

Table 7. The Sanskrit Manuscripts of Sir William Jones in the Royal Society Collection

RS no.	Binding	Title Page note written by Jones	Topic	Title
T64	Bound together. The first four are indicated on the page before the textblock - "Four Indian Dramas in Sanscrit and Pracrit" with their names following. He mixed up 3 and 4 originally.	Not specifically.	play	<i>Candrābhisheka</i>
T65		Not specifically.	play	<i>Ratnāvalī</i>
T66		Not specifically	play	<i>Vikramorvaśī</i>
T67		Not specifically.	play	<i>Mālavikāgnimitra</i>
T1		Runs on from the previous text with no apparent break - despite change in subject matter. "The book, called Ch'handasī, 2. from the samaveda collated by Goverdhana 3 April 1788"	vedic	<i>Chandasī</i>
T69		Not specifically.	catalogue	Catalogue
T2		"The Krihadaranyaca: from the Yajur Veda with a Gloss by Sancara"	vedic	<i>Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad</i>
T3		Aitareya written on both first and final folio. Someone else has written "beginning" on first folio.	vedic	<i>Aitareyopaniṣadbhāṣya</i>
T4		"Niructi or Nairucta: the Gloss of the Veda" - above this is written: "By all means procure Brahma - serva - swam"	vedic	<i>Yāska's Nirukta</i>
T5		"The Great Siddhanta Caumudi Part I collected by Bhttoji Dicshita from the Grammatical Rules, Explanation, Commentaries of Pānini Catyayana Patanjali" On this page, he also notes that this book is "not to be read on the 13th of the Moon Dicshita"	grammar	<i>Siddhāntakaumudī</i>
T6		"Panini + Catyayana + Patanjali The Sacred Grammar as far as Compounds" - Wilkins has supplied the title below this and noted "a duplicate"	grammar	same as T5
T7			grammar	<i>Sārasvatayākaraṇa</i>
T8		"Sārāvalī: a Grammar of the Sanscrita language"	grammar	<i>Sārāvalī</i>
T9.1			vedic	<i>Mugdhibodhaṭikā</i>
T9.2				
T9.3				
T9.4				
T10			lexicography	<i>Amarkośa</i>

(Continued)

Table 7. Continued.

RS no.	Binding	Title Page note written by Jones	Topic	Title
T11	Bound together	“A Grammatical comment on the botanical chapter in the Amarcosh finished 18 sept 1792 Crishna-nagar”	lexicography	Frag. of <i>Amarkośa</i>
T12		“Amara Cosha”	lexicography	<i>Amarkośa</i>
T13		“Medini: A Sanscrit Dictionary”	dictionary	<i>Medinikośa</i>
T14		“Visva Pracasa: a Sanscrit Dictionary. W Jones”	dictionary	<i>Viśvaprakāśa</i>
T15.1		“Sabda Sandarba Sindhu: A Dictionary of the Sanscrit Language bu Cásínát’ha Śarman Vol I”	lexicography/dictionary	<i>Śabdasantarbasindhu</i>
T15.2	Bound together	“Sabda Sandarba Sindhu: A Dictionary of the Sanscrit Language bu Cásínát’ha Śarman Vol II”		
T31		“W Jones The Thousand Names of Vishnu from the Mahabharat with a Gloss”	epic	<i>Viśṇusahasranāma</i>
T56		“Shuca Septati Seventy Tales Told by a Parrot”	tales	<i>Śukasaptati</i>
T40		“--Nāreḍiyā Purana: This book is the property of the Honble. The India Company--”(struck through) followed by “W Jones: Bought by mistake for the company, to whom I gave in exchange the Tit’hi Tatwa”	pauranik	<i>Rukmāṅgadarita</i>
T16		“A Treatise on Musick and Dancing, W. Jones” followed by the list of the works in order (3 chapters) and the name of the author.	music	<i>Saṅgīta-Nārāyaṇa</i>
T17		Title page obscured slightly: “The _____ Analysis of Love: I have read this delicious book four times at least”.	rhetoric; love	<i>Rasamanījarī</i>
T18		Signed name	law	<i>Mānavadharmasāstra</i>
(T19)		MISLAID - according to the catalogue, the MS has similar annotations to T18	law	<i>Mānavadharmasāstra</i>
T20		“Arjuna Gita”	philo	<i>Arjunagītā</i>
T21			philo	<i>Brahmanirūpaṇa</i>
T22		“Hatha Pradipaca”	philo	<i>Hathapradīpikā</i>
T23.1		“Tantaria Saria Part 1st by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”	tantra	<i>Tatrasāra</i>
T23.2		“Tantaria Saria Part 2nd by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”		
T20		“Arjuna Gita”	philo	<i>Arjunagītā</i>
T21			philo	<i>Brahmanirūpaṇa</i>

T22	“Hatha Pradipaca”	philo	<i>Haṭhpradīpikā</i>
T23.1	“Tantaria Saria Part 1st by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”	tantra	<i>Tatrasāra</i>
T23.2	“Tantaria Saria Part 2nd by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”	tantra	<i>Tatrasāra</i>
T24	“Rajaballabha: de Materia Indorum Medica ... by Nārāyanadāra”	medicine	<i>Dravyaguṇa/Rājavallabha</i>
T25	“W Jones. Siddhantha Siromani: A treatise on Astronomy in Sanscrit by Bhāscarācharya Part 1st	astronomy	<i>Siddhāntasīromani</i>
T26.1	“Mahābhārata: I Ādi Perva / II Sabha Perva”	epic	8 volumes - <i>Mahābhārata</i>
T26.2	“Mahābhārata: III Vana Parva”		
T26.3	First block of text has no title page by Jones (it’s supplied by T). Second block of text: “Mahābhāratā: V Udyōga/--Bhishma-- } Perva / --VII Drōna--” - these final two texts have been foliated together in Volume 4 below - Jones appears to have ordered them wrong given the crossings out (he crossed out Bhishma but not Dr]ōna) (key: -- = crossed out, / - new line, } = Jones grouped together with curly bracket so Perva applies to both)		
T26.4	“Mahābhārata [followed by Sanskrit text of titles] / Bhishma Pervan VI / --Virātā Pervan IV--” - again seems to be an indication that the ordering of the texts has been corrected in the IOL binding process. Second textblock has no Jones title page, only a title page by T.		
T26.5	Title page of whole volume: - “Mahābhārat: VIII Carna / IX Salya } Gadā / X Sauptica } Eshica / XI Viśōca } Strī / XII Śānti Pervān”		
T26.6	“Mahābhārata: XII Śānti - { Āpaddherman / Mōcshadherma”		
T26.7	“Mahābhārat: XIII Anuśāana Dānadherma / XIV Aswamedha / XV Āśramavāsa/ XVI Mauśala / XVII Mahāprest’hāna / XVIII Swergārōhana”		
T26.8	“Mahābhārat: Herivaṇśa”		
T20	“Arjuna Gita”	philo	<i>Arjunagītā</i>
T21		philo	<i>Brahmanirūpaṇa</i>
T22	“Hatha Pradipaca”	philo	<i>Haṭhpradīpikā</i>
T23.1	“Tantaria Saria Part 1st by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”	tantra	<i>Tatrasāra</i>

(Continued)

Table 7. Continued.

RS no.	Binding	Title Page note written by Jones	Topic	Title
T23.2		“Tantaria Saria Part 2nd by Chrishnanda Bhatthachariya”	tantra	<i>Tatrasāra</i>
T24		“Rajaballabha: de Materia Indorum Medica ... by Nārāyanadāra”	medicine	<i>Dravyaguṇa/Rājavallabha</i>
T25		“W Jones. Siddhantha Siromani: A treatise on Astronomy in Sanscrit by Bhāscarācharya Part 1st	astronomy	<i>Siddhāntāśiromaṇi</i>
T26.1		“Mahabhārata: I Ādi Perva / II Sabha Perva”	epic	8 volumes - <i>Mahābhārata</i>
T26.2		“Mahabhārata: III Vana Parva”		
T26.3		First block of text has no title page by Jones (it’s supplied by T). Second block of text: “Mahābhāratā: V Udyōga/--Bhishma-- } Perva / --VII Drōna--” - these final two texts have been foliated together in Volume 4 below - Jones appears to have ordered them wrong given the crossings out (he crossed out Bhishma but not Drjōna) (key: -- = crossed out, / - new line, } = Jones grouped together with curly bracket so Perva applies to both)		
T26.4		“Mahābhārata [followed by Sanskrit text of titles] / Bhishma Pervan VI / --Virātā Pervan IV--” - again seems to be an indication that the ordering of the texts has been corrected in the IOL binding process. Second textblock has no Jones title page, only a title page by T.		
T26.5		Title page of whole volume: - “Mahābhārat: VIII Carna / IX Salya } Gadā / X Sauptica } Eshica / XI Viśōca } Strī / XII Śānti Pervān”		
T26.6		“Mahābhārata: XII Śānti - { Āpaddherman / Mōchadherma”		
T26.7		“Mahābhārat: XIII Anuśāna Dānadherma / XIV Aswamēdha / XV Āśramavāsa/ XVI Mauśala / XVII Mahāprest’hāna / XVIII Swergārōhana”		
T26.8		“Mahābhārat: Herivaṅśa”		

T27.1
T27.2
T27.3
T27.4
T27.5
T27.6
T27.7
T27.8
T27.9
T27.10
T27.11
T27.12
T27.13
T27.14
T27.15
T27.16
T27.17
T27.18
T27.19
T27.20
T27.21
T27.22
T28.1
T28.2
T28.3
T28.4
T28.5

There are title pages – these are written in pencil and are so faint they are barely legible. They record only the sections at beginning and end.

epic

22 volumes – *Mahābhārata*

“Rāmāyan: Book I. Bālacānda or Ádicanda, in Seventy Seven Divisions called Sergās”
“Rāmāyan: Book II Ayodhyá caṅdá in 119 Divisions”
1) “Rāmāyan: Book III Áraṇya caṅdá in _____ Divisions” (i.e. does not mark divisions) 2) “Rāmāyan: Book IV Cishcinda Cānda in Sixty Seven Divisions”
“Rāmāyan: Book V Sundara Caṅda in Sixty Eight Divisions”
1) “Rāmāyan: Book VI Yudha Caṅdá or Lancá Caṅdá in _____ Divisions” 2) “Rāmāyan: Book VII Uttara Caṅdá”

epic

5 volumes – *Rāmāyaṇa*

(Continued)

Table 7. Continued.

RS no.	Binding	Title Page note written by Jones	Topic	Title
T29.1		Just visible (pencil used on coarse Indian paper) “Ramayana Adi Kanda”. A name has been effaced. Originally the title page was written upside down on the other side of the paper. This is crossed out.	epic	7 volumes - <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i>
T29.2		Almost totally effaced annotation. Only the end of “Ramayana” is visible.		
T29.3		Just visible (pencil used on coarse Indian paper) “Ramayana Adi Kanda”		
T29.4		“Ramayana: Kishkindhakanda”		
T29.5		“Ramayana: _____” rest is effaced.		
T29.6		“Ramayana: Lankakandha beginning”		
T29.7		“Ramayana: Uttara Kandha”		
T30.1		In this volume, Jones writes a contents for the work (were it to be completed) - in a table he lists the books and the volumes - it would have been three volumes. First volume - Bāla cānda and Ayōdhya Cānda / Second volume Āraṇya C, Cishcindhā C and Sundara C / Third volume Lancā C and Uttara C. As it stands, the third volume was never completed - see note in volume 2. - On fi, he wrote “Rāmāyaṇ: an Heroick Poem by Valmic Book I Bāla”	epic	2 volumes - <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i>
T30.2		“Rāmāyaṇa: Book III Āraṇya”		
T32.1		“The Bhāghavata: First, Second and Third Parts”	pauranic	<i>Bhāghavata Purāṇa</i>
T32.2		“Bhāghavata IV, V, VI”		in 5 volumes
T32.3		On final page of first part of the third volume, Jones has written “Bhāghavata Books VII, VIII, IX” and then crossed it out (presumably because it is on the incorrect leaf).		
T32.4		“Bhāghavata: Skandha the Tenth”		
T32.5		Jones notes only on the beginning of skandha 12 (i.e. first 2 parts of volume are not titled) - “Bhāghavata Skandha XII”		

T33		“Bhagavata: Book (1st)” and end page: “end of book” – this applies to all of the individual skandhas which are bound together across the different volumes – he marks the beginning and end of each skandha. No other annotations.	pauranik	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i> in 5 volumes
T34 ¹⁵²	Scroll		pauranik	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i> in 2 (palmleaf) parts
T35		“Agni Poorāna”	pauranik	<i>Agni Purāṇa</i>
T36			pauranik	<i>Kālikā Purāṇa</i>
T37.1		“Vayū Purāṇa / W Jones”	pauranik	<i>Vāyu Purāṇa</i> – 2 vols
T37.2				
T38		“W Jones”	pauranik	<i>Vāyu Purāṇa</i>
T39		“Vrihannārādiya Purāna”	pauranik	<i>Vṛihannārādiya Purāṇa</i>
T41		Signs name, no title page.	pauranik	<i>Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa</i>
T42			pauranik	<i>Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa</i>
T43.1	Bound separately – the first is the text and the second a commentary on part of it (sargas 9–18). Second volume composed for Jones and he notes the name of the scribe on title page.	“Cumāra Sambhava: an Epick Poem by Cālidās. / W Jones / Read six times.”	kavya	<i>Kumārasambhava</i> in 2 volumes. Commentary volume called <i>Bhāvavilāsanī</i> and was composed for SWJ.
T43.2		“Notes on the last book of the Cumāra by Servōra Trivēdi”	kavya	
T53	Bound together	“Geeta-govinda: a Poem by Jayadēva with notes”	kavya	<i>Gītagovinda</i>
T44		“Kumara Sambhava: a Poem in 7 sections”	kavya	<i>Kumārasambhava</i>
T51		“Santi sataka: a Poem in 4 Parts”	kavya	<i>Śantisataka</i>
T47		“Meghadūta: a Poem by Calidas”	kavya	<i>Meghadūta</i>
T59		“Mahānātaka: a Drama in Ten Acts. Founded on the popular story of Rāma and Sitā”	drama	<i>Mahānātaka</i>
T87			unknown	
T45		“The Raghuvansa of ___ (effaced)”	kavya	<i>Raghuvansha</i> with Mallinātha’s commentary.
T46		MISLAID	kavya	<i>Raghuvansha</i>

(Continued)

¹⁵²There is a problem with the indexing system at the British Library. Currently, RST 34 is erroneously listed under “RSP&A 34”. This has been pointed out to Pasquale Manzano, the curator of the Sanskrit collections.

Table 7. Continued.

RS no.	Binding	Title Page note written by Jones	Topic	Title
T48	Same scribe as several other Jones manuscripts (e.g. t39).	“Bhatti, a popular Heroick. Bought 30 Oct 1790 W Jones”	kavya	<i>Bhaṭṭikāvya</i>
T49		“Bhārāvī or Cīrātājuniya”	kavya	<i>Kīrātājuniya</i>
T50			kavya	<i>Māghavyākhyāna</i>
T52.1		“Naishadha: Part I”	kavya	<i>Naishadacarita</i>
T52.2		“Naishadha: Part II”		
T52.3		“Notes on the Naishadha”		
T54		“Sinhasana: The Throne of Vicramaditya”	tales	<i>Sinhāsanaadvātriṅśikā</i>
T55.1	Jones’s notes are made on watermarked European paper (Finch) different to the paper of the manuscripts (also European).	“Vrihat-cat’ha: Sarit Sāgara: or / Indian Tales in verse by Sōmadēva: This poet resembles Ariosto, but even surpasses him in elegance”	tales	<i>Kathāsarisāgara</i> - in 3 volumes
T55.2		“Cat’hā saritsāgara by Sōmadēva Vol. II”		
T55.3		“Cat’hā saritsāgara by Sōmadēva Vol. III”		
T57		“Goculpendit of Sandipur”	tales	<i>Hitopadeśa</i>
T58		Vénisanhara: a Drama	drama	<i>Veṅṣaṅhāra</i>
T60		“Saconthalā”	drama	<i>Abhijñānaśakuntala</i>
T61		“Mālati and Mādhava: a Drama”	drama	<i>Mālati-Mādhava</i>
T62		“The Sea of Laughter: Hāsyaṃava, a Farce by Jagadīswara / It is a bitter satire on kings and their servants who are described as profligate, scoundrel and on priests, who are represented as vicious hypocrite”	drama	<i>Hāsyaṃava</i>
T63		“Cautuca sarvasva: a Farce”	drama	<i>Kautukasarvasva</i>
T68		There is a title page in Sanskrit as well as this from Jones: “The Rising Moon of Knowledge: Prabōdha Chandrōdaya: An Indian Drama by Cēsava Mīśra.”	drama	<i>Prabodhacandrodaya</i>

In this table, I have followed Jones's spellings exactly in quotations. I have used the spellings from Tawney and Thomas, *Catalogue*, for the works of the titles in the column "Title". Where I have written T or referred to the "Catalogue", this refers to Tawney and Thomas, *Catalogue*. The order of the manuscripts is in rough shelf mark order but taking into account the binding of the composite manuscripts. I have written out Jones's title pages on these manuscripts, which are much more common in his Sanskrit collection than Arabic and Persian collections for the use of future studies of his collections.

In reviewing the Sanskrit manuscripts, it has become obvious that there are several groups of manuscripts which were presumably commissioned by Jones or by others and given to him, which are all the product of the same scribe. For example, I have been able to isolate the following group of manuscripts as all the work of the same scribe and, therefore, likely commissions: 8, 9, 12, 22, 23, 27, 29, 33, 35, 39, 43, 44, 47, 48, 51, 53, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 87.

Further work is required to advance our understanding of Sir William Jones's Sanskrit collections, with a view to achieve a greater awareness of the materials from which he worked, how he acquired them, who they were written by and, as with this article, expand our knowledge of his Indian network of acquaintances whose own learning and scholarship drove Jones's.

Appendix 3

Table 8. The Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic Manuscripts sold at the Auction of Sir William and Lady Jones's Library with the buyer and modern shelf marks where known.

Evans Lot number	Title	Location and shelf mark (if known)	Buyer
334	<i>Bhagavad Gita</i> (S)		Captain Hargrave
335	“Sacred Book of the Hindus” (S)	John Rylands; Sanskrit MS 3	Augustus and Julian Hare
336	<i>Madhaviyan</i> (S)		Mr. McClelen ¹⁵³
337	Comment on the <i>Faittiriya</i> (S)		Mr. Payne ¹⁵⁴
338	<i>Maitreya Upanishad</i> (S)		Mr. McClelen
339	<i>Kalpadruma</i> (S)		Mr. Payne
343	<i>Īamāśah</i> (A)	Bodleian MS Caps OR.b.13-4	Augustus and Julian Hare
432	<i>Sareswatam</i> (S)		John George Cochrane
432*	<i>Būstān</i> (Sa' dī) (P w/Turkish notes)	John Rylands; Persian MS 240	John George Cochrane
433	<i>Shūrīn va Farhad</i> (Vahshī) (P)	John Rylands; Persian MS 187	John George Cochrane
434	<i>Yūsuf va Zulaykhā</i> (Jāmī) (P)	John Rylands; Persian MS 267	Thomas James Pettigrew
435	<i>Sukcardān al-sultān</i> (A)	John Rylands; Arabic MS 264-5 [94-5]	John George Cochrane
436	<i>Upanishads</i> (translation by Dārā Shikūh P)		John George Cochrane
437	<i>Kamarupa</i> (S)		Captain Hargrave
438	<i>1001 Nights</i> (A)		Nathaniel Bland
439	<i>Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī</i> (P)		John George Cochrane
440	<i>Amarakosha</i> dictionary (S)		Thomas James Pettigrew
441	<i>Vivadamaśeta</i> (S)		John George Cochrane
442	<i>Divān-i Hāfiẓ</i> (P)	(Possibly) John Rylands; Persian MS 263	John George Cochrane
443	<i>Amarakosha</i> dictionary (S)		John George Cochrane
444	Chinese drawings (C)	John Rylands Library; Chinese Drawings 8-14, 17, 19, 24, 25, 26 and 27	Mr. Curtis ¹⁵⁵
445	Digest of Hindu Law (compiled for SWJ) (S)		John George Cochrane
446	Commentary on Manu (ms notes) (S)	Bodleian; MS Sansk c.32	Augustus and Julian Hare
447	<i>Sakontala</i> (S)	Bodleian; MS Sansk c. 37	Augustus and Julian Hare
448	<i>MugdhaBodha</i> (S)	Bodleian; MS Sansk c.34	Augustus and Julian Hare
449	<i>Hitopadeśa</i> (S)	John Rylands; Sanskrit MS 1	John George Cochrane
450	Various (S)		John George Cochrane
451	<i>Principia Grammatica</i> (S)	(Possibly) John Rylands; Sanskrit MS 2	Thomas James Pettigrew
452	<i>Soma</i> (S)		Mr. Curtis
453	<i>Zakhīrah-'i Khvārazmshāhī</i> (P)	John Rylands; Persian MS 192	John George Cochrane
454	Untitled Contents; calligraphy noted (P)		Nathaniel Bland
455	Batta Manuscript (Sumatran; on bark)		John George Cochrane

¹⁵³Unidentified.¹⁵⁴Unidentified.¹⁵⁵Unidentified.