

Robert Clive: Founder of the British Colonial Empire in India

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Abstract:

This research paper attempts to investigate a brief biography of Robert Clive, who is known as "Clive of India" by historians and who has been an instrumental figure in establishing the East India Company's dominance in India. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Robert Clive is an obscure figure for the firm. Nobody knows about this personality and his magnetic power that is imposed over the nabobs. In 1744, this figure appears on the platform of the company like other servants, joining the company as an ordinary agent. After 1757–1774, he becomes a major or prominent figure in India's history. This research paper provides an in-depth analysis of that person's life and career. In a nutshell, who is Robert Clive and why does he come to India? What does he achieve and accomplish? This research delves into the origins and growth of imperialism and various factors responsible for the situation. This investigation reveals the military establishment, namely Clive's activities against the nabobs in the dictatorship. Understanding his original role in maintaining imperialism in India requires a detailed description of his interactions with the state and society. The purpose of this research is to gain insight into the Mughal emperor's diplomatic dealings with European countries from the perspective of the mutual military and economic gains that resulted from such dealings. Is Clive a response to these developments in Asia, or Do the Mughals feel powerless in the face of European expansion as their naval might extends their grip over the subcontinent? Therefore, they are unable to devise a plan to effectively negotiate with the Europeans with whom

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

they may interact in this situation to reap the advantages. In light of this, the current research examines Clive's perspectives and the surprising twists he took to advance British Imperialism in India. This study aims to provide more information on Robert Clive, a writer or clerk who joined the East India Company after coming to India. His social, cultural, and political study opens numerous avenues for the British to establish a colonial empire in India. In India and England's history, he established the British Empire and founded British India. The research is based on analytical and comparative methods. Qualitative research techniques are used in this research to collect data. All the events are historically discussed in chronological order.

Key Words: *Robert Clive, European, Mughals, Nabobs, Imperialism, Black Hole*

Introduction:

Political and economic development were considered necessary elements to maintain the sovereignty of any country. Hindustan had been of great value to the whole world for centuries due to its immense wealth and prosperity. The sub-continent was considered a golden sparrow and a diamond in the crown for travelers in their accounts. It was the story of a nation of gold and wealth that had adopted a non-aggressive policy for centuries toward traders. The Mughal emperors, who were the kings, tried to keep the whole Hindustan united despite different colors, creeds, and races. Hundreds of small and large districts or kingdoms, with their cultural languages, were living under one rule for centuries under one roof. The kings managed and maintained the integrity of Hindustan, which was making progress day by day. They attracted foreigners due to the immense peace and prosperity they offered (Chaudhry, 2014).

Hindustan was a source of inspiration for foreigners. Vasco-de-Gama arrived in India in 1498 and stayed in Calicut, which was a highly important commercial area in the south and a well-known port in Europe. From this port, the country made significant profits in the business world, and the kings became richer as the coast of Malabar was attached to it. This area was so powerful that Vasco-de-Gama called it the "goose of golden eggs." According to him, the people of this place were not

moderate and had no proper customs, religion, tolerance, or proper security, but they were lucky and fortunate for foreign merchants. He quoted the verse of Camoens: "Wealth was flowing everywhere due to trade, with heaps of money coming in the waves of seas from China and the Nile." "Merchants had desired to trade with this fertile land blessed by God" (Oaten, 1908).

There were traditional centers in India such as Surat, Calicut, Hugely, Masulipatam, Bengal, Broach, Bombay, and Madras. Due to their heavy production and importance as trading centers and ports, they had been the apple of the eye of outsiders. The Indian economy depended on agriculture and on goods made by the native people, such as the manufacturing of cloth and silk, for centuries (Ansari, 1975). The immense wealth of Hindustan attracted the attention of foreigners, including Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French. The main objective of the English people in making contact with India was solely to progress in their business. However, over time, these merchants became the masters of the land (Murry, 1860).

India was a center of trade and a central place for traders for centuries, as many European and traders from all over the world came to India for their trading activities. They would take spices and other goods from India and sell them in the European market. The fertility of the soil in the kingdom brought great prosperity to the natives, making India a source of misfortune for the Indians. Their natural production and wealth accumulation were in progress during that time. India was considered a jewel in the crown in the eyes of the whole world (Alam, 1994).

During the reign of Akbar, it is said that he once tried to judge the wealth of India. From dawn to dusk, he counted the coins of one city, which tired him out. He then went on another expedition, indicating the immense wealth and prosperity of the country (Methew A., 1556). The story opens with the initial introduction of European nations to India as trading partners. Hindustan had commercial relations with the West for an unknown time. In the 7th century, sea routes came under the control of Arabs. Then, geographical discoveries helped merchants find a new route to India. Many Europeans from

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

various eras made the journey to India in the hopes of spending time in the Mughal courts. They visited India in various capacities as merchants, tourists, and representatives of British businesses to the courts of the Mughal rulers (Collis, 1942).

Their descriptions of their travels, as well as their impressions of the society, culture, politics, and particularly the prosperous and strong economy, made them want to visit. According to Ralph Fitch, the first English trader who extensively traveled across India and documented the country's natural resources, Bellergan was the Indian town where diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones were traded. India also had an abundance of pepper and other spices, among other goods. Fitch also mentioned that the towns of Goa, Bengal, and Agra were endowed with an abundance of natural resources. He discussed Goa, the commercial hub of the Portuguese (Fitch, England's Pioneer to India and Barma, 1899).

In 1584, Ralph Fitch embarked on a journey to India. He held a position as a jeweler in Akbar's court in Goa throughout his tenure. During his time in Goa, he witnessed the prosperous rule of Akbar and documented his experiences. Fitch was impressed by India's wealth and opulence. He described Akbar as a hospitable ruler with clear thoughts, who allowed many traders to stay in the country. Goods, including horses, were transported via ships, with the horses being exempt from customs duties. Fitch even sent a letter to the King of England, praising India for its favorable trading environment. He returned to England in 1591, becoming the first English traveler to India. He advised the East India Company to begin trading with India due to its wealth. Early travelers often referred to India as the "Golden Sparrow" or the "Jewel in the Crown," emphasizing its desirability. Many countries throughout history yearned to plunder India's wealth and be part of its culturally and historically significant location. This is just the beginning of the tale, thanks to the numerous English explorers who arrived in India as ambassadors, merchants, or traders, establishing business ties with a region that captivated the world with its extraordinary richness (Fitch, England's Pioneer to India and Barma, 1899).

Numerous people from around the world, including the Portuguese, Dutch, Scots, Chinese, English, and French, have visited India, the Land of Desire, and extensively written about their experiences. However, the English travelers garnered the most attention because they played a crucial role in opening up new markets for the merchants of the East India Company. In other words, it was the tales of their travels that led the English traders to venture into India. As a result, the East India Company obtained charters from various rulers. On December 31, 1600, Elizabeth I granted the first charter to a group of merchants, and subsequent English monarchs awarded further charters to the company. During Elizabeth I's reign, several traders visited India to seek the approval of the Mughal emperor to commence trading. Notable individuals such as William Keeling, Stephen Hawking, and Thomas Roe were part of this endeavor, which continued during the reign of James I. Each admiral, knight, alderman, captain, and traveler played a role in the English system of government. Consequently, England experienced economic benefits from its explorations between 1600 and 1700 (Methew A., Charter granted to Elizabeth I, 1600).

The period from 1700-1744 was very peaceful, and the English people paid complete attention to peaceful trade with India. Then, one name changed the history of the business and turned the pages of time from peaceful trade to an aggressive political system (Mill, 1858).

From 1600 until 1747, trade and commerce in India ran smoothly because merchants from all walks of life were able to secure positions in the East India Company. They bought merchandise to sell in European markets and then disappeared. At that time, it never occurred to them to try to colonize India. However, in the middle of the eighteenth century, a man appeared in the history of India who altered the course of three countries. Previously, it was unknown whether the East India Company would ever come to dominate the Indian subcontinent. About Robert Clive, it is said that with his arrival, the tides of the sea turned the pages of history, not only for India but also for England. It was he whose policies changed the masters. The surprising shift in Indian history was not the only thing this man did to alter the course of the East India Company and England.

Clive presented himself in India as a successful businessman, politician, diplomat, and corrupt individual. As a member of the East India Company in 1744, Clive not only participated in exciting and spectacular actions in India that surprised the rest of the world but also witnessed firsthand the social, cultural, economic, and political life of the Mughal empire in India. It has been claimed that one person's character may determine the future of the entire company. The international profile of England was shaped by a person of relatively modest means.

Imperialism:

According to this notion, resources flow from the boundaries of poor or underdeveloped countries to the core of healthy, wealthy, and developed countries. This means that wealthy states rely on the resources of the poor and underdeveloped states. Thus, this theory reflects the relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries worldwide. The theory was presented in a positive sense, suggesting that highly capitalist countries, in order to ensure their survival and maintain their sovereignty, controlled the economic systems of poor countries. This control eventually extended to their political systems. This arrangement was not only beneficial for the rich countries but also provided some benefits to the poor countries (Wolf.J.Mommson, 1980).

The main objective of imperial countries was to exploit natural resources. The core countries of the world are generally advanced and possess advanced resources, arms, and technology, while peripheral countries are less developed and weaker. This structure represents the world economy, which favors certain countries at the expense of others and limits the development potential of subordinate economies. Developed countries accumulate wealth by exploiting the resources of poor countries in the periphery. The core countries utilize these resources to produce goods, which are then sold to semi-peripheral countries. The goods produced by the semi-peripheral countries are in turn sold to peripheral countries. Core countries heavily rely on the resources of peripheral or semi-peripheral countries for their manufacturing and industrial growth. They sell these goods at a high cost, perpetuating a cycle of

dependency. Core countries are dependent on other countries for their economic needs (Wolfgang.J.Mommson, 1980).

The imperial country, having become wealthy, focused on developing its military strength. Military conquest and control became their primary objective. According to Vladimir Lenin, the governments of advanced countries introduced welfare programs to improve the conditions of the working class. As per Lenin, imperialism represented the advanced stage of capitalism. Powerful countries directly or indirectly controlled the political systems of underdeveloped countries, exploiting their resources for their own interests and profits. The capitalist ruling class extended its influence beyond domestic territories. They invested heavily in keeping the working class content and peaceful and then used them to establish colonies in poor countries. These colonies provided significant benefits to the capitalist class, while the working class in the imperial country remained satisfied with the economic gains. The capitalist class also exerted control over the political systems of these poor countries (Brewer, 2002).

The period from the 16th century to the 19th century was known as the era of imperialism. It was a policy and ideology through which wealthy countries exploited the resources of poorer nations, often acquiring them at low costs and manufacturing goods to be sold at higher prices in the international market. They weakened these countries by establishing their own military presence and ensuring their loyalty. Additionally, they established colonies to generate income and gain advantages for their own countries.

Robert Clive: 1st Governor of Bengal

Introduction:

Clive was a controversial and enigmatic figure in the business history of the world, as scholars have always debated whether he was a hero or adversary of the company. This complex individual remained dedicated to the service of the company throughout his life. It is astonishing how someone who started as a mere employee of the company was able to establish its dominance in India and pave the way for its success. Whether it

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

was mere perception or solid reasons, Clive undeniably left a profound impact on the history of both countries.

General description: Early Life:

Robert Clive, also known as Clive of India, was the first British Governor of the Bengal Presidency. He, along with Warren Hastings, is credited with imposing British rule in India and expanding British power in the region. Despite being born into a common and unrecognized family, many of his relatives held high positions in the government. On September 29, 1725, Clive was born in the house of Richard and Rebecca in the countryside town of Shropshire. His neighbors often referred to him as a wicked child due to his troublesome behavior, such as breaking their windows and teasing shopkeepers. Despite attending good schools, Clive was described by his schoolmaster as both quarrelsome and disciplined. He had a commanding presence, and people were afraid of him, often obeying him quietly. However, his father's economic situation worsened over time, making it difficult for him to support their large family, despite being a lawyer and parliamentarian. As a result, Clive's upbringing was affected, as his mother was unable to provide a comfortable environment in their old and deteriorating ancestral house. This led to him having to live with his aunt and uncle, which had a significant impact on his life. (Spear, 1975)

As a writer or office clerk, he joined the East India Company and established his own military, upholding the political supremacy of the EIC on the Indian subcontinent after winning the Battle of Plassey. Clive was the most famous and influential figure who played a pivotal role in the British occupation of India. He possessed extraordinary qualities and laid the foundation for his country's dominance in the East. It is also accurate to describe Clive as a highly creative and cultivated individual who emerged victorious in the Battle of Buxar. He received a letter from the king, but lacked specific orders, was unfamiliar with the use of certain metals, and had no weapons except for makeshift ones crafted from sticks, fish bones, or horse soldiers. Clive, born with strong passions and subject to temptations, was fully committed, fair in his dealings and promises, and possessed an enlightened

perspective, recognizing the island's abundance of heroic figures. (Spear, *Master of Bengal: Clive and his India*, 1939)

In the 12th century, Clive settled on an estate near the market town of Drayton in Shropshire. Although the estate had no great value, it was his home. During the reign of George, Clive was known as a moderate but ancient traditional man, lacking great capacity. Richard, on the other hand, was a man of the law and a proprietor. He married and had a large family of thirteen children, unfortunately, six of whom died in infancy. Robert Clive, the elder son, was born in the town, which, although not a commercial area, was still significant. His father, a lawyer, served as a parliamentarian for many years. Despite his father's inherited anger, Robert also had a troublesome childhood. He frequently teased people and stole money from their money boxes. The father, deeply upset by his son's troublesome habits towards others, decided that he could no longer keep the child in his own possession. As a result, he sent him to live with his aunt. In his uncle's home, the child found great happiness, as he was raised as if he were their own son. Clive often praised his aunt and looked up to her as a role model. Despite the child's many mistakes, his uncle showed unwavering affection and never uttered a word of criticism. The child was greatly influenced by his mother's personality and held no ill will towards her. However, he couldn't help but feel a deep regret in his heart for being separated from his family and being raised in his uncle's house. Even though his uncle mentioned that his father was a drunkard, the child still held respect and admiration for him. Since his childhood, Clive displayed remarkable qualities of supervision and leadership. He always took on a leading role in any disputes or conflicts that arose. This innate leadership quality was evident in his behavior from a young age. Clive possessed a high level of passion, so much so that even Pitt wrote that all heroes were born in his land. At the age of 18, he was sent to Madras to work as a clerk and bookkeeper for the East India Company. Despite his talents, Clive was a moody young man who engaged in a duel and made two attempts at suicide (Garrett, 1976).

In 1742, Clive joined the East India Company as a humble writer. It was in 1744 that he arrived in India, but his journey

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

was not without its difficulties. Along the way, he faced numerous challenges and had to learn the Portuguese language. This further showcased his ability to learn quickly and effectively. Unfortunately, his ships ran aground on the coast of Brazil, adding to the hardships he experienced during his voyage (Mansingh, 2006).

After being appointed as a clerk in Madras, Clive started his duties, primarily focused on bookkeeping. However, he was not satisfied with his low salary and became quite unhappy with his earnings. In his despair, he attempted suicide twice, but fortunately, he managed to escape both times. The weight of his unhappiness led him to suffer from depression. At one point, he even took out his pistol and tried to fire it, but by some stroke of luck or divine intervention, the pistol jammed. This incident seemed to suggest that there was another purpose in store for Clive as if God had a different plan for him (Roy, 2012).

In Madras, he was unhappy for two reasons. Firstly, his salary was very low, which he always disliked. Secondly, he felt that he was not meant to work under others and felt confined in that environment. He became extremely upset and did not make any friends in India. Due to his tense state of mind, he attempted suicide twice but fortunately, he was saved. However, he couldn't continue in that job for long. He eventually resigned and joined the military, as he spent most of his time reading books in the company. The start of the Carnatic Wars brought about a change in the atmosphere (Lawson, 2013).

At the age of eighteen, he joined the company as a factor. He never imagined that he would become an independent power in his life. His voyage to India was long and arduous, with his ship facing troubles along the way. It took him eight months to reach India, during which he learned the Portuguese language. This proved to be beneficial for young Clive, as it showed his ability to quickly learn new things. However, working as a bookkeeper left him frustrated, and the climate of India bored him. It was a difficult situation for him to accept, as he had always played a leading role in his life. Now, he had to work under others, following their commands. He felt guilty for working in such a static and stereotypical atmosphere, where he had to maintain

accounts, trade, converse with traders, and load goods onto ships. This challenging situation made him so ill that he began to lose hope in life, but he managed to survive. After escaping from his desperate state, Clive said to himself, "Fate reserved me for some purpose" (C. Brad. Faught, 2013).

After spending some time working as a clerk in India, he decided to leave that job and join the military. This decision was influenced by the onset of the Anglo-French wars, as the changing circumstances compelled him to seek military training. Despite the challenges, he did not lose hope or courage. He demonstrated his abilities and faced the circumstances to the best of his capacity. His determination was unwavering, and he utilized his superb intelligence. During this time, the English were losing their position while the French were gaining ground. In 1751, he showcased his military talent in the siege of Arcot against the French. During that time, the French had control over Hyderabad and Carnatic through their candidates who were under the command of Dupleix. The English, on the other hand, were in a disadvantaged position in the Deccan region. However, Clive utilized his abilities and took the initiative to attack Carnatic. He successfully captured the capital of Carnatic, Arcot, which ultimately thwarted Dupleix's plans. Clive employed different strategies in this war and prevented the French from regaining their influence over the English in India. His actions saved the supremacy of the English in the Deccan region and changed the fate of the English East India Company in India. This act of patriotism earned him great recognition and esteem in the eyes of the directors of the East India Company. Indeed, the decision made by Clive to attack Carnatic was a turning point in the 2nd Carnatic War. It not only established British power in the south but also restored it. This event played a crucial role in solidifying Clive's position in the eyes of the English people. Another significant event that elevated Clive from a mere soldier to the Commander of the East India Company was the Black Hole incident. In this tragic event, the prideful Nawab played a deadly game with the English people, with Holwell being among them. A total of 213 men, women, and elderly individuals were confined in a small room, resulting in the suffocation and death

of most of them. This incident enraged Clive and motivated him to teach the Nawab a lesson (Lang, 2017).

Bengal was initially a province under the Mughal Empire, governed by a governor. However, due to the weak successors of Aurangzeb, it gained independence under the rule of Mushed Quli Khan, who established a new dynasty of nawabs in Bengal. After Mushed Quli Khan's death in 1727, his son-in-law Shuja-ud-Din became the nabob of Bengal and Orissa, with Bihar also falling under his viceroyalty. He was succeeded by his son Sarfraz Khan in 1739. During this time, Alivardi Khan, who served as the deputy governor of Bihar, revolted against his master in 1740. After defeating him, Alivardi Khan became the Nawab of Bengal. He proved to be a strong and capable ruler, but his regime was plagued by constant warfare with the Marathas. The repeated invasions by the Marathas caused immense suffering to the people of Bengal. After facing numerous challenges and conflicts, Alivardi Khan was eventually forced to seek peace by ceding the provinces of Orrissa and making an annual payment of twelve lakh rupees to the Marathas. Although Alivardi Khan allowed the English to trade in Bengal, he did not permit them to fortify their possessions. Upon Alivardi Khan's death, his grandson Siraj ud Daulah ascended the throne of Bengal. However, this succession was not favored by his two other daughters who had aspirations of ruling Bengal themselves. The eldest daughter, Ghaseti Begum, caused significant trouble for the young nawab, and Raj Ballabh actively supported her cause. Alongside dealing with the hostile activities of Raj Ballabh and Shaukat Jang, Siraj ud Daulah also found himself in conflicts with the English upon his accession. There were several causes that led to the conflict between Siraj ud Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal, and the English. Firstly, the English displayed a sympathetic attitude towards the rival claimant to the throne, whose cause was supported by Raj Ballabh. This support from the English turned the Nawab against them. Secondly, the English were misusing certain trade privileges in Bengal that were granted by the government. This misuse of privileges irritated the young Nawab. Thirdly, Alivardi Khan, the previous Nawab, had not allowed the English to fortify their settlement in Bengal. However, in anticipation of the

outbreak of the Seven Years' War, both the English and the French began fortifying their settlements in Bengal without Nawab's permission. This act of defiance by the English angered the Nawab, who ordered them to demolish their fortifications. While the French complied with the order, the English disregarded it. Lastly, Krishnadas, a wealthy merchant and son of Rajballabh, had sought refuge in Calcutta with his family and treasure. The English provided him shelter, despite the Nawab's request for his extradition. The English ignored Nawab's demand, further escalating tensions between them (Orme, M, DCCC, V).

The enraged Nawab, Siraj ud Daulah, marched against Calcutta and successfully captured it. The capture of Calcutta is often remembered for the infamous "black hole" episode, which holds a prominent place in the accounts of the incident by Holwell. According to Holwell, 146 prisoners were confined in a room called the black hole, and 123 of them died due to suffocation, leaving the rest to recount the tragic events of that summer night. However, recent research has shown that the entire story is largely fabricated. Some prisoners were indeed placed in the black hole, and a number of them died there, particularly those who were wounded during the fight. However, the tragic details provided by Holwell, which exaggerate the number of prisoners, have not been accepted by modern historians. Regardless, it is important to note that Siraj ud Daulah had no direct involvement in the black hole incident (Orme, Historical Fragments of the Mughal Empire, M, DCCC, V).

This incident made Robert Clive more active, and he went to rescue Calcutta with the help of Admiral Watson. There, he adopted another policy for the Nawab, making a treaty that held the East India Company responsible for all the losses and agreed to bear them, which was then sent back to the Nawab. This lessened and controlled the anger of the Nawab. However, there was still a great fear that the Nawab would be able to ally with the Marathas, who were the most powerful at that time in India. In 1757, Chandernagore, which was the main area of the French in Bengal, was attacked by Clive with the help of an admiral and captured. This made it impossible for the French and the Nawab of Bengal to collaborate. (Macaulay, 1851)

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

Robert Clive played a crucial role in breaking the French supremacy in India. In 1753, he returned to England and participated in an unsuccessful parliamentary complaint. In 1755, he once again took part in an expedition against the French as the deputy of Madras. (H. Brown, 2004)

The Battle of Plassey:

When the disastrous news of Calcutta reached Madras, an expedition was sent from there to recover Calcutta under the command of Clive, with the fleet under Admiral Watson. Clive successfully reoccupied Calcutta in January 1757, and Siraj ud Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal, once again marched with his army to confront Clive. However, he did not perform well in the engagement. Eventually, a treaty was concluded in which the English regained control of Calcutta and were granted the right to fortify it. In 1757, the English also captured Chandannagar, preventing the French from coming to Bengal to assist the Nawab. Siraj ud Daulah urged Bussy, a French commander in Hyderabad, to come to Bengal, but upon hearing of the disaster in Chandannagar, Bussy turned back at Ganjum. The English now understood the situation in Bengal well and were determined to replace Siraj ud Daulah with a Nawab who would be more amenable to their control. They conspired with disgruntled nobles of the Nawab and resolved to place Mir Jafar, the commander-in-law of Alivardi Khan, on the throne. Rai Durlab, the treasurer of the Nawab, and Jagat Seth, the wealthy banker of Bengal, were other prominent members of this conspiracy. Amin Chand, the highest Bengali merchant, acted as the intermediary between the English and the dissatisfied nobles. The terms of the agreement between the two parties were settled through him. It was resolved that Clive would march to Plassey, and Mir Jafar would join with all the forces under his command. Mir Jafar was to be made the Nawab of Bengal, and he would confirm all the privileges of the company. However, when the details of the conspiracy were settled, Amin Chand threatened to disclose the entire plot to the Nawab unless he was paid 30 lakh rupees and this condition was included in the agreement. Clive, however, very cleverly prepared two drafts of the treaty. The false document contained a promise to pay 30 lakh rupees to Amin Chand, while the genuine one contained no mention of the

amount to be paid to him. Watson was a conscientious person and refused to sign false documents. Therefore, Clive forged his signature. This false document was shown to Amin Chand (Edwards, 1963).

Clive then changed his attitude and wrote a letter to the Nawab, accusing him of evading the terms of the treaty and engaging in correspondence with the French. He further declared that he would refer the dispute to the Nawab's durbar. Clive marched towards Murshidabad with his army and reached a place called Plassey, located 23 miles south of Murshidabad, with 3000 troops. The battle was fought on the 23rd of June 1757. Mir Jafar, who commanded the Nawab's army, stood still with his forces. Mohanlal and Mir Maden, along with a handful of French men backed by the French officer, fought gallantly. However, the battle was ultimately decided in favor of the English. Siraj ud Daulha fled to Murshidabad and then to Patna. However, he was captured on the way and executed by order of Miran, son of Mir Jafar. The conspiracy of Mir Jafar and others, who were regarded as the great patriots of the country by their fellow citizens, resulted in the loss of Bengal's independence (Reid, 2017).

The Battle of Plassey can be considered one of the most significant battles in the history of India. Its results were deep and far-reaching. Firstly, the battle of Plassey brought about a change in the Nawab of Bengal. Siraj ud Daulah was replaced by Mir Jafar, who became a mere puppet in the hands of the English. Secondly, it resulted in the expansion of British territories around Calcutta, and the financial position of the East India Company was strengthened. The new nawab gave the company one crore rupees and a territory of 24 pagodas. Thirdly, the prestige of the company increased in the eyes of the people. From being a mere trader in Bengal, the company became the master of a rich tract of land and henceforth played the role of a kingmaker and king breaker in Bengal. Fourthly, the Battle of Plassey had an impact on the course of the Anglo-French conflict in the Deccan region. The Battle of Plassey placed the resources of Bengal, both in terms of manpower and finances, at the disposal of the English. These resources were then utilized against the French in the Carnatic region, enabling the English to defeat the French during the Third Carnatic War. This victory

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

in Bengal provided the English with the key to the conquest of India. It greatly enhanced their power, eventually leading to their defeat of Nawab Siraj ud Daulah and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II at the Battle of Buxar in 1764. Finally, after the Battle of Plassey, Mir Jafar was made the Nawab of Bengal, marking what was called the first revolution in Bengal. After the Battle of Plassey, Mir Jafar gave a significant amount of money to the officers of the East India Company. Clive himself received £334,000 as his share. This fueled the greed of the officers, who, after Clive's departure, decided to replace Mir Jafar and his son-in-law, Mir Qasim. One of the reasons for this change was the hope of the senior officers to obtain financial benefits from the new Nawab. Thus, the Battle of Plassey indirectly paved the way for a subsequent revolution in Bengal by arousing the greed of the East India Company's servants (Reid, 2017).

In 1757, the Battle of Plassey dramatically altered the balance of power in Bengal. Robert Clive's victory in this battle changed the position of the East India Company, and effectively brought the kingdom of 40 million people under the control of the company. This shift in power placed the fate of Bengal in the hands of the East India Company (Harvey, 1998).

First Governor 1757-1760:

He was appointed as the first governor of Bengal, and he took the following steps: firstly, he defeated Shah Alam in a collision midway between Owdh and Patna, which pleased Mir Jafar. As a reward, he was given a jagir that provided an annual income of £30,000 to Clive. Secondly, he defeated the Dutch at Chansura and captured the Sircar on the northern side. With the assistance of Colonel Forde, he secured this area to protect it from the French. In 1760, he became ill and returned to London, where he was granted the title of lord and obtained a seat in Parliament. Now, he became an imperialist. The person who held immense power was a government official in India who often acted beyond his instructions. When Clive returned to London, Vaanistart assumed the role of governor for five years. Chaos and disorder spread throughout the region. There was a lack of checks and balances, allowing every servant of the company to engage in corrupt practices to accumulate wealth. They accepted

bribes and sold their influence to Indians, resulting in substantial financial gain. Even the company merchants began engaging in private trading ventures. The unfair means spoiled the administration of Bengal, resulting in significant losses for the company. The directors of the company became upset upon seeing the administrative condition in Bengal, prompting them to send Clive once again to capture the governorship. Although he did not want to return to India, he came in 1764 for the protection of his Jagir. Consequently, he held positions as the governor, commander-in-chief of the army in 1767, and the administrator of Bengal. In 1761, he became a part of the Parliamentarian Shrewsbury (M. Bence Jones, 1974)

Importance of the Battle of Buxer:

The Battle of Buxer holds a significant place in the history of British India. Historians have expressed varying views regarding its importance. Brome asserts that the fate of the Indians hinged on the outcome of the Battle of Buxer. Sir James Stephen goes further to claim that Buxer, rather than Plassey, deserves recognition as the true origin of British power in India. Firstly, the battle was fiercely fought and highly contested. The Battle of Plassey was determined more by treachery than by the inherent superiority of English arms. However, the Battle of Buxer was a direct confrontation between two rival claimants for supremacy, both fully aware of the consequences of the war. Secondly, at Plassey, only the Nawab of Bengal was defeated, while at the Battle of Buxer, the Mughal emperor, the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, and the Nawab of Bengal were all defeated. Thirdly, the victory at Plassey provided the English with a foothold in Bengal, which they fully utilized in the Battle of Buxer. The groundwork laid at Plassey was completed in the Battle of Buxer. At Buxer, the English not only strengthened their control over Bengal but also ensured the security of its northwest frontier. Consequently, the English supremacy they were fighting for was established in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa as a result of the Battle of Buxer. The East India Company now held sovereign power, greatly enhancing its prestige (Umair, 2018).

After the war with Mir Qasim broke out, the English once again reinstated Mir Jafar as the ruler and gained certain privileges

Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

from him. However, Mir Jafar was elderly and passed away in February 1765. His son, Nizam ud Daulah, was then installed on the throne under the condition that the English would have complete control over the administration. The minister, appointed by the English, would have full authority over the management of the administration and could not be dismissed without English approval. As a result, the English gained supreme control over the administration, while the nawab became a mere figurehead.

Clive's Second Governorship 1765-1767:

After Clive left Bengal, the region experienced a period of misrule and political turmoil, which severely damaged the reputation of the English. The situation became so dire that the court of directors decided to reinstate Clive as the governor of Bengal, empowering him with full authority to address the abuses and restore order. Clive returned to the subcontinent in May 1765 and was faced with several significant challenges, with political and administrative issues being particularly prominent among them.

Political arrangements:

Clive's initial priority was to address the political situation in Bengal. To accomplish this, the Treaty of Allahabad was signed in 1765. The terms of the treaty included the restoration of Shuja ud Daulah's kingdom of Oudh, with the exception of the district of Kara and Allahabad. In return for the restoration, Shuja ud Daulah was required to pay 50 lakhs of rupees.

- As per the terms of the Treaty of Allahabad, an English force was to be stationed in Oudh to safeguard its frontier, and the expenses of this force were to be covered by the nabob.
- Additionally, the districts of Kara and Allahabad, which were previously taken away from the nabob of Oudh, were given to the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II to uphold his royal status and honor. Furthermore, Shah Alam II was granted a pension of 26 lakhs of rupees annually as part of the agreement.

- In return for these two gains, the Mughal emperor granted the Dewani (revenue collection) of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the company.
- The Treaty of Allahabad is very important in the history of British India. Firstly, the grant of Dewani by the Mughal emperor made the position of the company legal in the provinces of Bengal and Bihar.

Since 1757, they had been de facto masters of Bengal, but now they became its de jure masters. Secondly, the Nawab of Oudh became a dependent ally of the company. Thirdly, Oudh was made a buffer state between the British and the Marathas, thus securing the safety of Bengal. Lastly, the titular Mughal emperor became a pensioner of the company.

Clive's Reforms:

Lord Clive took several steps to reform the civil as well as military affairs of the company. The officials of the company were thoroughly demoralized, and bribery and corruption were rampant. He issued an order against the acceptance of presents that the company officials used to receive on the occasion of each Nawab's accession. He effectively put a stop to this system, despite facing vehement opposition. He also ordered the employees of the company not to engage in private trade. However, due to their low salaries, he tried to compensate them by establishing a trade society under the council's supervision. His intention was to reward only the most knowledgeable individuals in the company by granting them a share in the trade society. This society held a monopoly on the inland trade of bitternut and tobacco. Unfortunately, the directors did not approve of this arrangement, resulting in the complete abandonment of the monopoly (Chaurasia, 2002).

Clive also had to manage the military administration of the company. One of his significant military reforms was the elimination of double battles or field allowances for military officers. Since the Battle of Plassey, Mir Jafar had authorized this allowance for military officers. Initially, the allowance was intended for officers on active service, but they continued to receive it even when not on active duty. Even during times of peace, when the English company received the dewan of Bengal,

Bihar, and Orissa, the responsibility of paying double batta fell on the company. However, as a cost-saving measure, it was decided to abolish this system, and Clive halted the payment of double batta. This decision was met with resentment from military officers, and a significant number of them threatened to resign. Clive, however, responded firmly to this potential mutiny.

Dual Government of Bengal:

Another administrative measure implemented by Clive was the establishment of a dual or double government in Bengal. He reached an agreement with the Nawab of Bengal, according to which the company would be responsible for revenue collection and maintaining the army, while the Nawab would oversee civil, criminal, and police administration, and receive an annual payment of 53 lakh rupees. The general administration theoretically rested with the nawab, but in reality, it was carried out by two deputy nawabs - Muhammad Raza Khan for Bengal and Shitab Ray for Bihar. These two deputies were appointed by the nawab based on the company's advice. Under this system, the company took on the responsibility of revenue functions, but the actual administration was not undertaken by them. This resulted in a unique form of government where there were two authorities - one foreign and the other native, one with real power and the other with nominal power, one dominant and the other passive, one supreme and the other shadowy. This system of dual government established by Clive is known as the celebrated double government.

The dual system of government proved to be highly flawed in several ways. Firstly, power was separated from responsibility. The Nawab held the responsibility but lacked the power, while the company had the power but evaded responsibility. This divorce of power from responsibility led to a resurgence of old abuses, as noted by P.E. Roberts. According to Dr. Nandalal Chatterjee, the system demonstrated cunning manipulation rather than the foresight of a responsible administrator. It served as a means to enjoy the spoils of the past without assuming fundamental obligations. The second drawback of the system was that the company did not benefit significantly from it.

Although the company gained the right to collect revenue, its financial position deteriorated despite this authority. The revenue collection was carried out by native agents, and it was believed by the directors that a significant portion of it was being misappropriated by these agents. English supervisors were appointed to oversee the process, but even this did not improve the company's financial situation. The cultivators were burdened with excessive taxes, yet the company did not prosper as expected. Therefore, the dual government system can be considered a complete failure. According to Kaye, the dual administration only served to make confusion and corruption even more corrupt. Clive eventually returned to his country in 1767. He faced a trial for his alleged malpractices in Bengal but was acquitted with honor. However, he tragically ended his own life in 1774 by committing suicide. (Malcolm, 1929)

An Estimate of Clive:

Clive holds a significant position among the notable British generals and administrators who played a vital role in establishing British dominance in the Indian subcontinent. His victory at the Battle of Plassey laid the foundation for British supremacy in Bengal and paved the way for further expansion into the interior of the country. Through his efforts, a group of merchants transformed into a formidable territorial power in the subcontinent. Clive exhibited remarkable qualities such as tact, patience, industry, and foresight. He carefully strategized and worked towards achieving his goals. His capabilities extended beyond being a great soldier; he was also an exceptional administrator and statesman. Clive's bravery and military skills were evident in his actions as a soldier. Smith says, "His military genius and gifts of leadership were abundantly manifested both in the Peninsula and in Bengal." His abilities as a statesman were exhibited chiefly during his second governorship of Bengal when he established Oudh as a buffer state between Bengal, on one hand, and the Marathas, on the other. His second governorship was marked by considerable reforms, and he did much to check the rapacity of the company's servants." Malleson states, "Never throughout his glorious career as a soldier did Clive's character and conduct stand higher." In dealing with punishment for mutiny, he and he alone suppressed the

people. Clive was not only a man of action but also a man of thought. However, as a human being, he was not free from flaws. Upon his arrival in England, Clive faced severe criticism for the fraud committed against Amin Chand and his acceptance of substantial bribes at present. He had a strong inclination towards money and did not hesitate to resort to any means, fair or foul, to acquire it. In this regard, Mr. Colebrook states that Clive's entire interaction with Mir Jafar was tainted with deceit and treachery, and his greed knew no bounds. This behavior is highly condemnable. Furthermore, by accepting bribes in the form of presents, he set a precedent that was followed by company servants for many years. Despite some faults, there is no denying the fact that at that most critical moment, he rendered great and meritorious services to his country. His headlong valor on the battlefield, his splendid daring and audacity in political crises, and his moral courage in facing dissatisfied and mutinous subordinates made him superb. His force and fire in debates all justify the lofty verdict of Lord Macaulay that "our Ireland has seldom produced a man more truly than Robert Clive, either in arms or in council." Thus, Clive occupies a high place in the history of British India and may be rightly regarded as the founder of the British Empire in the subcontinent. Now, this was the man whose actions affected not only India but also changed the position of India. Clive always made reforms as an individual with his God-gifted abilities, not acting on a collective basis. According to some scholars, the company had a remarkable person with a remarkable mind (C. Hall, 2006).

Even though it was claimed that Robert Clive was a corrupt individual who accumulated wealth for himself and looted Bengal, resulting in a famine, it was he who transformed the status of the company from a group of merchants to a governing power (J. Harrington, 2007).

John Malcolm argued that the Mughal's successors formed alliances with European trading companies because they were struggling for territorial expansion and power. The military was significantly weak, and they lacked the ability to fight on their own, so they sought assistance from company officers, among whom Clive stood out. This was a characteristic of Robert Clive - he suppressed his rivals with his qualities and also aided the

nabobs as a military commander, despite the vices attached to his personality. He went from being perceived as a plunderer to a military hero. Through these transformations, he played a crucial role in establishing British imperialism in India (J. Malcolm, 1836).

Clive was praised as patriotic and even likened to a pirate after the Elizabethan period. His actions were solely driven by a desire to bring glory to his country. His reforms demonstrated that he worked solely for the benefit of England, serving as a soldier rather than a merchant. It was often remarked that he could adapt from diplomatic negotiations to military action as the situation demanded (P.A. Dunae, 1980).

During the years 1767-1940, it was Clive's actions that brought revolutionary changes and elevated the status of the East India Company from a mere trading entity to an administrative power. While the East India Company was already an organized company, it primarily focused on trade and lacked administrative qualities, knowledge, and experience. It was Robert Clive's leadership qualities that allowed him to organize and control the law and order situation in India, which had been disrupted by the nabobs. He even made changes to the rules of the merchants and used force to suppress any opposition. Through his diplomatic and administrative skills, Clive solidified the East India Company's status as a ruling agent (HUW V. BROWN, 1987).

The political dimensions of Clive's life were significant. Growing up, he witnessed his family's struggles and separation, leading to a period of separation from his father. He was deprived of the love of his mother, which affected him as a young child. As a result, money became crucial to him. Through the Diwani rights, he was able to accumulate a substantial amount of revenue, and he also collected a significant sum of money for himself from Mir Jafar. His annual income ranged from £27,000 to £30,000. Clive acknowledged that he learned how to collect money through his association with Mir Jafar. Despite his controversial actions, as a politician, Clive was successful and had a decisive personality (Bruce Lenman, 1983).

Conclusion:

The personality of Clive has been a subject of confusion among scholars, as different schools of thought have portrayed him differently. Scholars aligned with colonial or Orientalist perspectives have hailed him as a hero and the great founder of the British Empire. On the other hand, scholars who adhere to nationalist or Occidental views have labeled him as a villain, imperialist, looter, and plunderer. Undoubtedly, it was Clive's policies that sustained British rule in India. He reorganized the civil and military services, prohibiting servants from accepting presents and engaging in private trade. Despite the disagreement of the directors, he increased salaries, earning the admiration of admirals. He also provided senior servants with allowances from the profits of the salt trade. Additionally, he discontinued the field allowance granted to military officers during wartime. During the period of English supremacy, military officers were no longer granted allowances for war as funds were established for this purpose and pensions were provided instead. Clive introduced the dual government system, a significant step in which the position of the Nawab became symbolic. The Nawab was essentially a puppet in the hands of the English, with the responsibility for revenue collection falling to them. Clive did not rely on the Nawabs due to their weak administration and their susceptibility to corruption and bribery. He realized that they would do anything for personal gain. Consequently, he took away their control over finances. However, this system had its flaws as the company did not bear any responsibility for governing the region. There were several causes of the failure of the French in the Carnatic Second War. Firstly, the immediate learning process of Clive gave him many advantages in this war. Like the French, he formed an alliance and sought military assistance from Nasir Jang. Being against Chanda SB, he provided exceptional service to the English, enabling them to win the battle and establish their supremacy in the Deccan. Secondly, the French were financially powerful. From 1600 to 1744, they engaged in peaceful trade, which increased their commercial value. Additionally, their position was strengthened through factorization. However, the French company, being a

government-supported entity, lacked boldness and corporate efforts. The French government was unable to bear the expenses from a distance. Lastly, the English possessed strong leadership qualities. No doubt like other politicians of his time, he amassed wealth and strengthened himself without considering the poverty his actions created in India. Nevertheless, the expansion of the territory made the Company an imperial power in certain kingdoms of India. As a Company officer, he learned what reforms should be implemented next. In the future, the Company acted as a colonial power in India and ruled for centuries.

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Rahat Ara & Dr Rukhsana Iftikhar

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