

(Mobile ebook) The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India

# The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India

*Philip J. Stern*

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*Corporate Sovereignty and  
the Early Modern Foundations of  
the British Empire in India*



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**Philip J. Stern : The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A great read! This accessible window into the nativity of ...By Rich BaileyA great read! This accessible window into the nativity of modern corporate culture captivates from first page to

last. Prof. Stern walks the reader through a formative period, when the methods, attitudes and ethics of this odd arm of government were formed. The Indian and American Revolutions were a response to the mismatch between citizenship and that jury-rigged form of control that corporations continue to attempt today. This book does a wonderful job of framing both today's corporate issues and some of the bumpier passages of modern history. Any reader who has a concern about problematic corporate behavior or an interest in creating a healthier version of politics should get and read this book. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Modern relevance. By Jeremy Jones...an excellent treatment of the development of the sovereign authority of the "British" East India Company from fledgling private commercial venture to effective arm of the British Imperialism... a valuable read in that respect. Stern's scholarship is impeccable. Not enough was said however of the price paid by exploited indigenous peoples of the region. I would expect such an omission from William W. Hunter who wrote about the company 100 years ago, but from a contemporary writer, the omission is conspicuous. Still, this is a must-read for anyone interested in the topic. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By CustomerGreat book, very informative. A tad dry at times but I really enjoyed it.

Almost since the event itself in 1757, the English East India Company's victory over the forces of the nawab of Bengal and the territorial acquisitions that followed has been perceived as the moment when the British Empire in India was born. Examining the Company's political and intellectual history in the century prior to this supposed transformation, *The Company-State* rethinks this narrative and the nature of the early East India Company itself. In this book, Philip J. Stern reveals the history of a corporation concerned not simply with the bottom line but also with the science of colonial governance. Stern demonstrates how Company leadership wrestled with typical early modern problems of political authority, such as the mutual obligations of subjects and rulers; the relationships among law, economy, and sound civil and colonial society; the constitution of civic institutions ranging from tax collection and religious practice to diplomacy and warring; and the nature of jurisdiction and sovereignty over people, territory, and the sea. Their ideas emerged from abstract ideological, historical, and philosophical principles and from the real-world entanglements of East India Company employees and governors with a host of allies, rivals, and polyglot populations in their overseas plantations. As the Company shaped this colonial polity, it also confronted shifting definitions of state and sovereignty across Eurasia that ultimately laid the groundwork for the Company's incorporation into the British empire and state through the eighteenth century. *Challenging traditional distinctions between the commercial and imperial eras in British India, as well as a colonial Atlantic world and a "trading world" of Asia, The Company-State offers a unique perspective on the fragmented nature of state, sovereignty, and empire in the early modern world.*

"With great skill, Stern has extracted from the archives a cogent and highly engaging narrative of events that even participants found highly tremendously confusing. He deftly conveys the world of the East India company, marshaling striking visual materials and wonderfully evocative quotations from a wide array of Company documents."--Radical History "A thought-provoking reinterpretation [that] will compel us to reexamine assumptions about colonial companies in general."--H-Net "In a work of deep erudition and striking originality Philip Stern deftly demolishes many of the categories by which we try to organize our work: are states and companies really different animals, were the early modern Atlantic and Indian Oceans distinct worlds, what, if anything, was new about the post-Plassey British Indian empire? We are politely but firmly directed back to the drawing board."--P. J. Marshall, King's College London "In *The Company-State*, Philip Stern has made an important contribution not only to studies of empire, but to early modern history in general. This is an important and innovative reconsideration of the East India Company as a political actor in the first phase of its career. This incisively crafted book will be widely read, cited, and debated."--Sanjay Subrahmanyam, University of California, Los Angeles "A bracing re-thinking of the early modern East India Company and its role in shaping English practices of empire, governance, 'trade,' and polity, Philip Stern's book will replace all previous studies on the topic."--Kathleen Wilson, Stony Brook University "Stern's rich portrait of the East India Company as a sovereign entity transforms our vision of politics and culture in the early British Empire. Masterfully researched and written with flair, the book places conflicts over corporate sovereignty at the center of a vast and variegated imperial field. *The Company-State* significantly advances new narratives of global empire."--Lauren Benton, New York University "In this forcefully argued and prodigiously researched book, Philip J. Stern overturns long-standing assumptions about the English East India Company, the British Empire, and early modern empires. Stern's innovative reassessment of the East India Company's first century builds a new foundation for the British empire and his model of composite, decentralized empires has broad resonance across the early modern world. Historians will be coming to terms with the wide-ranging implications of Stern's important and provocative work for years to come."--Alison Games, author of *Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* "A thought-provoking reinterpretation...[that] will compel us to reexamine assumptions about colonial companies in general."--Lilya Vinkovetsky, H-Net About the Author Philip J. Stern is Associate Professor of History at Duke University.