



The British East India Company: From Trade to Colonial Rule

Bijina M.

Assistant Professor, Department Of History, Co-Operative Arts And Science College, Madayi, India.

Article information

Received: 5th December 2025

Volume: 2

Received in revised form: 7th January 2026

Issue: 1

Accepted: 9th February 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18860707>

Available online: 4th March 2026

Abstract

This paper examines the transformation of the British East India Company from its establishment in 1600 as a commercial trading corporation to its emergence as the colonial ruler of the Indian subcontinent by the mid-nineteenth century. Through analysis of primary sources, parliamentary records, and contemporary accounts, this study explores the economic, political, and military mechanisms that enabled a private trading company to acquire territorial sovereignty over vast regions of Asia. The research demonstrates that the Company's transformation occurred through a complex interplay of opportunistic expansion, systemic weaknesses in Mughal governance, strategic military innovations, and evolving British imperial policy. The paper argues that the Company's evolution from trader to ruler represents a unique form of corporate colonialism that anticipated many features of modern multinational corporate power while establishing the foundations for the formal British Raj. This transformation fundamentally altered both British and Indian societies, creating new patterns of economic exploitation, administrative governance, and cultural interaction that would define the colonial relationship for the next century.

Keywords: - Corporate Colonialism, Company-State, Economic Exploitation, British Raj, Military Innovation

Introduction

The British East India Company occupies a unique position in world history as perhaps the only private commercial corporation to acquire and exercise sovereign political power over territories comparable in size and population to major European nations. Established by royal charter in 1600 with the modest goal of competing with Dutch merchants in the spice trade of Southeast Asia, the Company evolved over two and a half centuries into the ruler of the Indian subcontinent, governing nearly 200 million people through a private army larger than that of most European states. This extraordinary transformation raises fundamental questions about the nature of early modern capitalism, the relationship between economic and political power, and the mechanisms through which European expansion occurred in Asia.

The Company's evolution from commercial trader to territorial sovereign challenges conventional narratives of European imperialism that emphasize state-directed expansion and formal governmental control. Instead, the East India Company's history reveals how private commercial interests, operating with minimal oversight from the British government, could acquire vast territories and populations through a combination of military force, diplomatic manipulation, and economic coercion. This process of "corporate colonialism" created new forms of governance that blended commercial logic with territorial administration, profit maximization with political control.

Understanding the Company's transformation is crucial for several reasons. First, it illuminates the origins of British imperial power in Asia and the foundations upon which the formal British Raj was constructed

after 1858. Second, it provides insights into the relationship between capitalism and colonialism, revealing how commercial expansion could generate its own political and military imperatives. Finally, the Company's history offers important perspectives on contemporary debates about corporate power and globalization, as many of its methods and structures anticipate modern forms of multinational corporate influence.

This paper argues that the East India Company's transformation from trader to ruler occurred through a process of gradual institutional adaptation driven by the logic of commercial competition, military necessity, and political opportunity. Rather than following a predetermined imperial strategy, the Company's territorial expansion emerged from a series of tactical responses to local conditions that cumulatively created an entirely new form of colonial governance. This process fundamentally altered both British and Indian societies while establishing patterns of economic exploitation and political control that would define the colonial relationship for generations.

Research Question: How did the British East India Company transform from a commercial trading corporation into the de facto colonial government of India, and what were the economic, political, and social mechanisms that facilitated this unprecedented transition from mercantile to territorial power?

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of the East India Company's transformation requires engagement with several theoretical frameworks from economic history, political science, and imperial studies. Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory provides insight into how the Company functioned as an agent of European capitalist expansion within a global economic system (Wallerstein 1989). The Company's evolution can be understood as part of the broader process through which European core regions extracted surplus value from peripheral areas through unequal exchange relationships.

Charles Tilly's work on state formation offers another crucial framework for understanding how the Company acquired and exercised sovereign power. Tilly's emphasis on the relationship between war-making, extraction, and state-building illuminates how the Company's military activities generated both the need for and the means of territorial control (Tilly 1992). The Company's evolution thus represents a variant of the general European pattern of state formation, albeit one driven by commercial rather than dynastic imperatives.

Philip Stern's concept of "company-state" provides a more specific framework for understanding the Company's unique institutional character (Stern 2011). This approach recognizes that the East India Company developed forms of sovereignty that differed fundamentally from both traditional European states and modern colonial administrations. The Company-state combined commercial and political functions in ways that created new forms of governance adapted to the conditions of early modern global trade.

Origins and Early Commercial Focus (1600-1720)

The East India Company was established on December 31, 1600, when Queen Elizabeth I granted a royal charter to "The Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies." The charter provided the Company with a monopoly on English trade between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan for an initial period of fifteen years, reflecting the Crown's desire to challenge Dutch dominance in the lucrative spice trade of Southeast Asia (Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies).

The Company's early operations were characterized by modest ambitions and limited resources. Initial voyages focused on establishing trading posts in the Indonesian archipelago, where English merchants competed with established Dutch, Portuguese, and local trading networks. The Company's first permanent establishment in India was at Surat in 1612, following the successful negotiation of trading privileges with Mughal Emperor Jahangir. This achievement, largely due to the diplomatic skills of Sir Thomas Roe, established the pattern of operating within existing political structures rather than challenging them directly.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the Company maintained a primarily commercial focus, establishing additional trading posts (factories) at Madras (1640), Bombay (1668), and Calcutta (1690). These settlements served as warehouses and administrative centers rather than territorial bases, and the Company initially showed little interest in acquiring political control beyond what was necessary to protect its commercial operations. The Company's servants were explicitly instructed to avoid involvement in local political disputes and to maintain friendly relations with indigenous rulers.

The economic foundation of the Company's early success lay in its role as an intermediary in the complex trading networks of the Indian Ocean. English merchants imported Indian textiles, spices, and other luxury goods for sale in European markets while facilitating trade between different Asian regions. The Company's profitability during this period depended on its ability to navigate existing commercial and political relationships rather than reshape them according to European models.

The Transition Period: Military and Political Involvement (1720-1770)

The transformation of the East India Company from trader to territorial power began in the early eighteenth century as a result of changing political conditions in India and intensifying European competition. The gradual decline of effective Mughal authority created opportunities for regional powers to assert greater independence, while the emergence of France as a serious rival to British commercial interests introduced new military and political dimensions to European activities in India.

The Wars of Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) proved particularly significant in transforming the Company's role. These European conflicts extended to India, where British and French forces, allied with different Indian rulers, fought for commercial and political advantage. The Company's victory over the French and their ally, Siraj-ud-Daulah, at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 marked a crucial turning point in its evolution from commercial to political power.

Robert Clive's leadership during this period exemplified the new breed of Company servant who combined commercial acumen with military and political skills. His victory at Plassey was achieved through a combination of military force and political manipulation, including the bribery of key officials in Siraj-ud-Daulah's army. The subsequent installation of Mir Jafar as a puppet nawab of Bengal established the pattern of indirect rule that would characterize much of the Company's later territorial expansion (Clive 1902).

The acquisition of the diwani (revenue collection rights) of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in 1765 represented the Company's formal recognition as a territorial power within the Mughal system. This grant, obtained from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, provided the Company with legal authority to collect land revenue from approximately 20 million people while maintaining the fiction of Mughal sovereignty. The diwani marked the beginning of the Company's transformation from a commercial corporation dependent on trade profits to a territorial power funded by land revenue.

Economic Foundations of Territorial Expansion

The Company's territorial expansion was driven by powerful economic incentives that emerged from the logic of commercial competition and the fiscal needs of maintaining military forces in a politically unstable environment. The acquisition of land revenue rights provided a more reliable source of income than trade profits, which fluctuated according to market conditions and political circumstances. Land revenue also offered the advantage of being collected in local currency, reducing the Company's dependence on precious metals for purchasing Indian goods.

The development of what historians have termed the "Bengal system" illustrates how economic and political imperatives reinforced each other in driving territorial expansion. The Company used its political control over Bengal to restructure local economic relationships in ways that maximized revenue extraction while minimizing administrative costs. The permanent settlement of 1793, negotiated with Bengali landlords (zamindars), exemplified this approach by creating a class of intermediaries responsible for revenue collection while guaranteeing the Company a fixed annual income (Fifth Report from the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company 1812).

The Company's economic policies in its territories reveal the distinctly commercial character of its rule. Unlike traditional Indian rulers, who viewed land revenue as one source of income among many, the Company focused almost exclusively on maximizing fiscal extraction. This approach led to significant changes in agricultural practices, land tenure systems, and local social structures. The monetization of the economy, the emphasis on cash crops for export, and the integration of Indian agriculture into global commodity markets all reflected the Company's commercial priorities.

The profits generated by territorial control enabled further military expansion, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of conquest and exploitation. The Company's armies, funded by land revenue from conquered territories, could undertake new campaigns of expansion that brought additional revenue sources under direct control. This dynamic helps explain the rapid pace of the Company's territorial expansion in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Military Innovation and Strategic Expansion

The East India Company's transformation into a territorial power required significant military innovations that reflected both European military developments and adaptation to Indian conditions. The Company's military success depended on its ability to combine European discipline and firearms technology with local knowledge and recruitment practices. The development of the sepoy system, in which Indian soldiers served under European

officers, provided the Company with large, relatively inexpensive armies that could operate effectively in local conditions.

The Company's military organization differed significantly from both European armies and traditional Indian forces. Unlike European armies, which were primarily composed of professional soldiers from the lower classes, the Company recruited extensively from rural populations, particularly from warrior castes and communities with military traditions. This recruitment strategy provided the Company with soldiers who possessed local knowledge and cultural connections while maintaining loyalty to their immediate superiors and regular pay.

The strategic doctrine developed by Company commanders like Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) emphasized mobility, artillery superiority, and the systematic reduction of enemy strongholds. The Company's armies proved particularly effective against traditional Indian cavalry forces, whose tactics had been designed for warfare against similarly equipped opponents. The combination of disciplined infantry formations, mobile artillery, and cavalry support gave Company forces significant advantages in set-piece battles.

The Company's military expansion followed strategic logic that prioritized the control of river systems, major cities, and economically productive regions. The conquest of Mysore (1799), the subjugation of the Maratha Confederacy (1818), and the annexation of Punjab (1849) eliminated the major remaining centers of independent power in the subcontinent while bringing the most productive agricultural regions under direct Company control. Each of these campaigns was justified in terms of defensive necessity or the protection of existing Company interests, reflecting the incremental character of territorial expansion (Wellesley 1834–39).

Administrative Development and Governance Structures

The transformation of the East India Company from a commercial corporation into a territorial government required the development of entirely new administrative structures and governance practices. The Company faced the unprecedented challenge of adapting commercial management techniques to the task of governing diverse populations with complex social, religious, and cultural traditions. This process involved both the creation of new institutions and the adaptation of existing Indian administrative practices to serve Company purposes.

The evolution of the Company's administrative structure reflected the tension between commercial efficiency and governmental responsibility. Early territorial acquisitions were administered by commercial agents (factors) whose primary responsibility was revenue collection rather than governance in any broader sense. However, the expansion of territorial control necessitated the development of more sophisticated administrative hierarchies that could address issues of law and order, judicial administration, and public welfare.

The development of the civil service system under Company rule established many of the bureaucratic practices that would later characterize the formal British Raj. The Company's emphasis on systematic record-keeping, standardized procedures, and hierarchical authority created new forms of governmental practice that differed significantly from both traditional Indian administrative methods and contemporary British governmental practices. The influence of Utilitarian philosophy, particularly through figures like James Mill, introduced concepts of rational administration and legal systematization that would have lasting impact on Indian governance.

The Company's judicial innovations represented another area where commercial logic intersected with governmental necessity. The establishment of British legal procedures and the codification of Indian legal traditions reflected both the need to provide predictable legal frameworks for commercial transactions and the broader imperial project of cultural transformation. The development of Anglo-Muhammadan and Anglo-Hindu law created hybrid legal systems that combined elements of English common law with interpretations of Islamic and Hindu legal traditions (House of Commons 1831–32).

Parliamentary Oversight and Constitutional Development

The East India Company's evolution from commercial trader to territorial ruler created unprecedented constitutional questions about the relationship between private corporate power and governmental authority. The Company's acquisition of sovereign powers over millions of people while remaining a private commercial corporation challenged traditional concepts of political legitimacy and accountability. Parliamentary attempts to address these issues through a series of regulatory acts reveal the broader implications of corporate colonialism for British constitutional development.

The Regulating Act of 1773 represented the first significant attempt by Parliament to assert oversight over the Company's territorial activities. The Act established the office of Governor-General with authority over all Company territories and created a Supreme Court in Bengal with jurisdiction over British subjects and

Company employees. These innovations reflected growing Parliamentary concern about the Company's exercise of sovereign powers without adequate accountability to the British government or people (Statutes at Large 1773).

The India Act of 1784 (Pitt's India Act) established a more systematic framework for governmental oversight through the creation of a Board of Control with authority over the Company's political and military affairs. This dual system of control, which separated commercial and political functions while maintaining Company administration, created a complex constitutional arrangement that persisted until 1858. The Board of Control represented the British government's interests while the Court of Directors continued to manage commercial operations and appointment procedures.

The Charter Acts of 1813, 1833, and 1853 progressively increased Parliamentary control over Company affairs while gradually eliminating its commercial privileges. The abolition of the Company's monopoly on Indian trade in 1813 and its monopoly on China trade in 1833 reflected changing attitudes toward free trade and commercial regulation. These acts also introduced new principles of governance, including the formal commitment to Indian education and the gradual opening of Company service to competitive examination.

Economic Impact and Colonial Exploitation

The East India Company's rule had profound and lasting effects on the Indian economy, fundamentally altering patterns of production, trade, and social organization in ways that served British commercial interests while undermining indigenous economic development. The Company's economic policies reveal the distinctly exploitative character of corporate colonialism and its role in facilitating the transfer of wealth from India to Britain on an unprecedented scale.

The transformation of India's textile industry provides the clearest example of how Company policies systematically undermined existing economic structures while creating new forms of dependency. India's cotton textile industry had been among the world's most advanced prior to European intervention, with Indian textiles competing successfully in global markets including Europe itself. The Company's policies deliberately destroyed this industry through a combination of discriminatory taxation, import restrictions, and the dumping of British machine-made textiles in Indian markets (Chaudhuri 1978).

The Company's revenue policies had equally dramatic effects on Indian agriculture and rural society. The emphasis on cash payments and the requirement that revenue be paid regardless of harvest conditions forced many cultivators into debt relationships with moneylenders and intermediaries. The commercialization of agriculture, while increasing production of export crops like cotton and indigo, also increased vulnerability to market fluctuations and reduced food security for rural populations.

The drain of wealth from India to Britain through Company operations represented one of the largest transfers of resources in human history. Contemporary estimates suggested that the Company extracted between £1-2 million annually from India during the late eighteenth century, rising to much larger amounts in the nineteenth century. This wealth transfer occurred through various mechanisms, including land revenue collection, trade profits, salaries and pensions paid to British officials, and the systematic undervaluation of Indian exports relative to British imports.

Social and Cultural Transformation

The East India Company's rule initiated profound changes in Indian social and cultural life that extended far beyond the economic and political spheres. The Company's policies, while primarily motivated by commercial and administrative considerations, had far-reaching effects on education, law, religion, and social practices that would fundamentally alter Indian society and create new forms of cultural interaction between British and Indian traditions.

The Company's approach to Indian social and religious practices evolved significantly over time, reflecting both changing British attitudes and practical considerations of governance. Early Company policy emphasized non-interference in local customs and religious practices, partly from genuine respect for Indian traditions but primarily from recognition that religious interference could provoke resistance and undermine commercial interests. However, the acquisition of territorial power made such non-interference increasingly difficult to maintain.

The introduction of English education through institutions like the Hindu College in Calcutta (1817) and the support for missionary activities reflected the growing influence of evangelical Christianity and Utilitarian philosophy on Company policy. Thomas Babington Macaulay's "Minute on Education" (1835) articulated the policy of creating "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" who could serve as intermediaries between British rulers and Indian subjects (Macaulay 1835).

The Company's legal and administrative practices also contributed to significant social changes. The codification of Hindu and Islamic law, while presented as an effort to preserve Indian legal traditions, actually created standardized and simplified versions of complex legal systems that had previously varied according to local conditions and interpretations. The introduction of British concepts of property rights, individual ownership, and commercial law gradually transformed traditional social relationships and economic practices

Resistance and Collaboration

The East India Company's expansion across the Indian subcontinent encountered various forms of resistance that ranged from large-scale military confrontations to subtle forms of everyday non-cooperation. Understanding these patterns of resistance and collaboration is crucial for assessing the Company's methods of control and the impact of its rule on different segments of Indian society. The diversity of responses to Company rule reflected the complex social, economic, and political conditions of eighteenth and nineteenth-century India.

Military resistance to Company expansion took several forms, from the organized opposition of major rulers like Tipu Sultan of Mysore and the Maratha confederacy to local uprisings and guerrilla warfare. The Company's systematic military campaigns against these opponents required significant resources and demonstrated the extent to which territorial expansion depended on superior military organization rather than popular acceptance. The defeat of these resistance movements eliminated the major centers of independent power but did not necessarily establish legitimate authority over the populations involved.

The Company's success also depended heavily on collaboration from various segments of Indian society. The sepoy system relied on the willingness of millions of Indians to serve in Company armies, often against other Indian rulers and populations. Similarly, the revenue system required the cooperation of local administrators, landlords, and commercial intermediaries who found opportunities for advancement within the new colonial structures. This collaboration was typically motivated by material incentives rather than ideological commitment to British rule.

The emergence of new social groups under Company rule, including Western-educated Indians, commercial intermediaries, and administrative officials, created constituencies with vested interests in the continuation of colonial governance. These groups often served as cultural brokers between British and Indian societies while developing their own distinctive identities and political perspectives. Their complex relationship with both British authority and traditional Indian society would prove crucial in later developments of Indian nationalism and independence movements (Bayly 1988).

The End of Company Rule and Transition to Crown Government

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 marked the beginning of the end for East India Company rule, exposing the fundamental contradictions and weaknesses of corporate colonialism while demonstrating the inadequacy of existing governmental structures for managing a territorial empire. The rebellion, which began as a mutiny among sepoy soldiers but spread to include civilian populations across northern India, challenged the basic assumptions upon which Company rule had been constructed.

The causes of the 1857 rebellion were complex and varied, but many directly related to Company policies and practices. The introduction of the Enfield rifle with cartridges allegedly greased with cow and pig fat violated religious taboos of both Hindu and Muslim soldiers. More broadly, the Company's territorial annexations under the Doctrine of Lapse, its interference with traditional social practices, and its economic policies had created widespread resentment among various segments of Indian society.

The Company's response to the rebellion revealed both its military capabilities and its political limitations. While Company forces, reinforced by troops from Britain, succeeded in suppressing the rebellion through brutal military campaigns, the events of 1857 demonstrated that corporate rule lacked the legitimacy and resources necessary for governing a potentially hostile population. The rebellion also exposed the dangers of relying heavily on Indian military forces whose loyalty could not be assumed.

The Government of India Act of 1858 formally transferred authority from the East India Company to the British Crown, establishing the system of direct imperial rule that would persist until Indian independence in 1947. The Act abolished the Company's governmental functions while winding up its commercial operations, marking the end of the unique experiment in corporate colonialism that had lasted for over two centuries. The transition to Crown rule represented both continuity and change, as many Company policies and personnel were retained under the new governmental structure (Parliamentary Debates 1858).

Global Context and Comparative Perspectives

The East India Company's transformation from commercial trader to territorial ruler must be understood within the broader context of European expansion and the development of global capitalism during the early modern period. Comparison with other European trading companies and colonial ventures reveals both the unique features of the Company's evolution and the general patterns of European imperial expansion in Asia and other regions.

The Dutch East India Company (VOC) provides the most direct comparison, as it operated during the same period and faced similar challenges in managing commercial and political relationships in Asia. The VOC achieved greater commercial success in Southeast Asia and developed more systematic methods of territorial control in regions like Java. However, it never acquired territories comparable in size and population to those controlled by the English Company in India. The VOC's eventual bankruptcy and dissolution in 1799 contrasted with the English Company's continued expansion and consolidation during the same period.

The Portuguese and French experiences in Asia offer additional comparative perspectives. Portuguese expansion in Asia had emphasized the establishment of fortified trading posts and naval control of key maritime routes rather than extensive territorial acquisition. The French East India Company, despite achieving some early successes, was ultimately unable to compete effectively with British commercial and military advantages. These contrasts highlight the specific conditions that enabled the English Company's unique transformation into a territorial power.

The Company's methods and structures also anticipated many features of modern multinational corporate operations. Its use of local intermediaries, adaptation to local conditions while maintaining centralized control, and integration of commercial and political functions prefigured contemporary corporate strategies for operating in diverse global markets. The Company's ability to mobilize private capital for imperial expansion also provided a model that would influence later forms of colonial and neocolonial relationships (Furber 1976).

Conclusion

The transformation of the British East India Company from a modest trading corporation to the ruler of the Indian subcontinent represents one of the most extraordinary examples of institutional evolution in world history. This transformation occurred through a complex process of adaptation and expansion driven by commercial competition, military necessity, and political opportunity rather than following any predetermined imperial strategy. The Company's evolution reveals how private commercial interests, operating with minimal governmental oversight, could acquire sovereign powers over vast territories and populations through a combination of military force, diplomatic manipulation, and economic coercion.

The Company's success in establishing territorial control depended on several key factors. Its military innovations, particularly the development of the sepoy system, provided the means for territorial expansion while keeping costs relatively low. Its economic policies, especially the systematic extraction of land revenue, created the financial resources necessary to maintain military forces and administrative structures. Its administrative adaptations enabled the governance of diverse populations while serving commercial interests. Perhaps most importantly, its ability to exploit political divisions and weaknesses in existing Indian political structures provided the opportunities for expansion.

However, the Company's transformation also revealed fundamental contradictions that ultimately proved unsustainable. The tension between commercial logic and governmental responsibility created persistent problems of legitimacy and accountability. The reliance on collaboration from Indian intermediaries while maintaining British dominance generated ongoing tensions that would eventually contribute to organized resistance. The economic exploitation that funded Company expansion also undermined the long-term stability of the colonial relationship.

The legacy of Company rule extends far beyond its formal termination in 1858. The administrative structures, legal systems, economic relationships, and cultural patterns established during the Company period provided the foundation for the formal British Raj and continued to influence Indian development long after independence. The Company's methods of control and exploitation also established patterns that would be replicated in other colonial contexts and that continue to influence contemporary discussions about corporate power and global economic relationships.

Understanding the East India Company's transformation remains crucial for several reasons. It illuminates the origins of European imperial dominance in Asia and the mechanisms through which this dominance was established and maintained. It reveals the complex relationships between capitalism and colonialism, demonstrating how commercial expansion could generate its own political and military imperatives.

It provides important insights into the nature of institutional change and adaptation under conditions of cultural contact and conflict. Finally, it offers historical perspective on contemporary debates about corporate power, globalization, and the relationship between economic and political authority in an interconnected world.

The Company's history ultimately demonstrates both the possibilities and limitations of corporate power in global contexts. While private commercial interests proved capable of achieving remarkable political and military success, they also proved incapable of establishing legitimate and sustainable forms of governance over diverse populations with their own political traditions and aspirations. This tension between corporate capability and governmental legitimacy remains relevant to contemporary discussions about the role of multinational corporations in global governance and development.

References

- Bayly, C. A. *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Bearce, George D. *British Attitudes Towards India, 1784–1858*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Bowen, H. V. *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics, 1757–1773*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies, 1513–1616*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1862.
- Chaudhuri, K. N. *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660–1760*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- Clive, Robert. *Select Letters of Robert Clive*. Edited by George Forrest. London: Longmans, Green, 1902.
- Embree, Ainslie T. *Charles Grant and British Rule in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.
- Fifth Report from the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*. London: House of Commons, 1812.
- Furber, Holden. *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976.
- Guha, Ranajit. *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement*. Paris: Mouton, 1963.
- Keay, John. *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company*. London: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Lawson, Philip. *The East India Company: A History*. London: Longman, 1993.
- Macaulay, Thomas Babington. "Minute on Education," February 2, 1835. In *Selections from Educational Records*, edited by H. Sharp, 107–17. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1920.
- Marshall, P. J. *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.
- Mukherjee, Rudrangshu. *Awadh in Revolt, 1857–1858: A Study of Popular Resistance*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Parliamentary Debates*. 3rd series. Vol. 151. 1858.
- Parliamentary Papers* (House of Commons). "East India (Judicial)." 1831–32. Vol. 9.
- Philips, C. H. *The East India Company, 1784–1834*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1940.
- Sen, Sudipta. *Empire of Free Trade: The East India Company and the Making of the Colonial Marketplace*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998.
- Statutes at Large*. Vol. 30. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1773.
- Stern, Philip J. *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Tilly, Charles. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The Modern World-System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730s–1840s*. New York: Academic Press, 1989.
- Wellesley, Arthur. *The Dispatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington*. Edited by John Gurwood. 13 vols. London: John Murray, 1834–39.