



Boğaziçi
MUN 2023

JCC: Sepoy
Rebellion of
1857

Study Guide

Table of Contents

1. Letter of Secretary General
2. Letter of Under-Secretaries General
3. Introduction
4. Background Information
 - 4.1. East India Company
 - 4.1.1. Royal Charter of 1600
 - 4.1.2. Settlement and Expansion of the Company
 - 4.1.3. The Monopoly of the Company
 - 4.1.4. Military Structure
 - 4.1.4.1. The European Soldiers
 - 4.1.4.2. Indian Native States' Troops
 - 4.1.4.3. The Sepoy Units
 - 4.1.4.4. The Presidency Armies

4.2. Brief Summary of the Global Political Landscape

4.3. Political Landscape of India prior to Mutiny

5. Roots of the Conflict

5.1. Religion

5.1.1. Hinduism

5.1.1.1. General Information

5.1.1.2. Some Useful Knowledge

5.1.2. Islam

5.1.2.1. General Information

5.1.2.2. Some Useful Knowledge

5.1.3. Grievances

5.1.4. Sikhism

5.1.4.1. General Information

5.1.4.2. Some Useful Knowledge

5.1.4.3. Sikh Princely States

5.2. Culture

5.3. Material Reasons

5.3.1. Institutional Racism

5.3.2. Wages

6. Historical Events and aftermath

6.1. The Mughal Empire

6.2. Bahadur Shah Zafar II

6.3. The Siege and Massacre of Cawnpore

6.4. The Recapture of Lucknow and the Suppression of the Mutiny

6.5. Aftermath

7. Reference and Further Reading

1. Letter from Secretary General

Most Esteemed Participants,

On behalf of the Academic and Organization teams of Boğaziçi Model United Nations 2023 Conference and the Model United Nations Subcommittee of the Boğaziçi University Debate Society, it is my utmost honor and pleasure to welcome you all as the Secretary-General of the 5th edition of one of the most prestigious conferences in Turkey, Boğaziçi MUN 2023.

My name is Şebnem Yaren. Currently, I am a 4th year Management student with a minor in Political Science & International Relations at Boğaziçi University. I have been a part of Boğaziçi MUN since the beginning of my university life, and I gladly took part in all the endeavors that we set off to. Hence, it is my greatest honor to be welcoming you to our Joint Crisis Committee: Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 (JCC) committee as the Secretary-General of our esteemed conference.

We have created six marvelous committees that serve the concept that we wanted to cover in this edition, bridging the gap. One of them is one that I'm very passionate about, JCC. In this JCC, delegates will try to solve a very ancient but important crisis in the East Indian Company, which involves suppression a rebellion which would be vital for the Company. With the extraordinary efforts of Mr. Akkaş, Mr. İzgi, Mr. Dermancı and Ms. Besler; I have no doubt that all our participants in this committee will have the best time re-living this historical experience. Of course, I owe my Deputy-Secretaries General Mr. Kaan Ertan and Mr. Zühtü Anıl Tutar enormous gratitude for their assistance and cooperation in every aspect of preparing this committee.

We hope that you are as excited as we are to have one of the best four days in this committee, together!

With sincere appreciation,

Şebnem Yaren

Secretary-General of Boğaziçi MUN 2023

2. Letter of Under-Secretaries General

Most distinguished participants,

We are, Kaan Akkaş and Mehmet Fatih İzgi, students from the Boğaziçi University Economics and Political Science departments respectively, and the responsible Under-Secretaries General of the Joint Crisis Committee: Sepoy Rebellion. We sincerely welcome you all to the fifth annual session of the Boğaziçi Model United Nations Conference.

The history of the Indian subcontinent is one of struggle and conquest. The bountifulness of the land, the diversity of the people, and their history reaching far beyond what any other part of Earth has to offer; made it so that many strived to have dominion over the region. Most of them vanquished while those who succeeded tended to come and go, for no establishment, has come close to quelling the conflictual nature of the land. This was the truth of the Indian subcontinent when the Ten King Alliance crumbled against the Bharata Kingdom in the 14th century BCE and it is the truth when Pakistan and India struggle over Kashmir today.

In our committee, we have a look at one of the most monumental events in Indian history. The Sepoy Rebellion is considered to be the first fight of Indian people, united in a modern sense, against their foreign rulers who came to dominate the native Indians for centuries. It marks

the end of the reign of the East India Company, yet also the beginning of a far harsher and far worse regime, the British Raj. The events that took place in this period thus shaped how the British Empire would rule its holdings in southeastern Asia, replacing merchants with officials, and how modern India would look like.

We would like to thank our resourceful assistants, Erkan Dermancı and Alisa Besler, for their unreserved efforts and contributions. We also wish you, the honorable officials of EIC, good fortune in preserving your institution, and to you, brave sepoys, to fulfill your demands and objectives.

With utmost regards,

Mehmet Fatih İzgi and Kaan Akkaş

3. Introduction

The East India Company was a British company formed for the exploitation of trade with East and Southeast Asia and India. It was incorporated by royal charter in 1600 and started trading in the East Indies in 1612. The company received a monopoly on British trade in the region, which lasted until 1813. It eventually came to control large parts of India, including the Bengal Presidency, Bombay Presidency, and Madras Presidency, through a combination of military, diplomacy, and economic means. The company also played a key role in spreading the British Empire throughout India and Southeast Asia. The Sepoy Rebellion, also known as the Indian Mutiny, was a rebellion against British rule in India in 1857-58. The rebellion was sparked by a number of factors, including resentment towards British policies, the annexation of Indian states, and the forced enlistment of Indian soldiers (sepoys) into the British army. The rebellion was primarily led by Indian soldiers, who were unhappy with the changes being imposed on them by the British, and by the Indian population, who were frustrated with British economic and political policies. The rebellion began in Meerut, a city in northern India, and quickly spread to other parts of the country. The British were able to suppress the rebellion, but it resulted in significant changes to British policy in India, including the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British government. The East India Company and the Sepoy rebellion are significant events in India's history, which are explained in detail later in this briefing, as it marks the beginning of British colonial rule in India and the resistance against it. The East India Company was a powerful economic and political entity that controlled large parts of India and Southeast Asia and played a major role in spreading the British Empire throughout the region. The Sepoy rebellion, on the other hand, was a significant event in Indian history, as it marks the first major rebellion against British rule in India and the first major test of the British Empire's power in the region. The rebellion also

resulted in significant changes to British policy in India, and ultimately led to the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British government.

4. Background Information

4.1. East India Company

The East Indian Company, also known as The British East India Company, was a British mercantile company founded in 1600. Its initial purpose was to participate in the East Indian spice trade, but it quickly grew to become one of the most powerful companies in the world, controlling a significant portion of global trade and even ruling parts of India as a sovereign power. The company was founded by a group of London merchants who received a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth, I granting them a monopoly on English trade with the East Indies.

4.1.1. Royal Charter of 1600

A royal charter is a formal document issued by a monarch, such as a king or queen, that grants certain rights and privileges to an individual or organization. These charters are typically issued for the purpose of establishing a corporation, e.g., a city or university, or granting certain powers or privileges to an individual or group. One of the most common uses of a royal charter is to establish a corporation. These charters typically outline the powers and responsibilities of the corporation, as well as the rights and privileges of its members. The royal charter of East India Company also known as the Royal charter of 1600, was a document issued by Queen Elizabeth I of England in 1600, granting the East India Company a monopoly on English trade

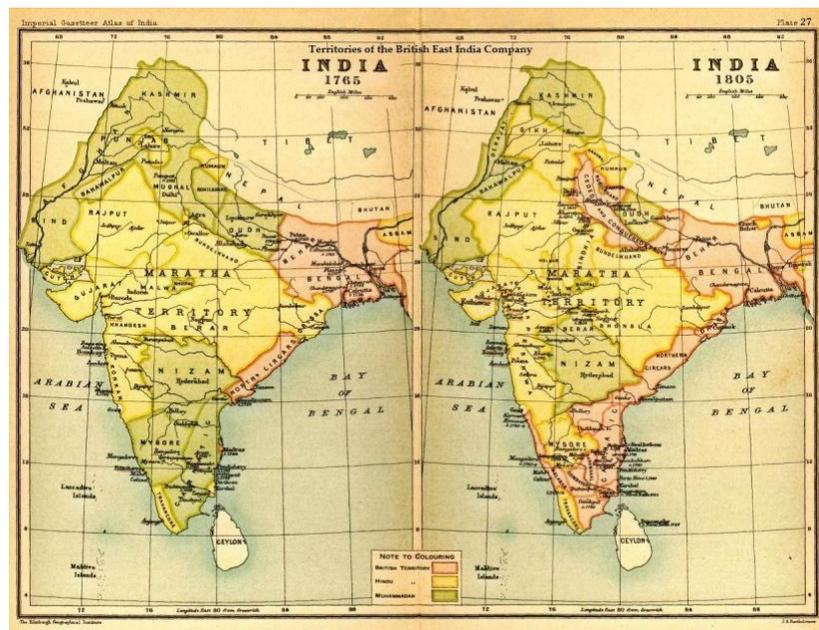
with the East Indies, including India, China, and the Spice Islands. The charter also granted the company the authority to establish colonies, make treaties, and raise armies.

The charter was issued at a time when European nations were competing for control of trade routes to the East Indies, which were a source of valuable spices such as pepper and cinnamon. The East India Company was granted the exclusive right to engage in trade with the East Indies for a period of 15 years, in exchange for paying an annual tribute to the crown. The charter also granted the company the authority to establish settlements and forts in the East Indies and to negotiate treaties with local rulers. Additionally, the company was given the power to appoint its own officers, including a governor and council, who would have the authority to govern the company's territories and make laws. The company is also granted the right to raise its own army and navy to protect its trade and territorial interests. The company was also given the power to mint its own coinage and to exercise jurisdiction over its own employees and territories. The charter of the East India Company was a significant development in the history of British imperialism and globalization. It allowed the East India Company to establish a powerful presence in India, and it laid the foundation for British control of the subcontinent for over 200 years. The charter also played a significant role in the development of global trade, as it helped to establish the East India Company as one of the most powerful companies in the world and open up new markets for European goods. However, the charter also had negative consequences, as the company's power and influence led to abuse and exploitation of the local population, as well as conflicts with other European powers. The charter was eventually dissolved by the British government in 1858, following the Indian Rebellion of 1857, also known as Sepoy Rebellion.

4.1.2. Settlement and Expansion of the Company

In its early years, the company struggled to compete with the Dutch and Portuguese, who already had a strong presence in the East Indies. However, the company eventually managed to establish a foothold in India through a combination of diplomacy and military force. The company's first settlement in India was established in Surat, on the western coast of India, in 1608. The settlement was initially established as a trading post, but it soon grew into a major center for trade and commerce. The East India Company's expansion in India continued throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The company established settlements in other parts of India, including Madras (now Chennai), Bombay (now Mumbai), and Calcutta (now Kolkata). These settlements were strategically located to control trade routes and access to resources. They also served as administrative centers for the

company's territories and as bases for its military operations. The company's expansion in India was driven by several factors. One of the main reasons was to secure a reliable source of raw materials, such as textiles, spices, and other goods.



The company also sought to control trade routes and establish a monopoly over trade in India.

Additionally, the company sought to expand its territorial holdings in India in order to secure its political and economic interests.

The East India Company's expansion in India was not always peaceful. The company often used force to expand its territories, and it engaged in conflicts with local rulers and other European powers. The company also faced resistance from local populations, who were often resentful of the company's presence and its attempts to control its resources. The East India Company's expansion in India also had a significant impact on the country's economy and society. The company's control of trade routes and resources led to the development of new industries, such as textiles and shipbuilding. The company's presence also led to the growth of new cities and the development of infrastructure, such as ports and roads. However, the company's expansion in India also had negative consequences. The company's control of resources and trade routes often led to the exploitation of local populations, and it contributed to



the decline of traditional industries and the displacement of local people. Additionally, the company's use of force to expand its territories led to the loss of lives and damage to property.

4.1.3. The Monopoly of the Company

One of the main factors in the formation of the East India Company monopoly was the support of the British government, which is provided with the Royal Charter of 1600. This charter was a significant advantage for the company, as it protected it from competition from other British traders and merchants. This factor gave the company a unique and influential political power which helped it to secure exclusive trading rights and to maintain its monopoly status for centuries. For instance, the EIC had a monopoly on the production and sale of opium in India, which was a major source of revenue for the company. The EIC was able to negotiate treaties and agreements with local rulers in the East Indies, which granted the company exclusive rights to trade in certain ports and regions. This helped the EIC to control the flow of goods and to limit competition. The company also had a powerful navy and army, which allowed it to maintain control over the trade routes and ports in the East Indies. This military power enabled the company to protect its trade interests and expand its territorial control. Additionally, the EIC was able to form a monopoly



through its control of information.

The company had a strict policy of secrecy, which prevented other European countries from gaining information about its trade routes and the prices it was paying for goods. This made it difficult for

other European companies to compete with the EIC. Furthermore, the EIC's monopoly was also formed through its ability to adapt to changing market conditions. The company was able to diversify its trade activities, moving into new markets such as China and Southeast Asia, which helped to insulate it from the competition. Additionally, the EIC was able to adapt to changing consumer preferences, such as the increasing demand for Indian textiles in Europe.

4.1.4. Military Structure of the Company

The structure of the EIC's military varied over time, but generally, it consisted of three main branches: the European soldiers, the Indian native states' troops, and the sepoy units, who were collectively organized around presidency armies.

4.1.4.1. European Soldiers

The European soldiers, also known as the "British troops", were recruited from the British army and were primarily used for the defense of the company's factories and forts. They were led by British officers and were considered the elite force of the EIC's military. They formed the core of the company's military and held most of the important command positions, since they were the only ones that can be promoted to significant posts in the company according to its laws.



4.1.4.2. Indian Native States' Troops

The Indian native states' troops were soldiers provided by Indian princes and rulers diplomatically acquired as part of treaties and alliances with the EIC. They were used for various purposes such as garrisoning EIC's forts, escorting convoys, and fighting against other Indian states. They were led by their own officers and followed their own customs and traditions.

4.1.4.3. The Sepoy Units

The Indian sepoys were native Indian soldiers recruited by the EIC. They were primarily used for garrison duties and for escorting convoys. Led by British officers and Indian NCOs (non-commissioned officers), they were an integral part of the EIC's military structure and played a significant role in the company's colonization and control of India. The first Indian sepoys were recruited by the EIC in the 18th century, primarily to serve as guards for the company's factories and forts, which were initially recruited from the traditional warrior castes of India, such as Rajputs and Bhumihars, but later recruitment was expanded to include other castes as well. The sepoys were trained in European military tactics and were equipped with European weapons. They were also paid a salary and were given other benefits such as land grants and pensions. As the EIC's power in India grew, so did the role of the sepoys and their numbers. They were increasingly used for garrison duties and for escorting convoys and made up the majority of the company's soldiers. They were also used in the EIC's wars against other Indian states and in the company's expansion into new territories. They were considered the backbone of the EIC's military whose loyalty and effectiveness were crucial to the company's ability to maintain its control over India.

Apart from their role as soldiers, the sepoys had an important impact on the social and cultural life of India. They were considered an elite group and were respected by the Indian

population. They were trained in European military tactics and were exposed to Western culture and ideas through their interactions with British officers and other European soldiers, which they brought back to their communities and families, contributing to the spread of Western influence in India. Because of their interaction with the British officers, they also played an important role in the mutual understanding and exchange of culture between the two nations. Another impact was the influence they had on the traditional Indian warrior castes, such as Rajputs and Bhumiars. These castes were traditionally associated with military service, and the opportunity to serve as sepoys in the EIC's army was an attractive option for many young men from these castes. This led to a significant increase in the social status and prestige of these castes, as being a sepoy was considered an elite and respected profession.

They were also important because of their role in maintaining order and stability in the territories under the EIC's control, playing a key role in maintaining law and order in their posts for which they were respected by the Indian population. Although they were mainly led by British officers, they were able to retain and follow their own customs and traditions which further cemented their position in the eyes of the people.



Furthermore, the sepoys were at the center of several major events that shaped the history of India. They were used in the EIC's wars against other Indian states and in the company's expansion into new territories. More notably, they instigated the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, also known as the Indian Rebellion of 1857 which was a widespread rebellion against the EIC's rule in India that was sparked by discontent among the sepoys over issues such as pay and working conditions. the rebellion was eventually put down by the British, but

it marked the end of the EIC's rule in India and led to the British Crown taking direct control of India.

4.1.4.4. The Presidency Armies

The Presidency Armies were the military forces of the three British presidencies (districts) in India: the Bengal Presidency, the Madras Presidency, and the Bombay Presidency. These armies were formed by the EIC in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to protect and expand the company's commercial interests in India. All these presidency armies had a similar structure, consisting of a mix of European and Indian soldiers, the sepoys making up the majority of the soldiers, led by British officers and Indian NCOs while the Indian native states' soldiers were led by their own officers.

The Bengal Army, also known as the Bengal Native Army, was the largest of the three presidency armies. It was responsible for the defense of the Bengal Presidency, which included present-day eastern India, Bangladesh, and parts of Pakistan. The Madras Army, also known as the Madras Native Army, was responsible for the defense of the Madras Presidency, which included present-day southern India. The Bombay Army, also known as the Bombay Native Army, was responsible for the defense of the Bombay Presidency, which included present-day western India.

4.2. Brief Summary of the Global Political Landscape

The 1850s were a time of significant political change and upheaval around the world. In Europe, the decade saw the rise of nationalism and the emergence of a number of new nation-states, as well as the unification of Italy and the formation of the German Empire. The 1850s were also marked by increasing tensions between the major European powers, as they competed for colonies and influence overseas.

In the United States, the 1850s were a time of great political division, with tensions between

the Northern and Southern states over issues such as slavery and states' rights coming to a head. These tensions eventually led to the American Civil War, which began in 1861.

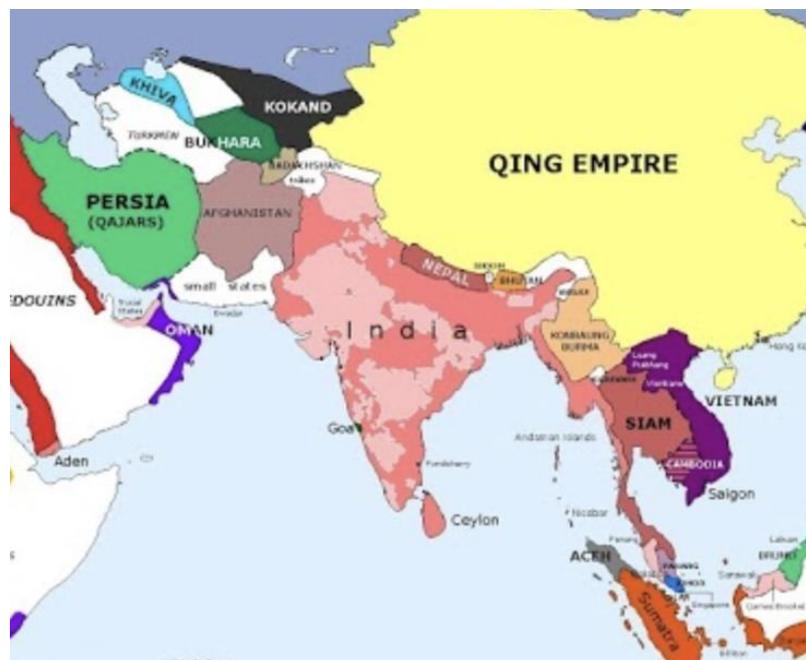
Other significant global political events of the 1850s included the Crimean War, in which Russia fought against an alliance of the Ottoman Empire, France, Britain, and Sardinia, and the Taiping Rebellion in China, which was one of the deadliest wars in human history.

Overall, the 1850s were a time of significant political change and upheaval, as various countries and regions grappled with issues of nationalism, imperialism, and identity.

4.3. Landscape of India Prior to Mutiny

Before the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the political landscape of India was dominated by the British East India Company, which had been granted a royal charter by the British government in 1600 to trade and conduct business in India. The Company gradually expanded its power and influence in India over the following centuries, eventually establishing itself as the dominant political and economic force in the region.

The Company's rule was characterized by a number of policies and practices that were unpopular with many Indians, including the use of exploitative land revenue systems, the imposition of British legal and administrative systems, and the suppression of local rulers and traditions. These policies



contributed to widespread discontent and resistance among the Indian population. In addition to the British East India Company, the political landscape of India also included a number of local

rulers and princes who held varying degrees of autonomy and influence. Some of these rulers were allied with the British and supported their rule, while others were more ambivalent or opposed to it.

The Company also supported the spread of Christianity in India and actively worked to convert Hindus to Christianity. This included supporting missionary efforts and building churches, as well as providing financial incentives for converts. These efforts were often met with resistance from Hindus, who saw them as an attempt to undermine their religious and cultural traditions. In addition to these policies and practices, the company also used military force to suppress resistance and maintain its control over the region. This included the use of sepoys in its army, as well as the deployment of British troops to suppress uprisings and maintain order.

Overall, the political landscape of India before the Sepoy Mutiny was marked by the dominance of the British East India Company and widespread discontent among the Indian population, which would eventually contribute to the outbreak of the rebellion in 1857. This discontent of the Indian population had its roots in several factors but not limited to cultural and religious suppression.

5. Roots of the Rebellion

5.1. Religion

India has a rich history of diversity of religion. It saw the emergence of many different belief systems, also adopting and adapting many others into its rich social fabric. The diverse peoples of India follow many different religions and they identify primarily by their faith, thus religions are particularly influential in their ways of living. This power of religion was utilized during the Sepoy Rebellion both to incite it and to mobilize masses for it. This section will give

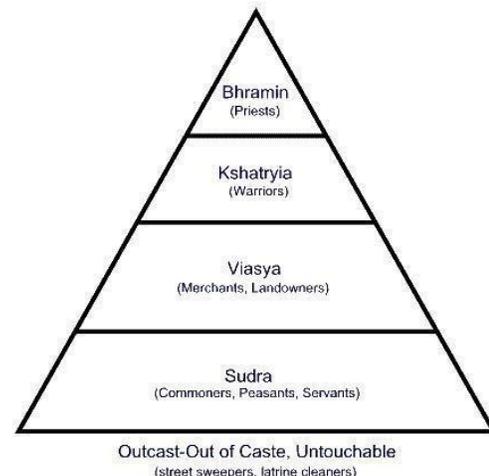
brief introductions to these religions, only to the extent that is enough, and provide some information that could be useful during the committee.

5.1.1. Hinduism

5.1.1.1. General Information

Hinduism is a polytheistic religion born in the hearth of India. The oldest of its sources, the Vedas (or the Vedic texts) date back as far as 1500 BCE, maybe even further. The three main deities are Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu. The religion is like a coalition of morals and practices, that emphasize living a good life around the ideas of karma, the ever-present system of divine justice, and reincarnation. In social terms, Hinduism

divides the people into five castes with a strict hierarchical order: Brahmins (ecclesiastical leaders) on the top followed by Kshatriyas (rulers and warriors), Vaishyas (traders and farmers), Shudras (servants) and Dalits (means “untouchables”, seen as so low that

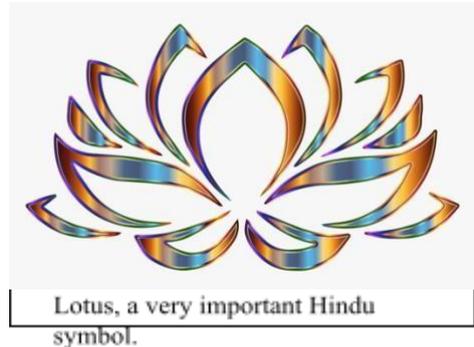


they cannot be touched, mainly associated with the burial of the dead). In this caste system there is no social mobility, a son of a farmer cannot become a warrior, and inter-caste relationships are abhorred, with the only exception being devotion to a temple, which makes religion a handsome career path. Religious practices also have a very central role, so much so that what enables reincarnation is cremation, ritualistic burning of the dead body, and what makes a soul out of the cycle of reincarnation, the equivalent of going to heaven, is prayers and offerings to the gods.

5.1.1.2. Some useful knowledge

The Hindu system of divine justice, karma, is always in motion and has no mechanism for forgiving. If you live a sinful life you will be reincarnated badly, like in a lower caste. Thus, Hindus refrain in their actions from anything that is sinful since they will definitely face consequences. Having this in mind, religious symbolism is very important in Hinduism and devout Hindus have a particularly strong incentive to respect and protect the elements of their religion. The most

visible of those are the taboo animals, the most notable of which is the cow. Three further important animals are the vehicles of the main gods; the swan as the mount of Brahma, the bull as the mount of Shiva, and the eagle as the mount of Vishnu. These animals are sacred and are not to be disturbed or violated. Also, rituals and prayers are very important for Hindus, who do yogas and various



Sculptures of deities at the entrance of a Hindu temple.

prayers daily and visit temples regularly. Furthermore, the caste system is an important part of the Hindu way of life. Especially Brahmins, who conduct the rituals integral to Hinduism, are to be respected and cared for. Lastly, Hindus celebrate the following festivals which could be useful to know for the purposes of the committee:

- August: Janmashtami, the birthday of Krishna, an avatar of Vishnu.
- September: Dusserah, a celebration of good over evil; and Ganesh Chaturthi, the Birthday of Ganesh (a deity), celebrated by parading huge images of Ganesh.
- January: Lohri, celebrated in Punjab, marks the end of winter.

- February: Pongal-Sankranti, celebrated in south India to celebrate the rice harvest.
- March: Holi, the new year; and Shivaratri, an honoring of Shiva
- April: Sri Vaishnavas, an honoring of Vishnu

5.1.2. Islam

5.1.2.1. General Information

Islam is a monotheistic religion that emerged through the Prophet Muhammet (peace be upon him -a prayer uttered by Muslims with each mention of the Prophet's name-) in the 7th century in Arabia. Its God is called Allah (literally meaning “the only one that is a deity”), an omnipotent being, all-seeing, all-hearing, and all-knowing, that owns all creation and is the sole judge of the heaven. The religion communicates its teachings through the Qur’an (the holy book dictated by Allah himself) and the Sunna (practices of the Prophet), and in general, preaches living a good life and fulfilling rituals in the favor of Allah so that one may enter heaven. The religion claims descent from the previous middle-eastern monotheistic religions, Judaism and Christianity, and accepts their prophets as its own. It is notably much more worldly than the other contemporary religions (save for Sikhism which was influenced by Islam in the first place), stating that endeavors for this world can also pave the way for heaven when done right.

5.1.2.2. Some useful knowledge

In Islam, as in every religion, there are obligations and prohibitions. Foremost of these is the daily prayers that each individual must conduct five times a day which also necessitates specific preparations like ablution, ritualistic cleaning of the body, and finding Qibla, the

direction of Kaaba, a holy building built by the Prophet Abraham that every Muslim must turn towards during prayer. Another notable worship is the fasting of Ramazan, a month-long daytime fasting which is followed by a celebration. Furthermore, Islam too has a taboo animal, the pig, no product which Muslims can consume. The religion uses a lunar calendar, called the Hijra calendar beginning from the emigration of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Medina, so their festivals (called eids, holiday in Arabic) change dates each year, most notable are the following (given according to the year 1857):

- June: Eid of Fitr, the three-day long holiday following the fast of Ramadan.
- July: Eid of Sacrifice, the four-day long celebration during which all able Muslims must sacrifice livestock for Allah, a possible point of contention between the Muslims and Hindus.
- August: Muharram 1st, Hijri new year, also the anniversary of emigration (The Hijra).
- October: Birthday of the Prophet.

5.1.3. Grievances

Hindus and Muslims make up nearly all of the sepoys. It would not be fully accurate to claim that all sepoys followed a religion or were devoted even if they followed one. However, religion was a significant factor to mobilize the masses for the uprising, sepoys and civilians alike, which sets the event apart from the previous small uprisings. In that, some particular religious conflicts were utilized against the British.

Firstly, British governance violated the Hindu caste system. Brahmins were disposed of their prestigious positions under the British and the sepoys were recruited from various castes. The

inability of sepoys to rise through the ranks of EIC meant that these recruits from different castes were hierarchically equal. Also, the caste system considered Muslims as the lowest of the castes, and their recruitment too caused discontent among Hindu sepoys.



Secondly, working for the EIC obstructed and sometimes prevented worship. Heavy working conditions and assignment procedures meant that sometimes sepoys had to work in places far away from their homes, without temples or proper conditions to worship. There is no indication of British officers objecting to fundamental religious practices yet the harsh and busy working conditions preventing them are among the reasons for prior uprisings. Apart from the fundamental religious practices, British officers also banned the religious-cultural practices that conflicted with the British way of life, an example of which was the prohibition of the Hindu tradition Sati, the burning of living widows during the cremation of their husbands which gathered pushback from the Brahmins.

Lastly and most importantly, there were rumors spread that EIC equipment used products of taboo animals. Initially, the rumors concerned the standard issue Enfield rifles, which's cartridges had to be prepared by mouth and used lubricants made of cow and pig fats. Another rumor followed that cow and pig bones were mixed into the flour given to the sepoys. There is no proof with regard to the truthfulness or falsity of these but one thing is clear: they caused an outcry that incited the sepoy rebellion.

5.1.4. Sikhism

Although not directly influenced the sepoys or the sepoy rebellion, Sikhism is an important aspect to consider because of the Sikh princely states' involvement in the conflict.

5.1.4.1. General Information

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion founded in 1499 in India by Guru Nanak, the first of the gurus, the spiritual leaders of the Sikh world. Its god is named Sat Guru which means “True Teacher”. The main philosophy is that each individual can spiritually find the God within themselves by journeying inward through methods like meditation and dispossession. The religion is influenced by, and in essence resembles a mixture of, Hinduism and Islam. It has an Islamic conception of God, and a Sikh is defined by an authoritative Sikh text as “...any woman or a man whose faith consists of belief in one God, the ten Gurus...who has faith in the Amrit of the tenth Guru -who believes the last Guru is indeed a Guru- and who adheres to no other religion.” which is quite parallel to the pillars of faith of Islam. On the other hand, it adheres to the beliefs of karma and reincarnation like Hinduism, and thus creates a strong identity for its followers. Unlike Hinduism however, Sikhism does not require its devotees to forego the material world to complete their spiritual journey, thus giving rise to the Sikh princely states.

5.1.4.2. Some useful knowledge

As aforementioned for Hinduism, the belief of karma in Sikhism too gives considerable importance to religious symbolism. The most notable of these is the Kirpan, a steel dagger carried by Sikhs at all times to symbolize their determination to defend the truth. This persistence of religious symbolism creates a strong Sikh identity and community. Sikhs are culturally closer to Hindus, as they cooperated with them against the Mughal expansions. The important Sikh festivals mainly commemorate the births or martyrdoms of Gurus, some important ones are as following:

- May: Day of Martyrdom of Guru Arjan commemorates the execution of Guru Arjan by a Mughal emperor.

- August: Celebration of the Guru Granth Shabib commemorates the completion of the sacred scriptures of Sikhs.
- October: Guru Nanak's Birthday.
- November: Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur commemorates the execution of Tegh Bahadur by a Mughal emperor.

5.1.4.3. Sikh Princely States

The fact that Sikhism creates a strong identity does not mean that it creates political unity. At the time, there were many scattered semi-autonomous Sikh princely states all over India that competed with one another. Their relationships with the British were likewise varied. The EIC came to be a formidable military force in the Indian political landscape. Initially, the Sikh states bought EIC forces to get ahead in their competition with other Sikh states. As EIC solidified its position in India the relationship turned upside down as EIC extorted Sikh states to provide "protection" which was revoked as soon as it fits. This led some Sikh states to have friendlier relations with the British while others approached them antagonistically. This played a major part in how the rebellion played out.

The most significant Sikh state to oppose the British was the state in Punjab, ruled by Maharaja (a term for the ruler in Sikhism) Ranjit Singh. They had a strained relationship with the British because they viewed them as a threat to the culture and stability in the region, and as a helping hand for their competition. Accordingly, they saw the sepoy rebellion as a means to strengthen their position and supported the rebels by sending troops and supplies which played a key role in the initial success of the rebellion. Notable Sikh states to oppose the rebellion are Patiala and Jind. These states had good relations with the British and saw the rebellion as a threat to their

interests. Thus, they offered to send EIC troops to help quell the rebellion or mediate between the sides, yet ended up remaining neutral when EIC rejected their involvement.

5.2. Cultural Reasons

Although very intricately linked with religions, the cultural aspect of the conflict too is quite important. British settlement and the growing influence of the EIC was seen as a fundamental threat to Indian life and social fabric. One very prominent reason for this was the British involvement in the caste system. The British colonial government in India implemented a number of policies that further entrenched and institutionalized the caste system, like classifying people based on their caste for the British census. Yet, one of the main policies implemented by the British was the system of reservation, which set aside certain jobs and educational opportunities for members of lower castes which was intended to provide some opportunities for lower castes to improve their social and economic status, and to help reduce tensions and conflict within society. The British also implemented a number of laws and regulations aimed at protecting the rights of lower castes and promoting social justice. This dual approach to the caste system caused conflicts with all components of society. Furthermore, the colonial government instated a British education system throughout its settlements and western missionaries found exceptional circumstances to forward their endeavors, which was viewed as an imminent danger to the Indian youth and way of life. With regards to sepoys, the necessity to work outside of India or their native provinces was seen as a problem because it distanced them from their cultural lifestyle as well as their religious duties.

5.3. Material Reasons

Religion and culture were influential elements in the relative success of the Rebellion of 1857, however beneath the veneer of religion there were also material reasons for sepoys to rise. These reasons had also incited prior protests and smaller uprisings and were as influential in this one.

5.3.1. Institutional Racism

The EIC chain of command was strictly British. No one outside British nationals could hold offices or promote in a meaningful way within the company. The limitations on the prospect of careers were very significant points of grievance among the sepoys since the initial prominence of their forces. Added with a non-institutional British snubber, this issue caused serious discontent and was one of the main demands of the rebelling sepoys.

5.3.2. Wages

The sepoys received a set salary from the company. Although the wages were always promptly paid, they never rose within the past 50 years. This meant that in real terms (when considering inflation and increasing prices which was not a concept insignificant at the time) their wages and purchasing power decreased each year. They made complaints to their officers, got ignored, made peaceful protests, got disregarded, instigated small uprisings, got squashed, and in 1857, rebelled.

6. Historical Events and Aftermath

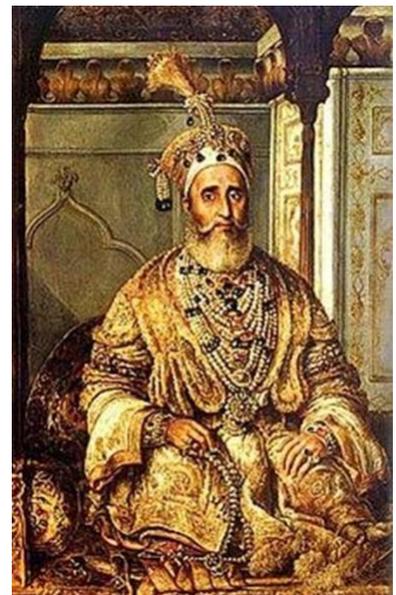
6.1. The Mughal Empire

The Mughal Empire was a Muslim empire in India that existed from the early 16th to the mid-19th century. It was founded by Babur, a Chaghatai Turkic-Mongol prince, who established himself as the ruler of the Mughal Empire after defeating the Sultan of Delhi in 1526. The Mughal Empire was characterized by a centralized, bureaucratic government and a strong economy based on agriculture and trade. It was also a period of cultural flourishing, and the Mughal emperors patronized the arts, literature, and architecture. The Mughal Empire reached its peak of power and prosperity under the reign of Emperor Akbar the Great (1556-1605), who is considered one of the greatest rulers in Indian history. However, by the early 18th century, the Mughal Empire was in decline, and it faced a number of challenges, including internal conflicts, external invasions, and the rise of regional powers. The British East India Company played a significant role in the decline of the Mughal Empire, as it gained control over large parts of India during this time. The Mughal Empire officially came to an end in 1857, with the Sepoy Rebellion.

6.2. Bahadur Shah Zafar II

Bahadur Shah Zafar II was the last Mughal emperor of India. He ruled from 1837 to 1857, during a time when the Mughal Empire was in decline and the EIC had significant influence and control over the country.

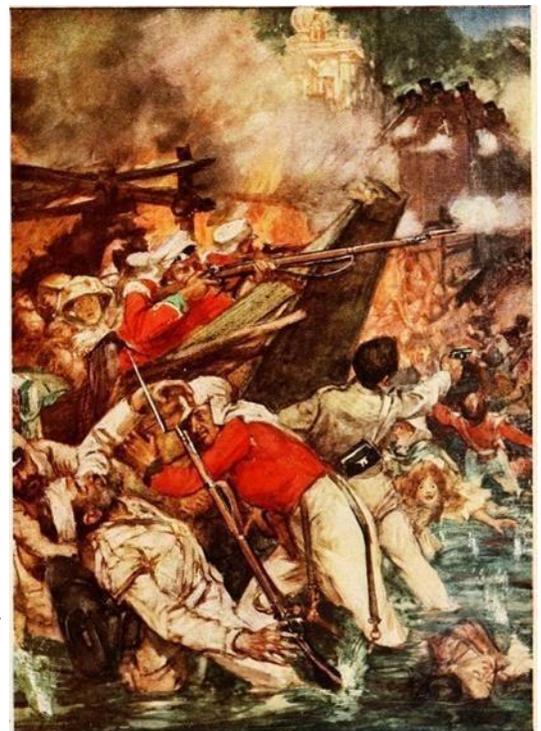
During the Sepoy Rebellion, the sepoys in the town of Delhi declared Bahadur Shah Zafar II as their leader. The sepoys had mutinied and taken control of the city, and they believed that



the Mughal emperor could provide a rallying point for the rebellion. However, Bahadur Shah Zafar II was not able to effectively lead the rebellion and was eventually captured by the British. He was exiled to Rangoon (now Yangon) in present-day Myanmar, where he died in 1862. Despite his limited role in the rebellion, Bahadur Shah Zafar II is remembered as a symbol of resistance against British rule in India, and he is considered a national hero in the country.

6.3. The Siege and Massacre of Cawnpore

Cawnpore was a crucial garrison town for the EIC forces, located in present-day Uttar Pradesh. Initially, the sepoys in Cawnpore remained loyal to the British. The British general in Cawnpore at the time was Hugh Wheeler, who spoke Indian and was married to an Indian woman. The general was so confident that the Cawnpore sepoys would not rebel, he dispatched two units to the town of Lucknow which was besieged. The rumors of a possible siege led the townsfolk to seek shelter in the magazine north of the city. Nana Sahib, an Indian aristocrat, and fighter sent a letter to General Wheeler on the 5th of June informing him that he intended to attack the following morning. The British forces were ill-equipped and were only able to hold Nana Sahib's attack for three weeks. Sahib offered Wheeler a safe passage for the British to Allahabad through a note. After a two-day period of preparation and burying the deceased soldiers, the British



left Cawnpore for Allahabad on the morning of the 27th of June, 1857. Forty boats took off from Cawnpore, on their way to Allahabad. The departing British boats were attacked by the rebel sepoys, with the rebels shooting soldiers and civilians indiscriminately. The British East India

Company blamed Nana Sahib for ordering this massacre, although some sources say the first shot was fired due to confusion. The surviving civilians were taken to the home of the local magistrate's clerk, the Bibighar. The number of women and children who were taken to Bibighar was estimated to be 206 and they were held captive for two weeks.

It was during this time that the Company defeated the Indian forces in Allahabad. It was clear to Nana Sahib that he and the rebel sepoys would not be able to hold the British forces off. Sahib and other leading rebels decided that the hostages must be killed. The sepoys refused to slaughter the civilians, therefore Sahib ordered local butchers to carry out his orders. All of the civilians were brutally murdered and thrown into a nearby well. Many claims have been made for the reasoning behind this massacre. One of these was that the Company would not advance if there were no hostages to save. Another reason was to ensure that no information was leaked after the fall of Cawnpore. No matter the reasoning, this act of cruelty hardened the British attitude against the sepoys.

6.4. The Recapture of Lucknow and the Suppression of the Mutiny

The rebellion in Lucknow began in June 1857, when Indian rebels, including soldiers and civilians, seized control of the city and the nearby Residency, where the British Resident and his staff were based. The British Resident, William Henry Sleeman, and his staff were able to hold out against the rebels for several months, but they were eventually forced to retreat to a small fort called the Martiniere. The British launched a number of military campaigns to recapture Lucknow and suppress the rebellion in the region. One of the most significant campaigns was led by Sir Colin Campbell, who was able to recapture the city after a series of hard-fought battles. The recapture of Lucknow was a major victory for the British and it was widely celebrated in Britain. The British forces were able to drive the rebels out of the city and restore British control.

The recapture of Lucknow was followed by a series of other military campaigns by the British to suppress the rebellion, including the capture of other key cities, such as Kanpur (then known as Cawnpore) and Delhi. The uprising was eventually suppressed in 1858, and it led to significant changes in the administration of India, including the end of the British East India Company's rule and the transfer of power to the British Crown.

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 was a major event in the history of India and the British Empire, and it had significant political, social, and economic consequences for both India and Britain. It marked the end of the Mughal Empire and the beginning of direct British rule in India, and it also led to the introduction of a number of reforms, including the establishment of a new system of administration and the introduction of new laws and policies.

6.5. Aftermath

The aftermath of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 had significant political, social, and economic consequences for both India and Britain. Some of the key events and developments that occurred in the aftermath of the rebellion include

- a. The end of the British East India Company's rule in India: The rebellion led to the dissolution of the British East India Company's rule in India and the transfer of power to the British Crown. The British government took over the administration of India and established a new system of government, with the Governor-General of India as the highest-ranking official.
- b. The introduction of new laws and policies: The British government introduced a number of new laws and policies in the aftermath of the rebellion, including the Indian Penal Code, which codified the criminal law in India, and the Indian Councils Act, which established a system of legislative councils in India. These laws and policies were aimed at strengthening British control over India and promoting economic development.

- c. The exile of Indian rebels: The British government took a number of measures to suppress the rebellion, including the execution of several Indian rebels and the exile of others to remote parts of the empire. Many Indian rebels were exiled to places like the Andaman Islands and Rangoon, where they were held as prisoners.
- d. The rise of Indian nationalism: The rebellion was a major turning point in the history of India, and it contributed to the rise of Indian nationalism and the demand for greater self-governance. The rebellion was seen as a heroic struggle against British rule, and it inspired many Indians to fight for their independence.

Overall, the aftermath of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 was marked by significant political, social, and economic changes in India and Britain, and it had a lasting impact on the history of both countries.

7. Reference and Further Reading

Bowker, J. (2021). *World religions: The great faiths explored and explained*. DK.

Cartwright, M. (2022, October 18). *Sepoy mutiny*. World History Encyclopedia. Retrieved

January 21, 2023, from https://www.worldhistory.org/Sepoy_Mutiny/

Consequences of the revolt of 1857. Unacademy. (2022, March 27). Retrieved January 21, 2023, from <https://unacademy.com/content/nda/study-material/indian-history/consequences-of-the-revolt-of-1857/>

Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). *Bahādur Shāh II*. Encyclopædia Britannica.

Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bahadur-Shah-II>

Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). *Indian mutiny summary*. Encyclopædia Britannica.

Retrieved January 21, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Indian-Mutiny>

Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). *Nana Sahib*. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved January

21, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nana-Sahib>

Luscombe, S. (n.d.). *Indian mutiny*. The British Empire. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

Magazine, S. (2012, May 24). *Pass it on: The secret that preceded the Indian Rebellion of 1857*.

Smithsonian.com. Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/pass-it-on-the-secret-that-preceded-the-indian-rebellion-of-1857-105066360/>

Why did the Indian mutiny happen? National Army Museum. (n.d.). Retrieved January 21, 2023, from

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/why-did-indian-mutiny-happen>

Erikson, Emily, (July 2014). *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757*

David E. Omissi, (June 1998), *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860*