



23rd Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture gathering with guest speaker Michael Wagner  
24 January 2023, 6pm (UK time)

### **Guns, Money and Lawyers: The English Chartered Trading Companies 1688-1763**

This lecture will examine the five early-modern English chartered trading companies: the East India Company, the Royal African Company, the Hudson's Bay Company, the Levant Company and the Russia Company. These companies allowed English trade to expand beyond its traditional markets and enabled access to vast new ones including India, China, Russia, Africa, the Ottoman Empire and Canada. Their imports were a driving force of the English consumer revolution and thousands depended on them for their livelihoods. Leading merchants became important City figures and the companies major contributors to the finances of the state.

The overwhelming focus on the East India Company has created a distorted view of the chartered companies as a whole. Mike Wagner will consider how the EIC differed from other chartered companies and illuminate the workings of lesser-known companies, such as the Levant and Russia companies. He will examine how international rivalry forced the companies to change the way they did business; how they responded through financial innovation; and how their political fate largely hinged on their economic performance.

Booking essential: <https://michael-wagner-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>



Mike Wagner is the author of *The English Chartered Trading Companies 1688-1763* (Routledge paperback edn 2022). He received his DPhil from the University of Oxford and teaches courses in eighteenth-century British history in the Department for Continuing Education.

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