

# GS Foundation 2024: Modern India

## Handout 7: Anglo-Maratha Wars

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### Maratha Confederacy

Originally, **Chhatrapati** was the fountainhead of all power during the time of **Shivaji**. But subsequently, the Maratha political-economic system underwent a qualitative **transformation**. Power was no more concentrated in the hands of the Chhatrapati, of the successors of Shivaji. There set in a process of **feudalization** among the Marathas in which political structure became more **decentralized**. A loose association of confederacy of military leaders (**sardars**) emerged.

This process can be traced back to the days of Balaji Vishwanath, who assigned separate **watans/saranjams** (jagirs) to Maratha sardars for efficient collection of **Chauth** and **sardeshmukhi**. When Balaji Vishwanath returned from Delhi in 1719 with firman for Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, he made a complex division of the collection of chauth and sardeshmukh between **Shahu** and his **sardars**. It was actually a political technique devised by him to rally the Maratha sardars to his side. In the long run, this proved to be a major weakness of the Maratha empire. The office of Peshwa (one of ashta-pradhans) became hereditary and actual head of the empire while Chhatrapati remained **symbolic head**. After the death of Shahu of Satara (1749), Peshwa became virtually all-powerful.

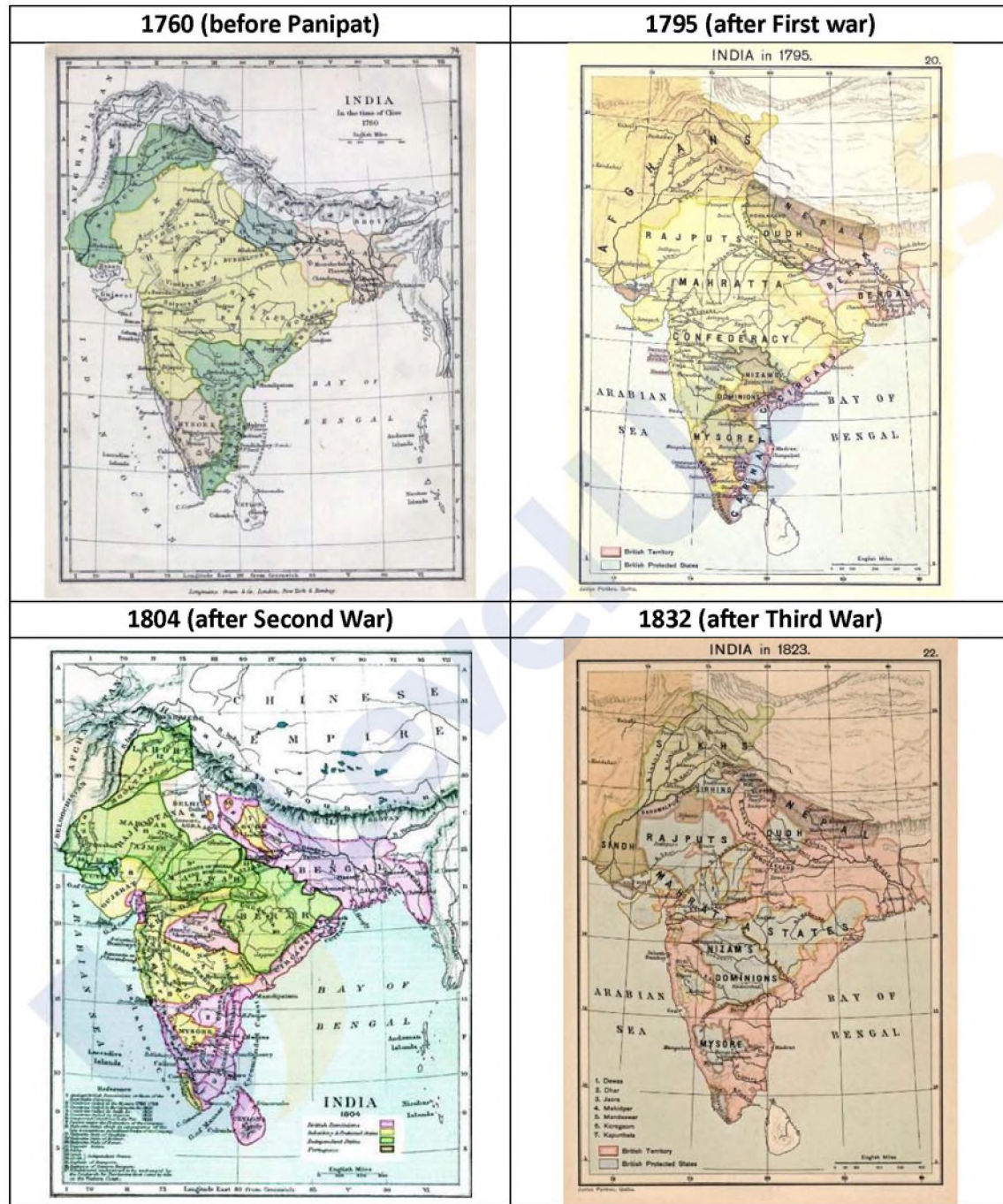


The process of **economic** feudalization also triggered off **political feudalization**. The Maratha Chiefs who were assigned the right to collect **Chauth** and **Sardeshmukhi** became the administrative heads of the respective areas. They enjoyed complete autonomy and emerged as **state-within-state**. As a result, political power was diffused. The Maratha state now assumed the character of a **confederacy** comprising a number of independent chiefs.

Among all the states that emerged in this era, Marathas had the most potential, but it didn't materialize - due to its own structure.

- In the **Confederacy**, power was shared among the chiefs. Parts of the Maratha state had been alienated to these military commanders.

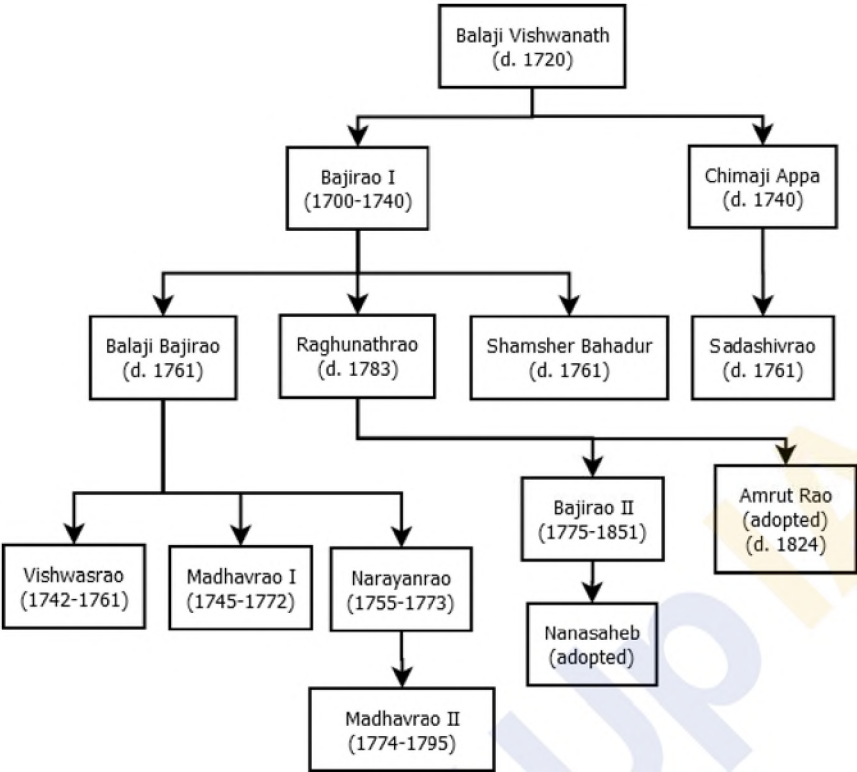
- It was difficult to control the chiefs, who did not always like the peshwa regulating their activities. Rather, their loyalty to Peshwa became increasingly nominal. Instead, they joined opposing factions at Pune and intrigues with the enemies of Marathas.
- There was also increasing factional rivalry among the Maratha sardars. Their mutual jealousy crippled the military power of Marathas to considerable extent.



### Overall Timeline:

Peshwas		
Balaji Vishwanath	1713-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Resolved the Maratha civil war.</li><li>Assisted the Syed Brothers in deposing the emperor Farrukhsiyar in 1719.</li></ul>
Bajirao 1	1720-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establishment of Hindu Pad Padshahi.</li><li>Defeated Nizam of Hyderabad multiple times (eg Palkhed, Bhopal)</li><li>Conquest of Malwa, Rajputana, Gujarat</li><li>Attacked Delhi in 1737</li><li>Created Maratha Confederacy</li></ul>
Nanasaheb (Balaji Bajirao)	1740-61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Extension in North, South, East - From Cuttock to Attock and Peshawar in 1758</li><li>Third Battle of Panipat 1761</li><li>Expansion of Pune city</li></ul>
Madhavrao 1	1761-72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Internal crisis, yet recovered from Panipat crisis - Maratha Resurrection</li><li>Defeated Nizam in the battle of Rakshasabhuvan.</li></ul>
Narayanrao	1772-73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assassinated by Gardi guards at the behest of Raghunathrao</li></ul>
Raghunathrao	1773-74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deposed by barbhai (led by Nana Phadanvis), fled for British protection.</li><li>First Anglo-Maratha War</li></ul>
Madhavrao II	1774-96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appointed as infant by generals and ministers as regents.</li><li>Era dominated by Nana Phadanvis</li></ul>
Baji Rao II	1796-1802	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Defeated by Holkar in the battle of Poona.</li><li>Fled for British protection, provoked Second Anglo-Maratha War</li></ul>
Amrit Rao	1802-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appointed by Holkar after defeating Peshwas and Scindia.</li></ul>
Baji Rao II	1803-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Third Anglo-Maratha War - End of Maratha Confederacy</li></ul>

The Family Tree of Peshwas:





## First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-82)

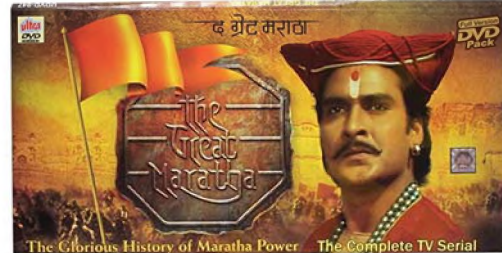
During the period of Warren Hastings (1772-85), two important wars took place - First Anglo-Maratha War and the Second Anglo-Mysore War.

### Post-Panipat Resurrection of the Maratha

Marathas were still powerful after the defeat in Third Battle of Panipat.

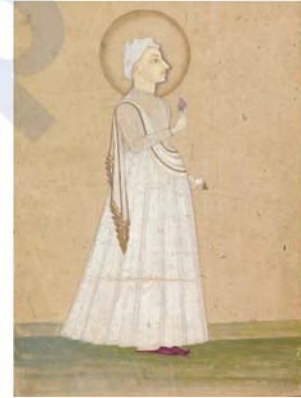
- Rise of Shinde in North:

- Mughal Emperor Shah Alam (British pensioner) was recovered by Mahadji Scindia and restored in Delhi in 1771 and left a strong Maratha army in Delhi for protection. Mughal emperor was now a Maratha prisoner.
- The title of Wakil-e-Mudalat was given to Peshwa. Till 1803, Delhi remained majorly under Maratha control.
- Warren Hastings immediately stopped the pension to Shah Alam.



- Able leadership of Madhavrao Peshwa in South:

- Maratha cavalry again started dominating the north and south under his leadership.
- Defeated Nizam of Hyderabad (at Rakshasbhuvan) and Hyder of Mysore (at Sira and Madhugiri)
- However, his untimely death due to TB.



Just after his death, a series of conspiracies and counter-conspiracies started in the court to control the gaddi of Peshwa.

- Raghunathrao (brother of Nana Saheb) wanted to be Peshwa but he couldn't succeed in his designs due to the intervention of Nana Phadnis. So, Raghoba sought British help. This conflict gave British a handle to interfere in Maratha politics.
- Treaty of Surat, 1775, with British obliged Raghunath Rao to
  - Give the regions of Salsette and Bassein to the British
  - Give the revenue of Surat and Broach
  - Accept to consult the British before making alliance with any other power.

### British Interest:

Expansion to cotton producing region of western India.

- Bombay was an important opium supply route.
- Bombay officers adventured - Intervention into internal matters of Poona court, into the succession rights.

In May 1775, an army contingent led by Col. Keating was dispatched to help Raghoba, thereby commencing the first Anglo-Maratha war. Warren Hastings, however, didn't like the idea and sent Col. Upton to mediate between the Marathas and the Bombay government. This culminated in the Treaty of Purandar (1776). This treaty provided:

Nana ph

- British would get Salsette, while other regions would be vacated by both the parties.
  - British should not help Raghoba
- england

But the Bombay officials were not satisfied with it and appealed to the Court of Directors and received a favourable ruling. Thus, the treaty of Purandar was annulled. This promoted the Bombay presidency to resume the war.

In the battle of Talegaon (1779), British were roundly defeated by the Marathas and this led to the signing of the Treaty of Wadgaon (1779). This treaty led to the status quo ante be Hum and Salsette went to Marathas again. All the benefits earned by British were lost.

1780 turned out to be a very difficult year for the British, when Nizam, Hyder, and Marathas joined hands against them due to diplomacy of Nana Phadanvis. Now, British went on offensive, and Hastings sent resources from the Bengal Presidency.

General Goddard was sent to invade Ahmedabad after crossing central India.

Col. Pofam was dispatched against Gwalior.

Sir Eyre Coote won the battle of Porto-Novo (against Mysore, 1781)

So, Hastings created severe military pressure on Marathas and forced them to come to the table. Thus, was signed the Treaty of Salbai (1782). According to this treaty:

- British got the control of Salsette, along with Elephanta Islands

The Company promised not to interfere in the internal matters of the Marathas.

## Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance

Although an expansionist strategy, it was an extension of the policy of Ring-Fence. It was not an entirely novel idea, some of elements were visible earlier.

- Dupleix had a similar treaty with Hyderabad in 1740s.
- Clive concluded first such treaty with Shuja-ud-Daulah back in 1765 (Treaty of Allahabad had seeds of SA - protection to Awadh for cost/land)
- In 1787, Cornwallis signed Treaty with Carnatic - foreign policy of Carnatic was under British control.

Evolution of Subsidiary Alliance System:

The process of evolution of Subsidiary Alliance is divided into 4 phases.

1. In the 1st stage the company assisted a friendly native ruler in his wars.
2. In 2nd stage the company started playing a bigger role in wars and battles of friendly native states. The native rulers started playing a secondary role.
3. In the 3rd stage, the company asked a friendly native state to supply money and not men. The company fought wars of such friendly native states on its own.
4. In the 4th stage, the company began to station a permanent subsidiary force in capital of friendly native state. Native ruler was asked to pay for the upkeep of this force. Smaller state was asked to pay in cash and bigger state was asked to transfer a part of its territory yielding revenue equal to the cost of upkeep of subsidiary force.

Gradually other provisions were added to it which transformed it into a system. Using the pretext of hyped French Menace to justify the aggression, the earlier practices were given a definite formal shape and theoretical framework by Wellesley in the form of Subsidiary Alliance. *Before* starting the final war with Mysore, Wellesley signed the first treaty with Hyderabad in 1789. It inaugurated the era of Subsidiary Alliance System.

Order in which the Indian States entered Subsidiary Alliances

- Hyderabad (1798, 1800)
- Mysore and Tanjore (1799)
- Awadh (1801)
- Peshwa (Marathas) (1802)
- Bhosle and Gaekwad (Marathas) (1803)
- Scindia (Marathas) (1804)

*After* the capture of Mysore, political entities in India were to be offered the option of submitting peacefully by becoming the part of the subsidiary alliance system, or of a military context if they resisted colonial domination.

The nawabs of Awadh and Arco drawn into this alliance at an early stage. Later, Wellesley increased the demand for subsidy from the Indian allies. In the case of major states like Awadh, collaboration with the British and acceptance of subsidiary alliance didn't prevent eventual outright annexation. Subsequently the treaty was forced upon the Maratha chiefs.

Wellesley thus used it to subordinate the Indian states to the paramount authority of the Company.

## Constituents of the Treaty

- Permanent Subsidiary Army
  - Stationed within the territory of the state to protect from internal disorder and external aggression.
  - Payment of a subsidy in cash (for smaller states) or ceded territory (for bigger states) to defray its expenses.
  - The state had no control over this army.
- Posting a British Resident at his court. Theoretically, the company was not allowed to interfere in the internal matters of the state but practically, this rule was almost always flaunted.
- Control over external relations
  - Not to employ any European in service without consent.
  - Not to directly negotiate with any other Indian ruler.

## Effects of the Treaty:

For the British - Extremely useful	On Indian States - Devastating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It allowed company to gradually and silently disarm Indian native states.</li> <li>• Maintain a large army at the cost of the Indian states. Ostensibly for the protection of the state, it helped the Company in maintaining a large army using state resources.</li> <li>• This subsidiary force was stationed in capital of native states which were places of great strategic significance. The company could fight wars far away from their own territories - throw forward military and expanded political frontier. It also ensured safety of the British territory.</li> <li>• This force was led by European commanders. It was always battle ready. It could be used anywhere by the company at short notice.</li> <li>• Company now controlled the defense and foreign relations of the protected allies. The possibility of any native alliance against company was eliminated. It eliminated French threat in India because no French men could be</li> </ul>	<p>It proved to be extremely degenerative for Indian native states because native rulers purchased security at the cost of Independence and sovereignty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The army was allegedly for the protection but, it turned the ruler into a tributary client. Indian state virtually signed away its independence. Disbandment of the local armies led to loss of livelihood for soldiers and officers.</li> <li>• British Resident, who interfered in the day-to-day administration. It led to internal decay and rulers gradually lost all spirit and energy. The rulers of the protected states tended to neglect the interests of their people and to oppress them. As a result, a situation of extreme mal-administration developed in many native states. The admin machinery collapsed completely. And this resulted in extreme suffering for common masses, because of this impact Thomas Munro commented that it must run everywhere its full course and destroy every government which it undertakes to protect.</li> </ul>



recruited by a native ruler without the permission of the company.

- This system allowed the company to ensure that only its favourites were sitting on throne of native state because at any time native ruler tried to threaten the interest of company he was immediately replaced. The system of Subsidiary Alliances was, in the words of a British writer, "a system of fattening allies as we fatten oxen, till they were worthy of being devoured".
- It transformed company into an arbitrator of Indian disputes because any kind of conflict involving native state was to be settled by English company. Thus, the Company could easily maintain its paramountcy over native states.

- Lost all vestiges of sovereignty in external matters - it became subservient in diplomatic relations, could not employ foreign experts, or settle disputes with its neighbours. It lost the right of self-defence as well.

- Extremely high cost of subsidy - leading to diversion of disproportionate share of revenue. The native rulers were regularly in debt and to overcome this debt extremely heavy burden of taxes were imposed on the common masses. It thus ruined agriculture, disrupted economy and impoverished people. Many states became bankrupt in no time.

The Company thus got the right both to use the Indian ruler's territory as a buffer against its own enemies and prevent a combination of Indian rulers against it. The native states were gradually brought under the sovereign control of English company because every native state accepted company as paramount power. That is why it is commented that it was a trojan horse tactics of empire building.

## Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-05)

### Causes

By the end of 18th century, British had contained all the major powers in India.

- Almost all the important Maratha leaders had passed away by this time. Next generation leadership was not so competent, lacked **pragmatic program** and involved in **internecine** conflict.
- The internecine conflict between **Shinde and Holkar** made the Maratha fall almost inevitable. Shinde-Holkar were competing to get influence over **Peshwa**.
- Due to this, Bajirao II took refuge in the British camp. Lord Wellesley was waiting for **this opportune moment**. The price extracted by the British for extending the support to Bajirao II was a subsidiary alliance treaty which deprived him of control over military and foreign affairs. On 31st December, the Treaty of **Bassain** (1802) was signed which had the following important provisions:
  - British **accountable for the safety and security** of Peshwas from internal and external dangers.
  - British regiment stationed at Poona for payment of 26 **lakh/annum**.
  - British resident stationed at Poona and the foreign policy of Peshwas had to be conducted at the advice of **British resident**.
  - Differences between Peshwas-Nizam or Peshwas-Gaekwad to be resolved under British **mediation**.
- As per the treaty
  - British army under Arthur Wellesley restored Peshwa at Poona. British intervention into the internal matters irritated different members of the
  - Confederacy. Peshwa started seeking the support of **Bhonsle & Shinde** against the British after **realising** problems of the **treaty**.
  - However, even in this critical situation, **Marathas** couldn't unite - **Shinde & Bhonsle** formed one front. Gaekwads supported the British while **Holkar remained separate** and was planning to wage war on his own.



**The Battle of Assaye, 1803**




Thus started the Second Anglo-Maratha War in 1803.

### Two military commands: First Phase of War

North: Lord Gerard Lake	South: Arthur Wellesley
• Defeated Shinde in the battle of Aligarh, battle of Laswari in north India.	Defeated the combined Daulatrao Shinde & Raghuji Bhonsle in a series of wars. The

He captured Delhi and Agra. Delhi was conquered by the British from the Marathas in the battle of Patparganj (1803). • Now Mughal Emperor again came under British control and remained till 1857.	most famous battle was the Battle of Assaye (1803)
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- Subsidiary Alliance Treaties:
  - Treaty of Devgaon with Bhosle. By this, Bhosle relinquished the right over Cuttack and the adjoining areas of Odissa and Bengal.
  - Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon (1803) with Daulatrao Shinde. By this, Shinde lost control of North India, esp Delhi. Later on, treaty of Mustafapur (1805) was also foisted upon Shindes.

<p><i>"By the establishment of our subsidiary forces at Hyderabad, and Poona, with the Gaikwad, Daulat Rao Shindhia... an efficient army of 22,000 men is stationed within the territories, or on the frontier of foreign states, and is paid by foreign subsidies. This force may be directed against any of the principal states of India, without the hazard of disturbing the tranquility of the company's possession, and without requiring expenses of the Government of India" Arthur Wellesley</i></p> <p>"Our policy and our arms have reduced all the powers of India to the state of mere cyphers." Arthur Wellesley.</p>	 <p>Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington</p>
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### Second Phase of War:

The war with Yashwant Rao Holkar continued till 1805. He, along with the ruler of Bharatpur, were at war with the British. Though Lord Lake invaded Bharatpur, he was not successful.

The most outstanding event of this phase was the crushing defeat inflicted by Yashwant Rao on a British force under Colonel William Monson in the battle of Mukandwara Pass near Kota in 1804. The British force lost five infantry battalions and six companies of artillery in this battle. He was later once again defeated in the battle of Farrukhabad.

In the meantime, the Court of Directors in London realized the extravagance of the war and recalled Wellesley. They sent Cornwallis again to India (1805) to curb expansionist policies of Wellesley, but he died after reaching in India. Thus, George Barlow was sent as the new Governor-General who concluded peace with Holkar in 1805 (Treaty of Rajpurghat).

So, the second Anglo-Maratha ended in stalemate. The tangible gains for the British were their ascendancy at Pune and the acquisition of some territory mainly in northern India. There was one noteworthy prize that came their way, although its significance was largely symbolic. Emperor Shah Alam was kept under Company protection and confined to the Red Fort.

## Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-18)

### Lord Hastings (1813-23)

- Before 1813, the EIC was not willing to increase its responsibilities. It generally avoided the policy of annexation as far as possible.
- Now, there was a new objective: India to be developed as a market for the British industrial products. Thus, from Lord Hastings to Dalhousie there was an era of unabashed "Policy of Paramountcy." *Now the Company claimed that its authority was paramount (supreme), hence its power was greater than that of Indian states. In order to protect its interests, it was justified in annexing or threatening to annex any Indian kingdom.* This view continued to guide later British policies as well.



### The events

#### Pindari War (1817-18)

- The final Anglo-Maratha overlapped with a large-scale campaign against the Pindaris. In fact, the so called Pindari menace provided the pretext and justification for military mobilization against the Marathas. Pindaris created a law-and-order situation for the British.

Lord Hastings decided to eliminate them. For him, annihilation of Pindaris was a prerequisite to the destruction of the Marathas. He formed a task force for the same purpose in 1816 CE. They were surrounded by an army of about 120,000 men, which converged upon them from Bengal, the Deccan, and Gujarat under the supreme command of the Governor-General Lord Hastings (northern command) and LG T. Hislop (southern command).



The sheer military might of the Company resulted in victory. The Pindaris themselves offered little resistance. Their bands simply dissolved and there was no direct encounter. Most of the leaders surrendered (some killed, some restored).



Hastings used Pindari campaign as a pretext to attack Marathas. After finishing the Pindari campaign, Lord Hastings asked Maratha commanders to sign new treaty and when they hesitated a war was declared on them immediately. Thus, along with the Pindaris, even Marathas became the target of the same army.



### (A) Peshwa of Pune

The Company wanted to capture Poona for strategic importance. Thus, Peshwa and the confederacy were pressurized due to continuous British intervention. Their reaction led to the war.

- War

- In 1818, Peshwa Attacked Poona Residency. He was defeated in the battle of Khadki and Pune surrendered.
- Peshwa was again defeated in the battle of Koregaon Bhima.
- The subjugation of Peshwa domain took several months. Several military campaigns had to be carried out to put down resistance in various parts of western Maharashtra even as Peshwa continued to be on the move. The last major encounter was in Ashti near Pune. Bajirao nevertheless continued with his resistance for a few more months. Eventually he agreed to negotiate.



Mountstuart  
Elphinstone, LG of  
Bombay (1819-27)

- Treaty

- The defeat of Peshwa broke the Maratha Confederacy. Bajirao II formally abdicated his office and was sent to Bithur with an annual pension of 8 lakh. He lived there in exile till 1851. The gaddi of Peshwa was abolished and region of Maharashtra (including Pune) was completely annexed. However, to assuage the feelings of Maratha spirit, a separate state of Satara was carved out and granted to Pratap Singh, a descendant of Shivaji.

### (B) Bhosle of Nagpur

Another major objective of the war was the subjugation of the Nagpur state which was ruled by Bhosle. Raghuji Bhosle died by 1817 and Company intensified its attempts to destabilize the state through the Resident.

- Raghuji Bhosle died by 1817 and Company intensified its attempts to destabilize the state. The main instrument of British interference was the resident, Richard Jenkins. Jenkins prevailed upon Appa Sahib to sign a subsidiary alliance which enabled the Company to place its troops in Nagpur. When the battle broke out, Appa Sahib aligned himself with Peshwa.

- War

- In 1818, Appa Sahib attacked British Resident at Nagpur.
- British had a difficult time in overcoming the resistance of Nagpur. It was only with the arrival of reinforcements that British got the handle over the situation. Appa Sahib was defeated in the battle of Sitabuldi, Nagpur.

- Treaty

- Appa Sahib also entered alliance with the British with many controls on Nagpur. Raghuji III became the new successor.

### (C) Hokars of Indore

While Tusi Bai favoured negotiations with the Company, the Holkar Army was resolved to fight the British.

- Story
- War

- o In 1818, Holkar attacked Indore Residency.
- o Holkars were defeated at Mahidpur after a fierce battle in which the casualties of British side were very high (around 800).

#### Treaty

- o Treaty of Mandsore with Holkar forced them to cede areas around Narmada to British. It substantially reduced the territorial possessions of Holkars.

#### (D) Shinde of Gwalior

- Though Shinde was not involved in the war. Company, through its show of arms, ensured that Daulat Rao Shinde disengaged himself from the Pindaris.
- With respect to Shindes, a new treaty was foisted upon them in 1818.
- This paved the way for the subjugation of the Rajasthan states.
  - o Charles Metcalf was sent to conclude subsidiary alliance treaties with the Rajput states of Marwar, Udaipur, Jaipur etc. Overall, 19 states signed the treaties surrendering their independence. None of them had the resources to engage in military contests to resist colonial supremacy, making the extension of colonial rule in the area a relatively smooth affair.

#### (E) Gaekwads of Baroda

- Gujarat, much of which was ruled by Gaekwads, was brought under subsidiary alliance system in 1802 already.
- In 1817, the company signed a new treaty with them on the eve of the war with Bajirao II. As per it, the strength of the subsidiary force was increased, and the city of Ahmedabad was formally ceded.

#### Consequence

The third Anglo-Maratha war finally ended the independence of the Maratha states - Nagpur, Indore, Gwalior, Baroda - and made the EIC a major territorial power in western and central India. The Peshwa's authority was terminated and his seat of authority, Pune, formally became part of the Company's territory (except for certain part which was given to successors of Shivaji in Satara to calm the sentiment) and Bajirao II was exiled to Bithur. Although Maratha Confederacy was dissolved, the Shindes, Halkars, Gaikwads and Bhosles still retained large tracts of territory at the end of the war, being incorporated into the British India empire as princely states.

Maratha could not offer alternative to Mughal rule political vacuum left behind by the Mughal eventually fill up by the British. despite brilliant initial military success under leadership of Shivaji and first peshwas the Maratha power decline in front of repeated British on slots. the cause of downfall of Maratha are as follows.

1) organizational flow: the Maratha sardar resemble later mughal noble they remain unified as long as Shivaji system of strong system of central authority was in place following Shivaji Maratha state devolved loose constipation of autonomous states.

2) weak revenue base and financial insolvency was perpetual problem of Maratha state the economic system of Maratha state was unpredictable. the Maratha chief had to resort to period raids plunder to run their economic. this economic insolvency also excreted evil influences in the political stability of empire. Maratha consideration big five chief who could not found abroad united front against common enemy British.

4) by the end of the 18 century all the talent and expired leader maharji Scindia tukoji holkar, nana Phadnavis were dead bajirao2 was selfish and inefficient and the absence of good leader led to mutual corals.

the Maratha military supremacy code its origin war fair based on gorilla tactics. but the later Maratha leader opted for the Western method of warfare and they could not integrate two.

5) finally maratha fail because lack ability adapt to new circumstance, they didn't have far site ness to devlope the new economy they could not relied on the import of science and technology only way by which maratha could have save the empire and combat the brish was by transforming state to modern state.





Four of the main leaders in 1857 were the protoges of the Bajirao II at Bithur - Lakshmibai, Nanasaheb, Tatya Tope and Raosaheb Peshwa - who actually fought from the front.