

GS Foundation 2024: Modern India
Handout 8: Mercantile Phase (1757-1813)
(Administrative, Economic and Socio-cultural policies)

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Between 1772 and 1857, changes were frequently made to the administrative structure the British East India Company had established in India. Such changes were not unnatural, given that British Indian **administration** was essentially a **continuous** process of experimentation, adjusted and **readjusted** either in accordance with the ideological **developmentstaking** place at the time in Great **Britain** or in accordance with the peculiar on-the-ground realities that the Company **encountered** in **India**.

Limited Objective of the Mercantile Phase (1757-1813)

Objective

- **Maximize revenue** to invest in **trade** and **commerce**.
- Not interested in **major** restructuring of the existing **administrative** structure. Preferred to **maintain the existing Mughal structure with certain modifications**.

Policies

- Creation of a **political** and **administrative** environment conducive to **trade** and **investment**.
- **Administrative Policy:**
 - Maintenance of law and order at the **minimum possible** cost
- **Economic Policy:** Origin of drain of wealth, Decline of **handicraft** industries.
- **Social Policy:** Maintain traditional social structure.
- **Cultural Policy:** **Orientalism** (Indians should be ruled according to their own traditions and customs)

The Perspective...

As the British conquered and **annexed** different parts of the country, they were faced with the difficult question of how to govern these **territories**. **Clive** didn't bother to take the administration of Bengal directly into **his hands**. **Warren Hastings** tried to plant British elements on the Mughal system, yet he wasn't ready to **overhaul** the whole structure. Reforms by **Lord Cornwallis** were guided by a sense of British **egoism** i.e. **belief** in **supremacy** of British institutions.

Clive	Warren Hastings	Lord Cornwallis	Lord Wellesley
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treaty of Allahabad (1765) - Diwani Right!• Dyarchy• Heavy Land Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abolition of Dyarchy• Duties standardized• Land Revenue experiments• Judicial Plan of 1772, 1774• Codification of Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lather of Civil Services• Thana Darogha system• Judicial Structure, Humanisation• Permanent Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fort Williams College• Censorship of Press Act, 1799

(A) Administrative and Revenue Policies

(1) Robert Clive's Reforms

Dual Government

Clive chose not to usurp the **Nizami rights** directly and instead developed the **system of Dyarchy**.

- Dyarchy (direct **diwani**, indirect **nizamat**)
- EIC received Diwani of Bengal directly from the Mughal emperor.
- EIC avoided taking administration (Nizamat) directly. However, the Nawab had become the puppet of the Company.
- A new post of Deputy **Nawab/Nazim** was created who combined the function of both **Diwani** and **Nizami** and the actual power was **wielded** by the Company through him.

Reforms in Land revenue system

- Heavy enhancement in land revenue (almost doubled)
- Indian revenue collectors continued but under **supervision of inexperienced/untrained** European authorities -> excessive corruption.

It is here that the **dyarchy** system was far from successful. This dual type of administration led to **anarchy** in **Bengal**. The class hardest hit by the new system was the **peasantry**. Neither the Nawab nor the Company cared for their **welfare**. The result of Dual Government was the impoverishment of Bengal's economy. The **disastrous** effects of the Double Government found manifestation in the famine of **1770** which proved to be one of the worst events in the history of mankind.

• Detrimental Impact on Bengal

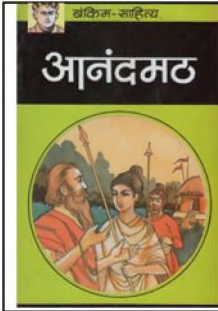
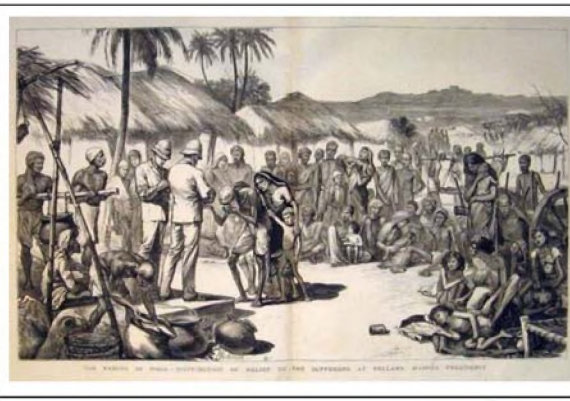
- o Uncontrolled power without responsibility
- o Exploited peasants.
- o Disorganized administration
- o Gomasta grain trade monopoly
- o Crop failure, smallpox

why English does not go for whole control:

- 1) cost of admin
- 2) manpower trained.
- 3) if all the power united against.
- 4) focus on trade
- 5) status other european company.

Great Bengal Famine (1770): one-third of Bengal's population perished (**70 lakh to 1 crore**)

- The famine hastened the end of dual governance in Bengal, the Company becoming the **sole** administrator soon after.



Anandmath (1880s) by Bankim -> Sannyasi **Rebellion** in 1770 Bengal in the aftermath of the Great Famine

The Regulating Act 1773

As the British East India Company emerged as a territorial power in India, an intense struggle broke out in Britain as to whose interest the newly acquired empire would serve. This was a time when imperial policies began to be seriously questioned against the backdrop of problems that Britain was facing in keeping its American colonies under control. It became necessary to determine the framework of Company's Government in India and to exert some control on it.

The acquisition of political power by the Company also had an adverse reaction in Great Britain. There grew the fear that the newly rich nabob class might be able to influence British Parliamentary politics by dint of their economic power and thereby disturb the balance of British democracy.

Although the Company had emerged as an important political power in India but at the same time company was losing badly as a commercial entity. Spending on wars, corruption in private trade and famines had led to huge losses, thus, the Company was in dire need of credit just when its activities began to be scrutinized in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and had applied to the government for a large loan. This made it difficult for it to resist demands for some kind of parliamentary control over its functioning. In other words, the Regulating Act was linked to the British Parliament's sanction for the loan.

The Regulating Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1773. By this legislation the parliament sought to regulate the Company to a limited extent.

- The Directors of the Company were duty-bound to **submit before the British Government all correspondence** relating to civil, military and revenue affairs in India to enable it to monitor the management of the empire.
- The **Company's organizational structure** was streamlined under this Act by restricting the voting rights of shareholders.
 - o This was done firstly by limiting the vote to those who held **minimum £1,000** worth of stock. Besides, the shareholder had to be in possession of the stock for **at least one year** in order to qualify for voting.
 - o Members of the **court of directors** were to be elected for a period of **four years**. **One fourth** of the members were to retire every year, and stay out of office for a minimum duration of **one year** before they could seek re-election.
- The Act laid down that the Government of Bengal would be headed by the **Governor General and a Council comprising four members**. All civil and military authority was vested in the governor general and his council.
 - o Hereafter, the Governor of Bengal came to be known as the 'Governor-General of Bengal.' **Hastings** was the first Governor-General of Bengal.
 - o The Governor-General was required to run the Government of Bengal according to the decisions taken in the council by a majority vote. The Governor-General

vote in case the house was divided equally on a given issue. Each had a five-year term.

- It recognized the **precedence of the Bengal Presidency** ('Presidency of Fort William in Bengal') over the two other presidencies. The presidencies of **Madras** and **Bombay** were placed under the overall **supervision** of Fort William. Now, the British authorities at Bombay or Madras had no power to strike alliance with or declare war against any other power.
- The Act also provided for the **establishment of a Supreme Court in Calcutta** to administer justice to the Europeans and their employees.
 - In tune with this provision, the first Supreme Court was established in Calcutta in 1774. **Sir Elija Impey** became the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The attempt of the British Parliament to develop a **re mote-control** mechanism to regulate the Company ended in a **failure**. The Regulating Act did not give the British Government effective control over the Company. The Act had certain inherent **loopholes** which created problems in the running of **administration**.

- Under the provisions of the Act, it was not possible for the Governor-General to act independently. The numerical composition of the council (**four members** in addition to the governor general) constituted under the 1773 Act rendered the governor general vulnerable in case **three** of the members combined to oppose him.
- Though the Act created the **Supreme Court**, it did not **clearly** indicate the specific power of the said court **vis a vis the Governor-General-in-Council**.
- The Regulating Act intended to make the **Governments of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies** subordinate to the Governor-General of Bengal. But, in reality, the control of the Governor General **over the other two** Presidencies was **inadequate**.
- The Regulating Act failed to resolve the friction between the Company and **its rival groups in England**. The opponents of the Company continued to exert pressure on the Parliament to discipline the Company.

Thus, the **1773** Act had several anomalies which were sought to be rectified through a subsequent legislative measure, enacted in **1784** (Pitt's India Act).

(2) Warren Hastings (1772-1785)

- Reforms of Clive -> fiasco.
 - Ruin of agriculture ruined company finances and exports.
 - Thus, both revenue and trade were adversely affected.
- **Abolition of Dual Government**
 - The Diarchy was abolished and the Company in 1772 assumed the **direct** responsibility of the **revenue administration** of **Bengal**.
 - The direct management of the revenue administration had other implications too. It meant that the Company, hereafter, would also be in charge of the **judicial administration** as well. Thus, the Company had to shake off its **commercial** nature to some extent. It now began to assert the authority of a state. Thus started the initial shape to the British admin **structure in** Bengal for future, (**trendsetter**)

Warren Hastings - Revenue Reforms

- Transferred the **royal treasury** from **Murshidabad** to **Calcutta**.
- **Toll Tax Reform:** **Standardization** of collection of duties (to **incentivize** trade)
- Land Revenue Reforms - **Farming System** (for maximization of **revenue**)
 - o It was the phase of **trial and error**. Experiments followed in quick succession.
 - o Initially it was only for **a five-year scheme** (1772-76). The **auctioning** system was carried out under supervision of **diwans** and European collectors. It didn't make **revenue** stable, and adversely affected **agriculture**.
 - o To gather systematic information about the different aspects of the Indian agrarian structure he appointed the Amini Commission in **1776**.
 - o After five years, in **1777**, the five-year settlement was abolished. A new **one-year scheme with role for zamindars**.
 - o Thus, in the actual control of the revenue management, Hastings was not satisfied, achieving a little more than a series of unsuccessful experiments.

Warren Hastings: Judicial Plans of 1772,1774

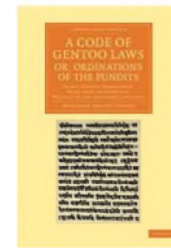
India's modern judicial system was **laid down** by the British. **Rule of law** was the basic feature of these reforms.

- Reasons
 - o Closely connected to Land Reform
 - o No uniform system before the EIC.
 - o Issue of Corruption
- Hastings established a **hierarchy** of civil and criminal courts (Development of The Adalat System). **Civil** district courts under Indian officials were setup. **Qazis** and **Muftis** were appointed for **criminal** cases. To make **adalats accessible**, he divided Calcutta, Orissa and Bihar into **six divisions** with **several** districts each.

Codification of Laws

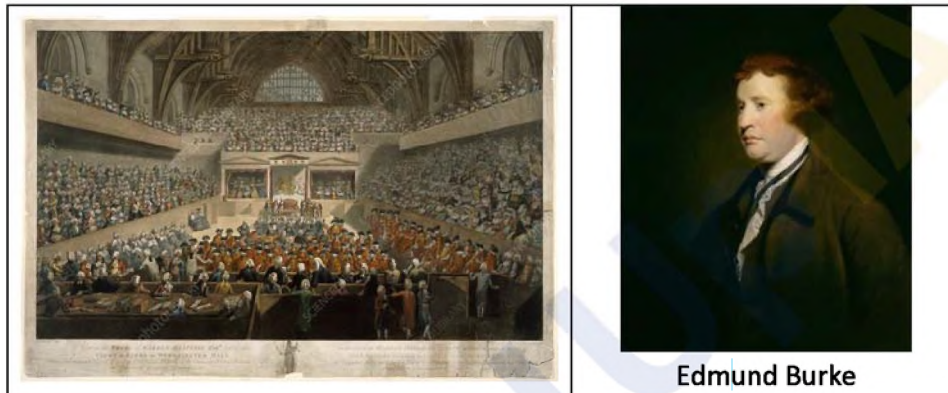
According to the orientalist influence, Indians were supposed to be governed as per Indian custom. However, to bring efficiency, uniformity and consistency, some amount of codification was required.

- Hastings appointed Hindu Pandits & Muslim Ulemas for codification of laws. Thus, under Warren Hastings a series of law codes such as 'Code of Gentoo laws', 'Colebrook's Digest' etc. came into existence.



Trial of Warren Hastings (1732-1818) in the British House of Commons.

In 1785, Hastings was accused of abuse of office and blackmail by the Whig politicians Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818) and Edmund Burke (1729-1797). The impeachment trial went for about a decade from 1774 to 1784. Finally, he was acquitted.



Edmund Burke



Golghar, Patna (1786)

Constructed by John Garstin of Bengal Engineers. It was designed to store grain and worked like a silo. On the side of the building is a carved inscription that states that the granary was ordered by the governor general in 1784 for the 'Perpetual Prevention of Famine in these Provinces.' Unfortunately, the building never served its purpose.

"Hastings provided a coherent shape to a state of which Clive had only sketched an outline, and he successfully defended that state almost singlehanded with hardly any help from home against a concerted Indian attack." - Percival Spear

Pitt's India Act 1784

The various limitations of the Regulating Act and the increasing **pressure** of the rival **groups** on the East India Company in England **encouraged** the Government of Britain to pass the **Pitt's India Act** in 1784. The Act came to be known so as William Pitt was then the Prime **Minister** of **England**. By this Act, The British Government was finally able to tighten up its grip over the Indian **administration**. According to the provisions of this Act

- The most important feature of the 1784 Act was the introduction of a permanent mechanism for **monitoring**, on behalf of parliament, the **administration** of the Indian **empire**. A **Board of Control** comprising **six** commissioners was created. The Board of Control was to **work** in a **supervisory capacity**. However, it was the court of directors that actually governed the Indian empire. Normally, instructions would be sent out to India by or via the **court of directors**, but the **1784** Act contained provisions for conveying orders of the board, whenever necessary, directly to Fort William through a **'secret committee'** bypassing the court of directors.
 - Thus, Pitt's India Act thus established a system of **dual control** on the Indian affairs. This became the main instrument till **1858** for parliamentary supervision over the Indian empire.
- The Pitt's India Act **elevated the status of the Governor-General** to a very extent and in this sense, it was an improvement upon the Regulating Act.
 - The governor general's **council was reconstituted** by reducing its strength from **four to three**. More powers were concentrated in the hands of the **governor general** so that his authority might not be constrained by the **council**.
 - The **Bombay** and **Madras** Presidencies were subordinated to Bengal in all matters relating to **war**, **diplomacy** and **revenues** in **unambiguous** terms.
 - Thus, Pitt's India Act made the governor general a very powerful colonial official and centralized the Company's colonial government, though centralization was not always possible in **practice**.

The significance of the Pitt's India Act lies in the fact, that, hereafter, the East India Company became an **organ** of the broader British **national interest**. India was to play a **subservient** role in the interest of the British ruling class.

The general **framework** of the Government of India, laid **down** by the Pitt's India Act remained unaltered till 1858, though certain minor **changes** were implemented from **time** to **time**.

(3) Lord Cornwallis

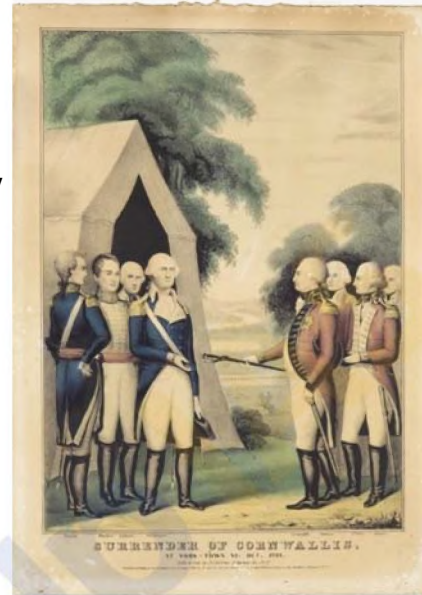
The appointment of Cornwallis as Governor-General in 1786 was the direct result of the controversies aroused by the acts of Clive and the rule of Hastings. Certain broad principles of the relationship of India with Britain were worked out.

- British had already lost America -> So, they tried to strengthen its rule in India through various reforms of Cornwallis.
- Cornwallis was guided by a sense of racial superiority of the British.

He gave social and political stability to Bengal at the price of neglecting the rights of the lesser landholders and undertenants and of excluding Indians from any responsible share in the administration.

Cornwallis Code (1793)

Cornwallis was the real architect of the modern Indian judicial system. The general regulations for the administration of justice by Warren Hastings had marked the beginning of a system, peculiarly English. This early stage of Company's law making came to a climax with the Cornwallis-Code (1793) which was to provide a new legal framework conducive to trade and investment. It contained a series of Regulations regarding governing, policing, judiciary and civil administration that remained in force till 1833.



(A) The code of written law prepared by Cornwallis signalled the coming of Rule of Law into India.

- The Rule of Law was to ensure a uniform system of justice based on the principle of equality before law.
- By introducing codified law, Cornwallis ended the experimentation of the first phase of British Government in India. The law administered was Hindu and Muslim personal law and a modified Muslim criminal code. He took some prevailing Muslim criminal laws as barbarous and so he tried to make them a bit humane. It was clearly laid down that in all district courts were to administer fixed forms of law. The procedure in these courts was to follow roughly the existing procedure in the British courts.
 - o Now, the witness could be from any caste.
 - o Intention, rather than type of weapon, was more emphasized.
 - o Open trials were to be conducted.
- Separation of powers: executive power (revenue collection) and judicial power (civil justice) of district collectors.
 - o Civil justice -> district judge
 - o District collector -> revenue collection

- It was expected that the new system would stabilise landed relations, provide security for property, and make people right explicit.

(B) **Father of Civil Service**

Tradition of "law-abiding, **incorruptible**" British rule in India. **Steel-frame of the civil service** started to emerge in this era, and it was Europeanized.

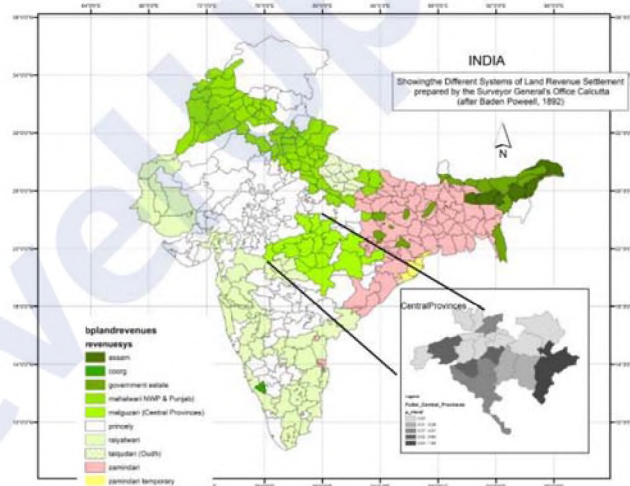
- Personnel is divided into **three branches: revenue, judicial, and commercial.**
 - Collector's fixed salary Rs. **1500/- pm + 1% share of revenue.** (highly paid)
- Foundation of **Thana/Police station system.**
 - The modern Indian police dates back to the days of Lord Cornwallis. The **police establishments** were redesigned throughout Bengal by the **police-regulation** passed by the Governor-General-in-Council in 1792.

Permanent / Zamindari Settlement

- During Mughal period, individual private ownership was not fully established. Different contenders claimed different parts of production. This system confused Cornwallis who was in search of a viable system. A sharp debate over the finer points of the **arrangement preceded the settlement.**

Features of the Zamindari System

- **Region:** Bengal, Bihar, Orissa (and also in **Banaras** division of UP and North **Karnataka**) constituting total of around **19%** of British India.
- **Duration:** How long should the settlement be done? **10 years** or permanent
 - In **1790** for 10 years; but it was made permanent in **1793.**
- **With whom:** **Zamindars** (earlier neglected by Hastings) or the company itself?
 - The **zamindars** were required to collect land **revenue** from the **ryots** as agents of the Company.
- **Land Ownership?**
 - Zamindars are declared as the hereditary **owners** of the land (highest bidder). Thus, free peasants were converted into **tenants** at will. Therefore, the traditional rights of the ryots on land were abolished. **Community land** was also **placed** under **zamindari** control. (**Barren land, irrigation, pasture, forest land** etc.)
 - Land was now made a private property and a transferable commodity. Land now became a transferable commodity, and the landlords now came to enjoy the right to sell it if necessary.
 - **Sunset Law (1793)** mandated that if a zamindar failed to pay the stipulated amount by sunset of the due date, his land was seized, and zamindari was auctioned.



Rate of Revenue: Tax fixed based on taxes collected in 1790-92 as the base year. (Which was equal to Rs. 2.68 crore)

- o 10/11 part to the Company, 1/11 share to the Zamindars.
- o Govt share was fixed permanently. All future increase in total income (either through extension or through revenue increase) would go to the zamindar.

The expectation was that the security of property and unchanging land revenue demand would transform a zamindar into improving landlord similar to those in England of the same period.

The outcome:

- Absolute land property created a land market in Bengal. The new class of landlords, which emerged because of the Permanent Settlement, had commercial interests.
- Many of them were residents of Calcutta who decided to invest their capital in the purchase of land in the countryside.
- As the landlords were contract-bound to remit the revenue within a short time, they raised rent to an unprecedented degree.
- There developed a complex rent collecting structure with various grades of intermediary tenure-holders.
- As a result of the ruthless appropriation of the rural surplus, the peasants were adversely affected.
- As taxes had then to be paid in cash, the peasants were compelled to have recourse to moneylenders or mahajans.
- In the process, a class of landless sharecroppers and agricultural labourers emerged in Bengal.
- The condition of the peasant became even more miserable as the Permanent Settlement, the new rule of property was backed up by a 'Rule of Law' or the new judiciary and the police introduced by Lord Cornwallis. The police and the judiciary responded to the interest of the wealthier classes alone. The peasants were invariably denied justice.

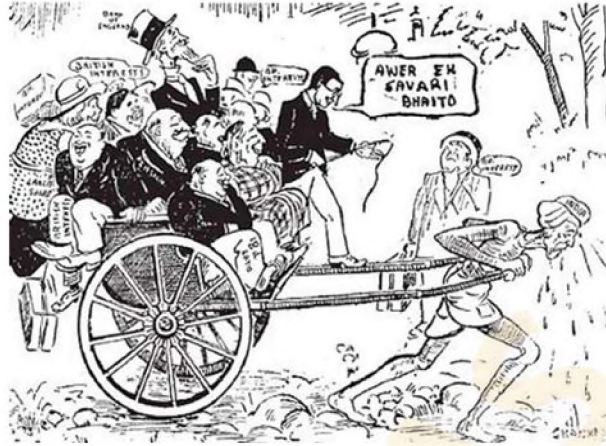
Thus, the introduction of the Permanent Settlement led to the evolution of a new set of agrarian relations that was extremely regressive. The misery inflicted by the British on the Indians was of a different kind which they had never experienced before. It reduced the peasants to extreme poverty and ushered in a period of chronic famine, starvation and hunger.

By the 1820s, it was clear that the permanent settlement had failed to meet its original expectations.

(B) Economic Policies

Drain of Wealth (DoW)

- Meaning
 - In 17th and 18th c Europe, DoW meant negative BoT and outflow of precious metal (bullionism)
 - In colonized India, it meant excess export, unilateral transfer of surplus from India to Britain.
- Context - "investment"
 - EIC was struggling to finance one-sided Indian trade, compelled to bring precious metal from Britain.
 - After Diwani of Bengal, it invested the plunder and revenue, and profit gained from inter-regional trade into trading activities. Indian goods were now purchased through Indian money while company curtailed the import of silver from Britain - unilateral transfer of surplus.



Decline of Handicraft

- Earlier
 - Various European companies purchased Indian handicraft products.
 - Dadni system (putting-out system) for clothes.
- Under British: Dadani system -> Agency System (complete control over artisans and production)
- British eliminated other rivals from this race. Once that was achieved, British put severe pressure on the artisans of Bengal.
 - Dual pressure by Gumastas (agents):
 - Company developed monopoly over the raw material supplies and started to provide it to the artisans at higher cost.
 - Simultaneously, the Company compelled the artisans to sell the product cheap (with legal backing)

Worst exploitation of artisans in Bengal

- Murshidabad & Dhaka became desolate. Dhaka (Lancashire of India), a great supplier of cotton and Muslin (Malmal) now lost its position.
- Unemployed artisans moved to already crowded agriculture: impoverishment.

Weavers also, upon their inability to perform such agreements as have been forced from them by the Company's agents... have had their goods seized, and sold on the spot, to make good the deficiency: and the winders of raw silk, called Nagaads, have been treated also with such injustice, that instances have been known of their cutting off their thumbs, to prevent their being forced to wind silk. - William Bolts (1772)

The bones of the cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India - William Bentick (1834)

Indian Opium - Chinese Tea Triangular trade

In 1773, the then British Governor-General, Lord Warren Hastings brought the whole of the opium trade under the control of the Government.



Brunswick Dockyard in London - the busiest one, build specially for East Indian trade



Total of around 400 such clippers were built every year to move tea and opium around the globe at the East India Brunswick dockyard in London.

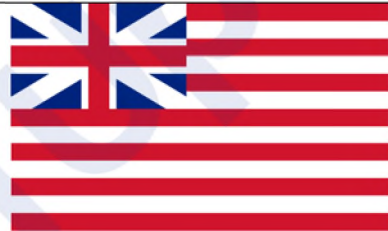
Fun Fact:

Boston Tea Party (1773) happened with tea bags purchased from China with Indian opium.

American Flag is based on the Flag of the East India Company



American Flag in 1770s



Flag of East India Company

(C) Social Policies

Limited objective

- o Focus on trade - maximize revenue to finance Indian trade.

No inclination for social reforms - better to maintain traditional structure.

- o To avoid responsibilities and expenditure
- o Not to antagonise the popular consciousness in Bengal
- o Not economically beneficial for the company



The first formal British ban on Sati was imposed in 1798, in the city of Calcutta only. The practice continued in surrounding regions.

(D) Cultural Policy: Orientalism

White Mughals

By the time Company starts colonizing India, many of the Company people start getting colonized by India because of its attractive culture and lifestyle.



David Ochterlony smoking Hookah. He was a military officer of the EIC and a British resident at Delhi in 1805. He adopted and thoroughly embraced Indo-Persian culture of Mughals.



William Fraser, British civil servant.

In 1805, having just passed out of Fort William College. He topped his class in Persian, Hindustani & Bengali. He still has his Scottish hat on but is already wearing Mughal dress and holding Persian calligraphy pens.



James Achilles Kirkpatrick, English Resident at Hyderabad in 1790s.



Captain James Tod riding an elephant (by Chokhla, Mewar, 1817)

British had decided not to interfere in the history and culture of people they had conquered. However, under the leadership of Warren Hastings and his friends, they embarked on an intellectual project to learn more about the country they were ruling. This project was in consonance with the needs of governance.

In Hastings' own words, *"Every accumulation of knowledge and especially such as is obtained by social communication with people over whom we exercise a dominion founded on the right of conquest is useful to the state... it attracts and conciliates distant affections; it lessens the weight of the chain by which the native are held in subjection and it imprints on the hearts of our countrymen the sense and obligations of benevolence."*

This ideology which prevailed at this time is called **Orientalism**. This intellectual project was institutionalized by the establishment of **Asiatic Society of Bengal** in 1784 CE by **William Jones**. Here, many scholars took specific interest in exploring Indian past and culture. This society became the centre of learning of Indian culture (**oriental learning**). Most of the British officers posted in India during this time were guided by this approach.

- **Meaning:**

- Sensitive and sympathetic approach towards Indian past and culture.
- Though Indian culture is different from European, it is not inferior to it.
- Orientalists appreciated the rich heritage of Indian past.

- **Examples:**

- Many Sanskrit texts were **translated**.
 - William Jones - Shakuntala, Geet Govindam, Manusmriti
 - Henry Colebrooke - Sanskrit Grammar, Samkhya Karika, Essay on Vedas (1805)
 - Charles Wilkins - Bhagvad Geeta, Hitopadesha, Sanskrit Grammar
 - William Carey - Ramayana

- **Codification** of Indian laws

- Henry Colebrooke - Digest of Hindu Laws (unfinished by William Jones), Law of Inheritance (both Mitakshara and Daybhaga)
- Nathaniel Brassey Halhed - Code of Gentoo Laws
- Emphasis on indigenous education system
 - **Calcutta Madarsa** by Warren Hastings



Asiatic Society, Bengal
(1784)



Fort William College,
Calcutta (1800)



Sanskrit College,
Banaras (1791)



Calcutta Madrasa
(1781)





Indian Museum,
Calcutta (1814)



Asiatic Society,
Bombay (1804) by Sir
James Mackintosh

- **Sanskrit College** at Benares by Jonathan Duncan (Resident)
- o Training of **Civil Servants**
 - Most of the **British officers** stationed in India were guided by Orientalism when they were trained in the **Fort William College** founded by Lord Wellesley.
- o Antiquarianism
 - **Indian Museum** in Calcutta (1814)

These establishments between 1780-1800 completed the early phase of Kolkata's emergence as an intellectual centre.

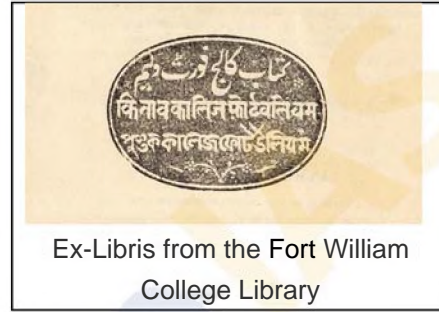
	
<p>Sir William Jones sitting under a banana tree taking notes from Hindu pundits explicating ancient texts.</p>	<p>Warren Hastings with Mullah and a Brahman (Victoria Memorial)</p>

Interest in understanding India's past, **her mineral** and natural wealth began at the turn of the 18th century for the purpose of trade and commerce. Later on, it became more serious research and the documentation of India's history, the study of **birds, animals, trees** and **plants**.

Fort William College, Calcutta (1800)

Initial attempt by Lord Wellesley to give professional training to the European Civil Servants so that they can perform their administrative functions efficiently. He designed a three-year course of study for fresh recruits (between 16-18 years old upon arrival in India)

- **The idea:** To teach the British rookies understand the Oriental Culture, tradition, law and administration.
 - Teaching of Asian languages: Arabic, Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit, Bengali. Later, Marathi and even Chinese.
 - Islamic and Hindu Law
- **Notable scholars associated:**
 - European
 - John Gilchrist-scholar of Hindustani languages
 - William Carrey
 - Henry Colebrooke
 - John Baillie
- The college employed a large number of Indians (munshis, pandits, maulvis) who were experts in their respective languages and had mastery over legal and/or sacred texts.
 - La Hu Lal - author of Prem Sagar, first modern work in Hindi
 - Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar - head Pundit of Fort William College
- Thousands of books translated from Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu into English. The college was instrumental in publishing dictionaries, grammar textbooks, and translations.



Trajectory

- Since Wellesley had not obtained proper authorization of the court of directors for setting up the institution, it was not accorded official recognition as a centre for training probationers. Also, CoD were never in favour of a training college in Calcutta -> lack of funds for running the college.
- East India Company College at Haileybury (England), was established in 1807. Yet, Fort William College continued to be a center of learning languages.
- Bentinck's educational policy of public instruction in English in 1835 clipped the wings of Fort William College. Dalhousie administration formally dissolved the institution in 1854.)