



## BHOR PRINCELY STATE: FOUNDATION AND EVOLUTION

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### **Abstract:**

*British ruled India with two administrative systems: British Provinces and Indian "princely" states. There were 562 princely states in India covered 712508 square miles. The main boundaries of Bhor princely state, at North-West side the boundaries of present Raigad district adjoined; at North-Eastern side boundaries were adjoined by ranges of Sahyadri. Eastern and southern boundaries were surrounded by boundaries of present Pune and Satara districts.*

### **KEY WORDS:**

Woodwork, evidences, st pa caitya griha, Wada, façade, Peshwa, Museums.

### **INTRODUCTION-**

Western boundaries were shared by present Raigad district. The total area was of 1491square miles. Bhor princely state was comprised of 502 villages. Administratively the state was divided into five mahals. There were 102 villages in Vichitragad mahal, 115 villages in Pranchadgad mahal, 66 villages in Paun Maval mahal, and 89 villages in Sudhagad mahal. Thus, Bhor princely state had sizable population and villages under its control. Mahals were further divided into tarfs. Beside Indian princely states were the inaccessible and less fertile tracts of the Indian peninsula, it is interesting to explore the evolution and history of such a sizable and important princely state.

### **FOUNDATION OF BHOR PRINCELY STATE**

The making of Indian states was largely governed by the same circumstances which led to the growth of East India Company. Some states were created by British in the process of overthrow of Maratha confederacy. The princely states created over western and southern Maharashtra created due to Maratha confederacy and due to British intervention in Indian states as part of ring fence policy through subsidiary alliance system. The defeat of the Marathas in 1803 and Holkar in 1805 virtually established the supremacy of British power. Peshwa thereafter accepted the subsidiary alliance system. Thereafter British were able to assert slow but effective control over Peshwa's foreign relation and relations with its feudatory and jhgirdars. The subsidiary system was the Trojan horse tactics in Empire-building. Simultaneous decline of Peshwa and Maratha power with aggressive expansionist policy of subsequent Govern General of East India company from first Maratha war to third Maratha war subsequently created southern and western princely states over Maharashtra. Sir William Lee Warner in his book, 'The Native states of India (London 1910)' has mentioned three epochs in British Relations with Indian states viz (i) The policy of ring fence down to 1813 (ii) The policy of subordinate isolation 1813-57 and (iii) The policy of subordinate union from 1857 onwards. With reference to this analysis Bhor princely states could be studied. In case of Bhor

princely state ring fence policy was not applied to Bhor. However, this state and other Maharashtra states were created by ring fencing Peshwas. As stated above Marathas accepted subsidiary alliance in the year 1805 which enforced Marathas to station British resident in the court. The British residents were usually the organs of communication between Government of India and rulers of the Indian states. Gradually their influence and power increased. Lord Wellesley the father of subsidiary alliance aimed at bringing native power within ambit of British political power. Elphinstone was appointed in 1811 to the important and difficult post of resident at Pune (formerly known as Poona). The difficulty arose from the general complication of Maratha politics, and especially from the weakness of the Peshwas, which Elphinstone rightly read from the first. Mount Stuart Elphinstone was the main architect behind founding British administration over Maharashtra. At this juncture Peshwas's revenue amounted around 1 crore and 10 Lakhs. The major source of this revenue was revenue collected from major feudatories of Peshwa spreading over Maharashtra and northern Karnataka. Elphinstone tried to cut Peshwa's income source by intervening in Peshwa feudatory relation which was quiet stretched due to revenue sharing. On 11th July 1812 Elphinstone made an agreement between Peshwa and feudatories at Pandharpur. It was imperative to weaken the Peshwa by virtue of subsidiary alliance clause that all foreign and internal relations of Peshwa's must go through British resident. Through treaty of Pandharpur which was made between Peshwa and his feudatories Elphinstone was successful in eroding Peshwa's military and financial support which he secured through his feudatories. All feudatories came in to British influence. This was diplomatic success if Elphinstone to erode military base of Peshwa on the eve of the third Maratha war. No one except Bapu Gokhale stand beside Peshwa. Though this was arrangement with aggrieving southern zhagirdars' of Peshwa separate arrangement was made with zhagirdars' which received zhagir as right from Shivaji being a member of council of ministers. This was broad policy of Elphinstone to secure support of zhagirdars' for that he again and again declare that British government instead of revenge would adopt conciliation policy with all Peshwas' zhagirdars. Rango Moreshwar Pathak the ambassador of Bhor state met Elphinstone and assured full support to Elphinstone. As policy of conciliation with feudatories of Peshwa Elphinstone made different treaties with Aundh, Bhor, Akalkot, Phaltan, Jat and Wai. This very princely state came into existence by the treaty with Elphinstone on 22nd April 1820 by Pansachiv Chimnaji Naryan. This treaty itself was very much consistent with the policy of subordinate isolation as stated by Lee Warner. Another tripartite treaty between British Chhatrapati and Bhor assured kind of autonomy of Bhor state from king of Satara. It also ensured conflict resolving mediation of British if ever occurred between king of Satara and Pansachiv.

From its very inception of this princely state the rapid increase of the influence of the company in the internal administration of state. Heirs of Bhor princely state till its integration with union of India remain subordinate to British. This was the only factor which paved way for the peaceful relations of Bhor princes with British administration.

### **BRIEF ANCESTRAL HISTORY OF BHOR PRINCELY STATE**

Medieval documents suggest that the ancestors of Bhor princely state were aboriginals of Gadapur a village situated in present Aurangabad district. Some medieval documents pertaining to early 17th century suggests that Brahmin families well versed in writing and account keeping had wide scope in lower and as well as at higher bureaucratic establishment during medieval period. By virtue of this ability though migrated from distant place early ancestor of this dynasty had job of Kulkarni in village Pait of present Khed Tehsil of Pune district. It is evident that heirs of Pansachiv have more than 300 acres of land still exist in this village. One document from quarterly publication of Bharat Etihās Sanshodak Mandal confirms this. One further doctoral research suggests Naro Mukand known early ancestor of this family stayed in village Mangdari of present Velhe Tehsil. However, it is evident that the early ancestor of this family prior to Mangdari may have served as village officer in Nizhamsahi dynasty at Pait as this village then was in Junnar Subha. Prahad, Vitthal, Naro Mukandpant and finally Shankraji Naryan first prominent and influential bureaucrat in the court of Chhatrapati Rajaram suggests early genealogy of this dynasty. The memo prepared in the court of Satara Raja and cited by Ganesh Chimnaji Vad suggests Shankraji Naryan served as Sachiv in A.D. 1698-99 during reign of Rajaram. Shankraji Naryan was followed by his son Naro Shankar as Sachiv in the year 1718-19. Chimnaji Naryan, Sadashiv Chimnaji, Rangunath Chimanji and Chimnaji Shankar were the Sachivs mentioned in the same text. Sachiv was important portfolio in Shivaji's council of ministry. He was assigned duties to correct the royal correspondence, to look after the provincial accounts of state and to issue orders by putting royal seal and dates on it. According to Sir, Warring Scot 'Sachiv' or intelligencer an officer of considerable trust and importance as upon his information must have depended the movement of troops. Grant Duff opined that Sachiv acts as head of the records, superintendent of the department of correspondence, examiner of all letters: all deeds and grants were first entered on his

books and the attestation of his examination and entry was necessary to their validity. Naro Mukand rose to status of chief accountant at the fort Sudhagad during Shivaji's reign. Peshwa Moropant Pingle the most prominent minister in the council of ministry of Shivaji was instrumental in grooming and mentoring higher Brahmin bureaucracy in royal court then partly due to learning ability of higher bureaucrats and partly due to nepotism being Brahmin as close class. Shankraji Naryan worked under Moropant Pingle in royal secretariat as assistant in 1680. Latter Shankraji Naryan worked under Ramchandrapant Amatya. Ramchandrapant Amatya appointed him in military activity. Shankraji Naryan used this opportunity for exhibiting his military generalship and diplomatic skills. Shivaji's demise and struggle for succession after that witnessed prelude of chaotic condition in royal court. In due course of time it also changed and transferred bureaucratic change over. At this juncture Shankraji Naryan became personal manager of royal household. Shankraji Naryan even worked as royal secretary i.e. Pansachiv at least for one year in Sambahaji's reign and for rest of period as royal personal manager of royal household. It even continued to Rajaram's period. Maratha war of independence of Rajaram's period proved strength and skills of Shankraji Naryan. Shankraji Naryan along with Ramchandrapant Amatya and great military generals Santaji Ghorpode, Dhanaji Jadhav. This team turned the fate of Maratha civil war. Their force not only released pressure of Mughal siege over Jinji fort Chhatrapati Rajaram himself was surrounded by Mughal army in the fort of Jinji but also recovered lost forts and territory of Marathas. Thus Shankraji Naryan became important functionaries of Maratha Empire then. This in turn confirmed more prestigious portfolio Pant Sachiv on Shankraji Naryan. This further created permanent hereditary office for his heirs. Naroshankar Pansachi during Shau's reign left immemorial imprint of his achievements (1707-37). Naro Shankar headed major military expedition against sidhi of Janjira and look after the civil and military administration over western Ghat regions. This dynasty of Shankraji Naryan produced series of office bearers of office Pansachiv till 1948. These office bearers' had good relations with Raja of Satara and Peshwa and latter with British.

### **GOVERNANCE AND BRITISH SUPREMACY**

After 1818 British power was supreme. The Indian states and British policies were indefinite and contradictory. British authority was ambiguous in deciding whether states were sovereign or feudatories. Company's paramountcy remained undefined. However, it tended towards expansion whenever possible under strong political force during phase of subordinate union. Though there were no natural legal heirs to state British Government was lenient to the Bhor princely state as ancestor of Bhor Princely state were first to support British against Peshwa. Elphinstone himself opined "Some provisions may be necessary to secure the Jahgirdars who are under him from being worse off than they were under Peshwa. But if they should voluntarily prefer his government to that of British, they should have no claim to this protection and it would probably be for your interest to withhold it. The Pant Sachiv is entitled to particular consideration as he was one of the first who left Peshwa on which account I promised him whole Jahgir, except his claim on the Nizam's country which forms a considerable part of it. He may be allowed his choice to be put under the British Government or the Raja." This attitude of Elphinstone saved Bhor Princely state from annexation at the time of Raghunathrao Chimnaji's accession in year 1827 as he was adopted prince. Pant Sachiv Raghunathrao Chimnaji was also loyal to British government as he did not support to rebel Umaji Naik and rather helped British government to capture him within Bhor Princely state's jurisdiction. British government very pleased for this kind cooperation of Bhor princely state. Even in the year 1836 adopted son of Raghunath namely Chimnaji came to throne at this juncture also British did not annexed the Bhor princely state on account of no natural heir to throne. Pant Sachiv the portfolio as minister of Chhatrapati was always been confirmed to heirs of Pant Sachiv family by Chhatrapati. As matter of fact even after British protection to Bhor Princely state every successor of this office has to take prior consent of Chhatrapati. This was also self confined allegiance to throne of Chhatrapati. British governor Bartel Fayer of Bombay province in the year 1866 called meeting of princes and Bhor prince Chimnaji then visited the same. Modern chronicle of Bhor princely state of A.N.Bhagavat praises Chimnaji for his public works and water supply. In the year 1839 East India Company issued order to princely states to grant permission of company's rupee for transaction. In wake of this order it was followed in Bhor princely state. Chimnaji Raghunath's reign witnessed peace and tardy progress in public works as prince kept peace over state during 1857 revolt against British rather helped British to calm down the rebellious activities. This in turn helped state in many ways firstly all possibilities of annexation on the ground of adoption ruled out and financial and administrative control of crown on state finances relaxed to great extent. After 1858 rule of East India Company came into end and company also abandoned the policy of annexation. The immunity from policy of annexation was obtained at great cost and lowering status of Indian princess. The Indian princes were granted possession and administration not sovereignty and his continuation as ruler was

conditional on his loyalty to the British Crown. Canning Governor General of India then considered Indian states as feudatories and vassal and crown or British government as unquestioned ruler and paramount power in India. This policy of subordinate union of British government was also applied in Bhor princely state.

The government of India exercised the right to interfere in the internal matters partly in the interest of princes or people or to assert government's proper orders in order to protect British subject. The government of India exercised complete and undisputed control over the external and internal affairs of Indian states. In consistent with this policy when prince of Bhor state(Shankarrao Chimnaji) in the year 1872 was minor, British administrative observer was appointed. In the year 1872 Satara Collector visited Bhor for supervising state's administration. From year 1887 administration of Bhor princely state was run under observation of Pune Collector. British government granted some kind of further autonomy to Bhor state in case of criminal and civil justice like grant of capital punishment. Shankarrao Chimnaji prince during 1871 to 1922 introduced administrative reforms and expansion and created many departments in order to run administration smoothly.

Prior to integration of princely states with Indian union Raghunathrao Pantsachiv remain prince of state. He was pragmatic prince and could foresee the fate of public and Indian union. He introduced peoples' representation act, panchayti raj, public works, social works, eradication of untouchability so on and so forth. He was the among first princes who introduced constitution to run administration through elected representative on line of modern democratic legislative system in the year 1928. It was due to efforts and attitude of Raghunath Pantsachiv which finally integrated this state with Indian Union on 8th March 1948.

During period of subordinate union thus, Bhor state also showed same character as of other princely states of India. Whenever possible, British government encroached on internal sovereignty of Indian Princes. Modern communication and transportation could not keep princely state isolated from development of unified nation. British administrative attempt in that direction like development of roads and transports also helped to integrate India indirectly.

### CONGRESS AND NATIONAL MOVEMENT OVER PRINCELY STATES

Congress success in 1937 elections for provincial legislation had repercussions on the states where agitation started for civil liberties and responsible government. On 3 December 1938 Mahatma Gandhi gave call for total extinction of Indian states and full responsible government. The civil rights movement kept pace thereafter in all states and national movement spread all princely states. This in turn helped to integrate many states in Indian union after 1947.

### CONCLUSION

Bhor princely state was created by the process of overthrow of the Maratha confederacy. British did not try to annex this princely state on the ground of being heirless. This may be due to more infertile and economically less productive area and loyalty of princes. One can see the policies that adopted by British with all other states were similarly followed over Bhor. Finally to sum up it is apt to quote F.G. Hutchins words, "The British and princes needed one another; India's need for either was highly doubtful."

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