The East India Company  HIST 0369  
Ian Barrow  Middlebury  

Spring Term 2012  
SDL 203, MW 8:40-9:55  

Ian Barrow  
Axinn 339; ibarrow; x2554  
Office Hours: M: 10:00-1:00; W: 10:00-11:00  

The East India Company  
In this seminar you will be introduced to the English East India Company, from the 17th-century until its  
dissolution in 1858. Much of our focus will be on the Company’s presence in India, and we will pay  
particular attention to its transformation from a maritime trading company into a territorial colonial state. 
We will read a number of controversial texts from the period, immerse ourselves in the worlds of Company 
and Indian politics, and do guided research using holdings in Middlebury’s Special Collections. Topics will 
include the rise of the Company as a trading concern, its aggressive competition with other European 
trading monopolies and South Asian kingdoms, and the importance of opium in its dealings with China. 
We will end with a discussion of the Indian rebellion of 1857.  

Books for Purchase  
William Dalrymple, White Mughals: Love and betrayal in eighteenth century India,  
Penguin, 0-14-200412-X  

Other readings on e-reserve: password is 1399ib  

Assessment  
Four essays, each 25% of grade:  
Essay 1, due Wednesday 29th February.  
Essay 2, due Wednesday 14th March.  
Essay 3, due Wednesday 11th April.  
Essay 4, due Wednesday 9th May.  
Essays must be 3 single-spaced pages, except the 4th which must be 4 single-spaced pages.  
Please print on both sides of the paper.  
Please sign the honor code at the beginning or end of each essay.  
I reserve the right to raise or lower your grade based on my impression of your attendance and participation.  

Learning Goals  
• An understanding of: the East India Company and the creation of an empire; why and how the 
EIC was opposed in Britain and India; the different ways the EIC has been assessed since its 
dissolution.  
• An ability to: assess the accuracy, reliability and credibility of primary and secondary sources;  
conduct guided primary research using materials in the Special Collections and construct an  
argument based on that research; articulate a point of view in discussions while building on  
others’ contributions.
Schedule

PART ONE: ESTABLISHING COMPANY CONTROL IN INDIA (1740s-1770s)

Week One

Mon. 13th Feb.: The Mughal Empire; the EIC’s founding, early contacts with the East Indies; trade with China, and phases of rule in India

Wed. 15th Feb.: The Myth of Origins
J.Z. Holwell, “A Narrative of the deplorable Deaths of the English Gentlemen who were suffocated in the Black Hole in Fort William, at Calcutta, June 1756” in his India Tracts (Third Edition, 1774), available through 18th Century Collections online, image #387-420.

Week Two

Mon. 20th Feb.: The Context: 18th and 19th century India
Douglas M. Peers, India under Colonial Rule, 1700-1885.

Wed. 22nd Feb.: The Nabob – Contempt and Envy

For additional context you may wish to read:
Kate Teltscher, “Geographic Morality: The Trial of Warren Hastings and the Debate on British Conduct in India,” India Inscribed: European and British writing on India, 1600-1800, 157-86.

Week Three

Mon. 27th Feb.: The Debate on How to Rule
William Bolts, Considerations on Indian Affairs, (Preface)

For additional context you may wish to read:

PART TWO: THE TRANSITION FROM MARITIME TRADING COMPANY TO TERRITORIAL COLONIAL POWER (1770s-1820s)

Wed. 29th Feb.: Essay 1 due. Social Life in late 18th century India.
Anonymous (Phebe Gibbs), Hartly House, Calcutta (1789)
(available at Eighteenth Century Collections via the Library’s website.)

Week Four

Mon. 5th Mar.: Military Victories – Expanding Territory
James Salmond, A review of the origin, progress and result of the
decisive war with the late Tippoo Sultaun, in Mysore, (1800), available from 18th century collections, image 32-66.

Wed. 7th Mar.: Tipu – the Terror
James Scurry, The Captivity, Sufferings, and Escape of James Scurry, who was detained a prisoner during ten years, in the dominions of Haider Ali and Tippoo Saib (1824). Available at archive.org and at hathitrust.org

PART THREE: THE COMPANY’S LONG ARM (1820s-1840s)

Week Five
Mon. 12th Mar.: Tutorial to discuss your essay

William Dalrymple, White Mughals: Love and betrayal in 18th c. India.

Week Six
Mon. 19th Mar.: Reasons for Change

Wed. 21st Mar.: An Englishwoman’s View

Week Seven
Mid-term recess 24th March to 1st April.

Mon. 2nd Apr.: An Indian Travels to Britain
Michael H. Fisher, The Travels of Dean Mahomet, Section One (The World of the Eighteenth Century, 1-30) and Section Two (Dean Mahomet in Ireland and England, 1784-1851, 135-181)

Wed. 4th Apr.: Social and Religious Movements in India
Vijay Pinch, ‘Gosain Tawaif, Slaves, Sex, and Ascetics in Rasdhan, ca. 1800-1857’, Modern Asian Studies, 38, 3, 2004, pp. 559-597. (available through the library’s link to this journal.)

Week Eight
Mon. 9th Apr.: EIC’s Social Agenda: Sati
Lord William Bentinck on the Suppression of Sati, 8 Nov. 1829, in Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, 1750-1921, edited by A. Berriedale Keith, 208-26.

Wed. 11th Apr.: Essay 3 due today. 3 single-spaced pages
The Company’s New Charter: What should it be; how should it rule?
Thomas Babington Macaulay, House of Commons, 10 July 1833, in Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, 1750-1921, edited by A. Berriedale Keith, 226-65.
Thomas Babington Macaulay, “Minute on Indian Education,” in
Using Macaulay’s Speech and Minute, define and assess the colonialism he wishes to promote. You should also discuss Bentinck’s 1829 piece.

Week Nine

Mon. 16th Apr.: Prof. Barrow is giving a lecture at Cornell University. Class will meet in Library 105; Prof. Andrew Wentink will introduce you to the Library’s online resources. Knowing about these resources and how to access them will help you conduct research for your final research essay.

Wed. 18th Apr.: Meeting in Special Collections to review holdings on the Mutiny.

PART FOUR: THE FINAL YEARS (1850s)

Week Ten

Mon. 23rd Apr.: The Mutiny – Causes, Events, Consequences

Wed. 25th Apr.: The Consequences
Metcalf, Chapter Eight: The Legacy of the Mutiny, 289-327
Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, Dastanbuy, pp.25-70.
Queen Victoria to Lord Derby, 15 August 1858; Queen Victoria’s Proclamation, 1 November 1858 (The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947 Select Documents, 10-11).
Note on Army Policy and Organization: Lord Lawrence to Lord Cranborne, 4 Jan. 1867 (509-12).

Week Eleven

Mon. 30th Apr.: The British Raj
Rudyard Kipling, selected poems (to be distributed in class)

Wed. 2nd May: Rise of Independence Movements
Brief selections from nationalists such as: Aurobindo, Tagore, Bose, Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah (to be distributed in class)

Week Twelve

Mon. 7th May: Tutorials to discuss your final essay

Wed. 9th May: Final Class

The subject and argument of your essay will depend on which text you choose. I will hand out guidelines and expectations soon after you have written your third paper.