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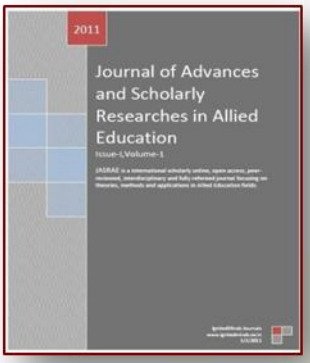
Study of Political Representations: Diplomatic Missions of Early Indian to Britain



Nirmal Singh

Research Scholar, Singhania University

Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

Among the tens of thousands of Indians who ventured to Britain in the 250 years prior to 1857, there were more than thirty diplomatic and political missions from Indian rulers or would-be rulers to London. These Indian agents sought advancement or financial benefits for their Indian patrons. These envoys negotiated, lobbied, and purchased political support from British politicians and East India Company Directors, as well as seeking to influence the British public through speeches and published books, articles, and newspaper columns. This paper examines two such diplomatic missions, both from the Mughal Emperor to the British monarch and Parliament. The first, by I'ti⇔am al-Din (1766–69), sought the Briths King's military aid in restoring the Mughal Emperor to power. The second, by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1831–33), sought enhancement of the Emperor's pension. These two missions are set in the context of the other

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diplomatic and political missions, and also in the other asymmetrical exchanges between Indians and Britons in both India and Britain in the pre-1857 period.

Context

Contests between Indian rulers and the British about control over political representations and information flows stood central to the formative process of colonialism. Over the century prior to 1857, Indian rulers resisted, yet all eventually succumbed to direct or indirect British rule. As part of their resistance, Indian rulers (including current and deposed rulers, their descendants, and claimants to rule) sent some thirty Indian diplomatic missions to Britain in order to shape imperial policy.

These were quite apart from the many British representatives hired by Indian rulers. These Indian envoys learned directly about the nature of the British state and society, unmediated by Britons, and disseminated that information back in India. This article uses interdisciplinary methodologies and sources to analyse these Indian diplomatic missions to Britain over the 1764–1857 period, concentrating on two from the Mughal imperial court.

The earliest Indian diplomatic missions to Britain were modeled on the traditional relationships within the Mughal Empire. In the pre-colonial period, most Indian rulers maintained extensive networks of *wakīls* (representatives) posted reciprocally at each other's courts. There were constant exchanges of *nazr* (gifts, from an inferior to a superior), khil'at (robes of honour given by a superior to an inferior), and courtly missives. When a subordinate could not present this

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nazr personally, he sent it through his ωαικλ. Many of these diplomatic networks for exerting influence and gathering information focused centrally on the Mughal imperial court, especially from the 16th through the 17th centuries. During Mughal decline over the course of the 18th century, virtually autonomous regional rulers extended their networks over each others' courts as well.

The East India Company, on its entry into politics in India, first tapped into these preexisting representational and information systems: recruiting its own political agents (both British and Indian) and receiving ωαικls from various Indian rulers. The Company as an entity submitted nazr to the Mughal Emperor and accepted imperial decrees and titles, including the Dcwcnc of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Its leading officials also participated personally in these networks of representation and submission, receiving from the Emperor titles and jcgcrs. As the balance of military power shifted, however, and consequently as British political assertions began to subordinate Indian rulers, they gradually attempted to establish their own monopoly over inter-court representation and communication across the sub-continent.

British Residents posted to the various Indian courts went from serving in ways similar to ωαικls to playing the key role in the system of indirect rule. Occasional British exertions of military power demonstrated that Indian resistance would be crushed decisively. Most Residents over time proved able to exert unmatched influence over the ruler, court, and state where they resided. Residents gradually formed the most vital means of surveillance by the Company over events and conditions within each princely state. Further, Residents eventually took on as a main mission the interruption of direct communication among the Indian courts and the substitution of exclusively Britishcontrolled diplomatic relations.

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To retain their own agency, various Indian rulers sent envoys to the London to try to supercede British authorities in India and to discover the true nature of British political power and authority. Even the most innovative Indian rulers found obscure the differences in authority and policies among the various Governors and the Governor-General in India, and even more so in Britain among the British Crown, Parliament, Board of Control, the Company's Court of Directors, and Court of Proprietors-let alone the competing interests within each of these. Indeed, the East India Company's officials in India often sought to blur these differences. On occasion, the Governor-General deliberately suppressed a rebuff from the Directors or Parliament, or a Governor resisted informing Indian rulers that he had been overruled by any one of the above. There were also instances where the English version of a treaty with an Indian ruler (intended for readers in Britain) specified one British entity but the Persian version (intended for Indian readers) specified another. Thus, the Company sought to exploit its role as exclusive intermediary for communication among Indian rulers and also between those rulers and Britain.

The earliest Indian missions arrived in Britain before any of the relevant parties had developed policies or traditions to deal with such political intercourse. The Mughal Emperor in 1766 sent a mission seeking direct correspondence with the British monarch and military support. His agents failed to gain their political purposes, but did bring back much information about domestic politics in Britain. Over time, however, men like Rammohun Roy learned the principles and procedures that motivated the British. As diplomatic envoy from the Mughal Emperor to Britain (1831–33), he used his sophisticated insights into British political practice and law to improve the Emperor's position. Yet, there were limits on what even he could accomplish.

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On their part, the Company's Directors and administration in India tried to channel all political communication from Indian rulers exclusively through local British officials and discourage Indian envoys from venturing to Britain. Should such missions reach London, the Company's Directors gradually created precedents and policies to try to constrain their effectiveness. For example, the Company's Directors humiliated Rammohun Roy and other Indian diplomats in an effort to induce them to return to India. They also used financial pressure on Indian envoys in London, and their employers in India, to terminate their missions.

The 1857 conflict altered these interactions profoundly. Subsequently, the British Raj reversed earlier annexationist policies so as to foster the British Crown's relations with Indian princes, using these rulers to support British colonial power through indirect rule. In her Proclamation of 1858, Queen Victoria guaranteed to all remaining Indian princes not only security of their rule but also direct diplomatic access to herself. Therefore the contests over political communications by Indian princes with the British metropole fundamentally changed.

This article focuses on the contests around two out of the many Indian diplomatic missions to London prior to 1858. It locates these, both sent by the Mughal Emperor, in the context of the many other Indian diplomatic missions of their time. Our analysis

reveals vital aspects of the larger processes of colonialism in India about representation and political information control. These Indian diplomats and rulers gained first-hand knowledge about Britain, and represented India and Indians directly in the British public sphere, despite British efforts to suppress them. This evidence reveals a quite different side of the issues of empire and information control discussed by Bayly. It also directly challenges assertions by Said

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and Pratt that Europeans appropriated "the Orient" and prevented Indians from representing themselves.

The Initial Indian Missions to Britain

When the British first entered the political world of India, Indian rulers sought to incorporate them into their own diplomatic protocols. The Mughal Emperors had for much of the 18th century been palace prisoners. In 1764, the "protectors" of Emperor Sh⊄h '…lam II (r. 1759–1806) brought him as a still powerful symbol against the British in the battle at Buxar. Following the massive defeat of the imperial army at the hands of the Company's Bengal Army, the Emperor entered into an agreement with the British that they would restore his authority over the provinces of Allahabad and Kora, provide the long-unpaid revenues from Bengal and Bihar, and furnish an army to protect him. In exchange, he offered the Company appointment as his D⊂w⊄n (chief financial officer including tax collector) in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. While this appointment (accepted by the Company in 1772) made the Company his subordinate officer, the Mughal Emperor also tried himself to submit to the British monarch as his protector and solicit military aid.

To establish his direct relationship with the British monarch, Sh⊄h '…lam sent a diplomatic mission to King George III. He wrote addressing the British monarch as "sovereign of the land of friendship, my brother, dear to me as life, whom may the Almighty assist and support." The Mughal Emperor went on to explain: "[due to] the ingratitude, treachery, infidelity, and arrogance of the Nobles of Hindostan... the empire has been reduced to a state of confusion and

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disorder... I attribute it to your royal favour and friendship and brotherly love that I am now established with the English gentlemen in the fort of Allahabad and I earnestly request that your Majesty will send to Calcutta 5 or 6,000 young men practiced in war that under the command of Lord Clive and General Carnac; they may carry me to Shahjehanabad, my capital, and firmly seat me on the throne of the Hindostan Empire, which is my undoubted right... Your Majesty's restoring me to my right will cause your name to be celebrated till the destruction of the world in every part of the habitable earth, and I shall be obliged to you as long as I live.... As a proof of my affection for them, I have granted to the English Company the Dewanny of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, as a free gift forever which I am persuaded will meet with your royal approbation.

P.S. As it is customary in this country to send with a letter something by way of present [nazr], I shall therefore send a few trifles for you my Brother and your royal consort my Sister. They will arrive hereafter and I hope from your friendship that you will be kind enough to accept them."

This nazr consisted of Rupees 100,000 and, if accepted, would indicate that George III recognized the Emperor as his dependant, whom he should protect. The Emperor appointed a Briton, Captain Archibald Swinton (1731–1804) to head this mission, entitling him Rustam Jung BahËdur and giving him a khil'at.6 Swinton resigned the Company's service to accept this imperial appointment. The Emperor also appointed—as the expert in Persian diplomatics—a munshc, Shaikh I'tiesam al-Dcn (1730–1800), granting him the title of Mcrzc. In making these appointments, the Mughal Emperor thus selected as his representatives people with long experience working for the Company. This raised questions about their loyalty to him. Other

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rulers would depute people from their own court or family, who might be more loyal but less practiced in dealing with Britons.

I'ti⇔am al-D⊂n, a son of Sayid Shaikh T⊄j al-Din, was born in Nadia district, Bengal of a sayyid family. He initially trained to be a scholar and scribe in the service of the naw⊄bs of Bengal. However, he soon shifted his service to the East India Company, as one of the first eight munsh⊂s to do so. He then worked for a series of British officials. Thus, while he respected the Emperor's authority, he did not have longstanding links to the imperial court, but rather had a career with the Company. When he accepted this mission from the Emperor, he received Rupees 4,000 for his efforts and expenses, which both turned out to be much more onerous than he had expected.

This mission encountered opposition and delay from its inception. Robert Clive wished to prevent the Emperor from establishing any direct relationship with the British King. He feared that such a mission might disadvantage the Company's government in Calcutta by intervening directly into politics in London. He also had many enemies in the Company and British government with whom these agent could ally. Thus, Clive delayed the Emperor's letter from reaching the envoys. Further, the Mughal court had difficulty delivering the promised Rupee 100,000 gift to George III, via the Company.

Finally, after a year of waiting, I'ti⇔am al-D⊂n, his servant Mu®ammad Muq⊂m, and Swinton sailed from Calcutta in January 1766. The difficulties that this mission encountered in setting off proved very typical.

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Throughout the period until 1858, the Company's officials in India strongly discouraged most rulers from sending such missions. They increasingly realized that the presence of Indian diplomats in London raised questions and pressures that the Company found awkward and threatening. Not until the early 19th century, however, would authorities in London develop procedures to deal with such missions. After it finally reached Britain, this imperial mission foundered. Swinton failed to accomplish much and showed little commitment to the Emperor, although he actively engaged in conflict among factions within the Court of Directors and Parliament.

Further, he alienated I'ti⇔am al-D⊂n, including by criticizing his adherence to Islam. Over time in Britain, I'ti⇔am al-D⊂n grew frustrated at his own inability to advance the Emperor's cause. His insistence on eating only hal⊂l meat made his life there more difficult and limited his socializing with Britons. Nor was he the master of English.

Finally, he was only an assistant to Swinton, not able to maneuver on his own within the British political system. In addition, I'ti⇔am al-D⊂n claimed that the Emperor's letter never reached the British monarch and that Clive personally presented the imperial gifts to the crown in his own name. In fact, the Emperor's letter offering nazr did reach the British King, but the Rupees 100,000 apparently did not. Nor was this money ever satisfactorily accounted for in the Company's books. Thus, this mission failed in its goal: to change British policy so that King George would protect and restore the Emperor by sending a British army.

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While the mission struggled in Britain, the Emperor back in India remained in empty expectation of success. Yet, he received no reply to his nazr and letter, despite his repeatedly requests. This was all the more frustrating for the Emperor since his subordinate, the Nawcb of Arcot, had recently received a formal letter from the British King. The Mughal Emperor thus had misunderstood British political realities of the time and his diplomatic mission could not accomplish his objective because of the hostility of Clive's administration in Calcutta and the Directors in London. Finally, I'tiemam al-Dcn and his servant returned to India in 1769 with little to show in political terms but with much information about Britain, its people, and its politics. Swinton settled prosperously in Scotland I'tiemam al-Dcn returned to serving British officials of the Company. Some years later in 1784/85, I'tiemam al-Dcn composed in Persian among the earliest written accounts by an Indian about Britain: Shigarf-ncma-i Wilcyat or "Wonder-book of Europe." The rich knowledge that I'tiemam al-Dcn brought back about politics in Britain, did not, however, disseminate quickly or widely among other Indians, including Indian rulers. Many Indian visitors to Britain who followed him over the following century expressed the same astonishment and surprise at the nature of British society, its reception of Indians, and the structure of the political system there. Yet, some Indians clearly learned from his work. For example, Karcm Khcn who also went as a diplomat seventy-five years later, referred to details included in I'tiemam al-Dcn's account. Further, later Indians who studied Western culture, like Rammohun Roy (discussed below), developed their own sophisticated understanding of British society and politics.

Over subsequent decades, many other Indian rulers also sought to establish personal and political bonds with the British monarch, as a way to enhance their position in India. One persistent claimant to the office of Maratha Peshwc, Raghuncth Rao (d. 1784), wrote a letter in 1778 to George III, similar to that of the Mughal Emperor, appealing to him as a fellow monarch.

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Raghunath Rao sent this through a diplomatic mission consisting of a Brahmin from his court, Hanumant Rao, assisted by two Parsis from Bombay (a community with long experience dealing with Britons).15 Over their months in London in 1781, these men recruited powerful British supporters, including George III and Edmund Burke. Hanumant Rao personally testified before Parliament in hearings which resulted in 1781 the Bengal Judicature Act and contributed eventually to Pitt's 1784 India Act and to the impeachment and trial of Warren Hastings by Parliament (1788–1795). Yet, in the face of opposition from the Governor-General and the majority on the Court of Directors, this mission also failed to shift British policy toward their master.

Not all Indian initiatives failed, however. Rulers or their descendants who refused to accept negative judgments by British officials in India occasionally managed to send missions or go themselves to London. There, even the descendants of long-deposed rulers occasionally proved able to convince the Court of Directors or Board of Control or Parliament to overturn the judgment of British officials in India and award much enhanced pensions. Examples of such gains include ventures to London by a descendant of the late Nawab of Broach in 1794 and of a wakil from the son of the late Nawab of Bednore in 1819–21.

Over the early 19th century, the number of Indians who returned from Britain rose, bring with them greater understanding of the possibilities for political maneuvering there. Yet British authorities in London also grew more experienced in dealing with Indian diplomats. As the level of knowledge about the other rose in both India and London, the strategies on each side became more sophisticated. The Court of Directors and British Government learned how to parry the thrusts of Indian envoys in London. But Indian envoys also learned how to use British institutions

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and values on behalf of their rulers as well. Among the most astute of the Indian diplomatic envoys of the early 19th century was R⊄j⊄ Rammohun Roy (c. 1772–1833). In 1828, the Mughal Emperor Mu®ammad Akbar II (r. 1806–37) sought an increase in his imperial pension from the British up to the level specified by his 1805 treaty, but long denied. To represent him, he recruited Rammohun Roy. As part of the arrangement they concluded, the Emperor bestowed the title of R⊄j⊄ on Roy and also that of imperial ambassador (*elahi*), giving him "full and unlimited powers." As we saw, the Mughals had first sent emissaries to London in 1766, so they should have had a better knowledge about the structure of British government.

Yet, the Emperor continued largely to follow the Persianate diplomatic etiquette he embodied. Despite a lifetime living under British "protection" as a place prisoner under the supervision of the British Resident in Delhi, he showed little knowledge of British political realities. He addressed his letter to the British King, appealing personally a fellow monarch: "Sire! My Brother! It is with a mingled feeling of humility and pride that I approach your Majesty with the language of fraternal equality at the very time that the occasion of my addressing your Majesty compels me to consider myself rather as a suppliant at the footstool of your Majesty's throne than as a Monarch entitled to assume the style and claim the privileges of royalty.... I cannot forget that I am a King only in name..." Roy's understanding of British politics exceeded the Emperor's more traditional one that his personal appeal to the British king presupposed.

Roy's more expansive vision of this opportunity reflected a nascent sense of India as a political entity. Roy accepted the Mughal Emperor as a significant part of that entity but Roy also regarded his mission as representing the honor of all Indians: "I am... responsible not only to the King of Delhi but to the whole body of my Countrymen for my exertions on his behalf and for

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their welfare." Roy understood how the lack of "patriotism" among Indians had enabled the British conquest. Thus, he accepted the offer that the Emperor extended to him to go to Britain on his behalf but had many other goals in addition.

The Government of India was strongly opposed to this mission and used almost every means to block it. They pressured Roy not to go, refusing to recognize his imperial authority and status as an envoy. The British Resident in Delhi tried to force the Emperor to repudiate Roy. Even while Roy was in London, the Resident continued to attempt to turn the Emperor against him; he succeeded in doing so with the Heir Apparent by exciting jealousy against Roy. Yet, the British recognized they had no legal right to forbid this or any other Indian mission.

Instead of an Indian as the secretary to a Briton, in this mission Roy employed Montgomery Martin as his assistant envoy. Martin had been the editor of the *Bengal Herald*, one of the newspapers of which Roy was a part proprietor; Martin had been ordered deported from India for his writings. Martin also organized the bodyguards who were needed to fend off the attempts on Roy's life from his opponents, mainly Hindu leaders in Calcutta who hated Roy for threatening the established order. Before leaving India, Roy directed Martin to prepare the Emperor's case, using various secret documents obtained illicitly from the Government of India. Martin claimed, however, that, when after four months' work he realized the secret documents were "surreptitiously obtained from the Government offices, by bribing the clerks therein," he resigned in protest against the illegal means that had been used to obtain them. Nonetheless, Roy carried on with his mission.

After he reached Britain in April 1831, Roy submitted the Emperor's case to the Company's Directors. He had prepared himself well and clearly achieved a far more informed, insightful, and

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sophisticated understanding of the political situation in London than almost any other Indian envoy. Roy cast his argument in terms of the sanctity of private property and of contracts, bedrocks of British legal and social thinking: if the Emperor's claim based on treaty "be not valid and obligatory, then no contract can be considered binding, no man's property is secure..." In addition, Roy researched earlier Indian missions, apparently intending to learn from them what worked and what had not.24 Indeed, Roy explicitly contrasted his own insightful understanding of the constitutional relationship among British political bodies with the vague notions about the British that he asserted had been widespread in India: "...whatever might have been the case while the Natives of India were entirely ignorant of the nature of the Government (the popular notion being that the Company was a venerable old lady who sent out her favourite sons successfully to take charge of the Country) such a system of stifling enquiry cannot, I presume, work at all in these days, when so many of the Natives are perfectly capable of appreciating the character of the local Government as well as the nature of the British constitution, and the relation subsisting between them."

In fact, other Indian envoys would arrive subsequently without Roy's understanding of these relationships. Roy used his time in London awaiting the Director's judgment by expanding his contacts and experience of European cultures and peoples. He engaged in series of meetings with prominent British social and religious leaders.26 Roy's personal charisma and his tremendous intellect both gained him a strong following, both among the British elite and among its middle-classes as well. Britons largely regarded him as a savant from the East, yet one sympathetic to progressive Christianity, a man from whom they could derive "Oriental wisdom," but also someone who could spread the message of European-style modernity among the Indian people. He was particularly welcomed by Unitarians, who believed Roy's religious views resonated with their own. Indeed, he caused many British thinkers to reconsider the very limits

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of British nationhood and Christianity. Roy also addressed the general public through generally well received speeches, sermons, and writings.

There were many in London, particularly those with personal experience in India, who refused to recognize Roy as a gentleman, rather identifying him only as a "black." For example, a supporter of Roy recalls Captain Manleverer saying angrily about meeting Roy in a social gathering "What is that *black fellow* doing here?" Many Britons, however, found Roy highly attractive, both because of his oriental identity and also because of his personality, keen intellect, and vast accomplishments. Skeptics were won over by his social charms and obvious intellectual gifts. He was invited out to dinner by more distinguished people than he could possibly accommodate.

Among other aspects of British modernity, Roy displayed a refined understanding of the power of the press. He had established some of the first newspapers run by an Indian in Calcutta. Roy wrote that he intended to publish a book chronicling his explorations that would inform his countrymen about "the intelligence, riches and power, manners, customs, and especially the female virtue and excellence existing in" Britain. While many other Indians did write such analyses of British culture and society, Roy's untimely death prevented him from doing so.

When he first wrote to the Directors, he submitted a printed pamphlet detailing and documenting the Mughal's case: *Treaty with the King of Delhi. Decision thereon by the Governor General of India; Reports of the British Resident and Political Agent at Delhi; with remarks* (London: John Nichols, 1831). But he promised the Directors that he had not yet released copies of this, clearly intimating that he would do so if necessary to gain public support for his case: "I mention this fact because I am anxious to bring the whole matter quickly and unostentatiously

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before the Honourable Court of Directors." Roy also cited specific Government of India Regulations proving his case, marking each in a printed manual. He sought to evoke the British "love of justice which breathes through the Acts of Parliament." Further, Roy's social and intellectual prominence provided him with an advantage of access to influential Britons and a respect among them unmatched by any other Indian emissary. Despite all these advantages, Roy experienced many of the same frustrations as other Indian diplomats. He ultimately gained only modest success in his endeavor. Further, Roy expressed how compromised he felt by his need to plead before the Directors, not only on behalf of his imperial master but also in terms of his own self respect.

The Directors attempted officially to deal with Roy's mission as they had come to do with others: refusing to recognize his accreditation and directing him to go home and send his petitions through local authorities in India. Roy had prepared for this stonewalling even before he left India. He held impeccable credentials from the Emperor. He had also documented his unavailing efforts to make such submissions through local British officials in India. He had notified the Governor-General of his mission in advance. Once in London, Roy negotiated shrewdly, strengthening his hand with the Directors through his use of the Board of Control as the representative of Parliament, where he had more support. His personal social connections with leading members of both bodies enhanced his influence.35 Further, he made a powerful case that, as a British subject, he held the legal and moral right to make this appeal.

The Directors were at first unpersuaded by all this and intended, as they did most other envoys, to turn him away unrecognized. Roy's documentation and argumentation, and equally important his personal connections and respected status among the influential in London, however,

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persuaded the Directors to make an exception in his case. They concluded it would be politic for them to deal with him rather than have him go to Parliament, which was already very respectfully supportive, based on his advocacy of the abolition of sati and other reform measures.37 He was a recognized guest in the Parliamentary galleries. Indeed, in 1831 a Parliamentary Select Committee requested that he, "as a native" of India, advise Parliament on the upcoming 1833 Charter Renewal of the Company; Roy published a book that was a compilation of his extended responses to their questions.38 When the 1832 Reform Bill passed Parliament, Roy wrote: "Thank heaven I can now feel proud of being one of your fellow subjects." Throughout, the Directors continued to resist the various pressures on them to conciliate Roy. Yet, even as they opposed his official purpose, the Directors recognized his personal stature. They might try to reject his right to represent the Emperor, but they also hosted a "family dinner" for him, which avoided officially recognizing him as envoy but showed their respect for him as a person. There, the Chairman toasted that he hoped other "able and influential" Hindus would emulate Roy by coming to London. Roy ate in their presence, but only took rice and water.

After nearly two years deliberations, in February 1833, the Directors conceded at least a partial increment in the Emperor's pension, from its current Rupees 1,200,000 annually to Rupees 1,500,000 annually. This Rupees 300,000 per year increase would be welcome by the financially strapped Emperor. Yet, since the treaty explicitly called

for the Emperor to receive the revenues of territories around Delhi, which had risen to generate about Rupees 3,000,000, the increase from 40% to 50% of that amount was only a modest gain. Further, it came at the cost of his relinquishing future claims on the rest; ultimately the Emporer and the company could never agree on terms and this increase was never paid.

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Roy's humiliation at the hands of the Directors did not end there. The Directors tried to maintain even in his case their custom of not informing Indian envoys of the outcome of their deliberations. Only Roy's warm personal relationship with a fervent Evangelical Christian, Charles Grant, Junior, President of the Board of Control, convinced the Directors to inform him. Even as the Directors did so, they stated that this exception was a "personal courtesy to himself; and that it is not usual for the Court to enter into any explanation of their decisions."

Whenever possible, the Directors tried to deny the authority of an Indian representative by withholding information about their decision, even when that decision favored the diplomat's cause. As his frustrating political mission came to a conclusion, Roy faced additional embarrassments. The British banking house in Calcutta which managed his money failed, leaving Roy without funds. He had to make repeated appeals to the Company's Directors for a loan of some £2,000 until this could be straightened out. The Directors called on him to humble himself by asking respectable British men to stand as his guarantors. When he offered his own personal guarantee, they callously refused to make the loan. Roy proudly refrained from asking for money from his admiring British supporters, but had to depend upon them for food and hospitality. Thus, despite his social prominence and the success of his private dialogues and public lectures and sermons, he fell into despondency and illness over his slighting treatment as a diplomat at the hands of the Company and also over his personal financial difficulties. On a trip to Bristol, Roy's illness worsened and he died on 27 September 1833. Thus, as a diplomat, Roy could achieve only limited success, even with a strong legal case and his tremendous public and private support in Britain.

Many other Indian envoys of this time proved even more frustrated but they also frustrated British authorities by making them defend their actions in public and Parliament. The current President of the Board of Control, Sir John Hobhouse, wrote the Directors in 1835: "If the Native

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Princes begin to believe that they can appeal from the Supreme Government in India and from the Court of Directors to the King, or his Ministers, it is not difficult to foresee the embarrassments which will be thrown in the way of your administration of your Indian Empire..." The British thus determined to prevent such missions wherever possible, even proposing that the British consul in Egypt to try to turn back all India missions that reached there.

During the 19th century, the Company also inserted a clause in most of its subsidiary alliance treaties with Indian rulers that stipulated no communication would be allowed between that ruler and any "foreign powers," except exclusively through the agency of the Company Resident at their court. When the Maharaja of Satara secretly sent envoys to Britain, the Bombay Government deposed him in 1839, with his alleged violation of this clause as a main part of its justification. Undaunted, the now deposed ex-Maharaja sent further representatives: at the peak in 1840, he maintained in London at the same time four ambassadors, supported by six secretaries and ten servants, which consumed a large portion of his annual pension. Despite tremendous pressures from the Directors and Governor-General on this ruler and his envoys, this mission lasted until 1853, causing much heated debate and revealing in public and Parliament many improper British actions in India. In 1839, Hobhouse confidentially wrote Governor-General Auckland:

His Highness of Sattara has lost his guddee [throne]...and, perhaps, the Guicowar may follow. Each of the dethroned Princes will have Vakeels in England, and I shall have to fight the battles of the deposers in Parliament. I hope, therefore, you will be a little cautious in adopting such measures [annexations] and, if you do adopt them, at least send me over a defensible brief.

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These Indian envoys thus forced British authorities to be more cautious in their actions, and to pay the price of political embarrassment for many of them. Over the 1840s and early 1850s, some proved able to put sufficient Parliamentary and legal pressure on British authorities that they could gain some of their more modest goals, mostly increases in their pensions. Nevertheless, given that the Government held the majority in Parliament and would win every major vote, only a particularly scandalous and egregious act by the Governor-General could threaten its rule or force a substantial change of policy.

Conclusion

Conflicts between Indian rulers and the British occasionally reached beyond India to Britain, as rulers struggled for ways to establish and sustain their own agency in political arenas beyond their courts. Following Roy, many Indian diplomatic missions reached London from rulers including those of Awadh, Jodhpur, Sind, Nagpur, Nepal, and Satara, plus Indian missions from many deposed rulers and claimants to rule. Some envoys, like Roy, managed to achieve modest gains through effective maneuvering among the various political factions and bodies in Britain. Most, however, were repulsed by the Company's Directors and British Government which determined to isolate Indian rulers in their courts, and channel all their political communication exclusively through British Residents.

Nevertheless, British imperialism had "counterflows" as numerous and diverse Indians made the voyage into the metropole. Over the period until 1858, tens of thousands of Indian sailors and servants, and dozens of Indian teachers, students, wives, and travelers ventured to Britain. Each of these gathered much information about Britain for the edification and guidance of themselves

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and other Indians dealing with British colonialism. Further, struggling in the face of growing European "orientalism," Indians in Britain inserted their own voices into public discourse about India and British imperialism there. Some, like Roy, influenced British thinking about the boundaries of British society. Roy and other Indians harnessed the new media developing in modernizing Britain including: capitalist print culture embodied in mechanically produced, inexpensive, and widely-distributed pamphlets, books, and newspapers; open debate in public forums over official Company and Government policy; the art of the persuasive petition to authority guided by trained British lawyers; and persistent lobbying of people with political influence who could be recruited as allies or sympathizers. Some, like Roy, influenced British thinking about the boundaries of British society. Despite the Company's prevailing military force during the first century of their indirect rule in India, British efforts to confine the political representations and communications of Indian rulers to their own courts never proved hegemonic.

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- 50. My current research explores these many Indian visitors and settlers in Britain for the 1600–1858 period.