



The Transformative Era: Dynamics of Power Shifts in 18th Century India

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Abstract

This paper examines the critical period in India from 1740 to 1775, characterized by the decline of Mughal authority and the rise of British colonial dominance. Key events include Nadir Shah's invasion of Delhi, the Battle of Plassey in 1757, and the Treaty of Allahabad in 1765, which formalized British political control. The Nawabs of Awadh, known for their cultural patronage, navigated shifting alliances and economic dependencies under British governance. By 1856, Awadh was annexed by the British, marking a significant shift in regional power dynamics. This paper provides insights into the political, cultural, and economic transformations during this transformative era of Indian history.

Keywords: Battle of Plassey, Mughal, Awadh

1.1 Introduction

An important turning point in the history of modern India occurred between the years 1740 and 1775. The invasion of Delhi by Nadir Shah stunned the Mughals and destroyed their kingdom. Delhi became the extent of the erstwhile Mughal Empire's dominion. After getting a taste for blood, the Afghans invaded Northern India four times. However, the Sikhs and then the Marathas were the ones to put up the fight. The Afghans, led by Ahmad Shah Abdali, faced a frustrating and unpredictable resistance from the Sikhs in their fights, which occurred in various locations and at different times. In January 1757, after Ahmad Shah Abdali had finally reached Delhi, the town was looted again, much like during Nadir Shah's invasion. After the Wazir Imad-ul-mulk surrendered, the Mughal Emperor officially granted the districts of Sirhind, Kashmir, and Sindh independence. After more plundering in the Delhi region, Abdali returned in April 1757 with a mountain of loot. Abdali designated Najib-ud-daula as his principal representative in Delhi to supervise the Mughal Court's operations. He made his son Timur Shah viceroy in Lahore. Time passed, and the Marathas arrived, driving the Afghans from Punjab and taking control of Lahore. Wars between the Marathas and the Afghans were soon to break out. They were both fighting for Hindustan's top spot. Ahmad Shah Abdali, who fought for the Marathas in multiple conflicts from 1758 to 1759, advocated for a Hindu-Muslim clash. The Ruhela Afghans and the Nawab of Awadh, Shuja-ud-daula, both backed him.

At the Battle of Panipat in 1761, Najib-ud-daula, who had previously been driven from Delhi by the Marathas, allied himself with Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Marathas were unable to get the backing of the Jat King Suraj Mal as well as the Rajput chiefs. A complete lack of a national strategy and the Marathas' own goals and attitudes were more to blame for their defeat. The Marathas suffered a crushing defeat at the fiercely contested Battle of Panipat in 1761. The concept of a Hindu king representing India had been lost for nearly 150 years, notwithstanding the rapid regrouping of the Marathas. Once again, the Mughal Emperor became a symbol of Indian nationalism in 1857, when the tide of Indian nationalism turned against British imperialism. A true sense of national identity, including the idea of Hindu kingship, did not emerge in India until Lokmanya Tilak said, "freedom is my birthright and I will have it," at the turn of the twentieth century. Someone noticed a new occurrence. The English and the French engaged in a bloody war from 1740 to 1760. In Bombay, Surat, Madras, and Calcutta, English factories had been established. To compete with Madras and Calcutta, French factories were established at Chandernagore and Pondicherry. Fighting over who would succeed to the crown of Arcot, the armies of England and France clashed. After Robert Clive's victory over the French in 1751, the French threat in India essentially disappeared. With the spoils of India in his possession, Clive triumphantly returned to England, affluent and esteemed. In a state of shame, Dupleix was sent back to France. In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, the French regained control of Pondichery in India by the Treaty of Paris (1763), but they were not granted the ability to fortify the territory. Since





then, the French have a purely symbolic role. Like fire flies, their officers continued to offer assistance to the Indian kings and princes, occasionally shining a light in a dark place. However, the British eventually came to dominate the Indian subcontinent. As a result of the feud between the Nawabs and the pretenders, the East India Company was able to acquire control of Bengal. In 1757, during a short skirmish at Plassey, Clive's soldiers were victorious over the Nawabs of Bengal, led by Siraj-ud-daula. Betrayal, rather than physical force, dictated the outcome of the Battle of Plassey. The Nawab's chief commander, Mir Jafar, betrayed him at a critical juncture and joined the English army. In exchange for his betrayal, Mir Jafar was appointed Nawab of Bengal. This shameful episode in Indian history has endured until this day. Following this, in 1764, at Buxar, a battle broke out between the armies of the East India Company and those of the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam, Nawab of Awadh, and the ex-Nawab of Bengal. The British were victorious due to their superior strategy and weapons. The Mughal courtiers in India in the 17th and 18th centuries didn't have much time to plan for battle. From their time spent fighting in different parts of Europe, the British had picked up a number of useful lessons. The Marathas may have been the only people to amass the means and opportunity necessary to keep their military knowledge and skills current, allowing them to wage and win wars. After multiple victories over the Nizam of Hyderabad, they were considered the most strong Indian army. However, the Marathas' fall rendered the British forces defenceless. By the time the second Maratha War came to a close, they had taken control of most of the nation and established themselves as absolute rulers (1803-05).

1.1.1 The Allahabad Treaty: The Treaty of Allahabad was inked on 12 August 1765 between Robert Clive of the East India Company and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, son of the late Alamgir II, following the Battle of Buxar on 22 October 1764.



Fig.1.1: Shah Alam II



Fig.1.2: The Lord Clive

- The Treaty initiates British control over India and signifies their political and constitutional engagement.
- As per the provisions of the agreement, Alam bestowed Diwani privileges upon the East India Company, which allowed them to collect taxes from the eastern provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa on behalf of the Emperor.
- This led to the East India Company being named the imperial tax collector for the Bengal-Bihar-Orissa province in the east.
- As a result of these privileges, the Company was able to rake in money from the residents of Orissa, Bihar, and Bengal.
- The Company secured the Kora and Allahabad districts for Shah Alam II in exchange for twenty-six lakhs of rupees (equivalent to 260,000 pounds sterling) in tribute per annum.
- Additionally, the agreement stated that Shah Alam might return to Varanasi province as long as he maintained a specific level of revenue payments to the Company.
- In exchange for Allahabad and Kora, Shuja-ud-Daulah got Awadh back. War indemnity payments totaling fifty lakhs of rupees were also made by the Nawab of Awadh to the East India Company.

Shah 'Alam conveying the grant of the Diwani to Lord Clive



Fig.1.3: Shah 'Alam conveying the grant of the Diwani to Lord Clive



Source:

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Shah %27Alam conveying the grant of the Diwani to Lord Clive.jpg](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Shah_%27Alam_conveying_the_grant_of_the_Diwani_to_Lord_Clive.jpg)

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Here are key points and outcomes of the Allahabad Treaty:

Background: The treaty followed the Battle of Buxar in 1764, where the East India Company's forces, led by Major Hector Munro, decisively defeated the combined forces of the Nawab of Awadh, the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, and the Nawab of Bengal. This victory marked a turning point in British influence in India.

Signatories: The treaty was signed between the East India Company, represented by Robert Clive, and the Nawab of Awadh, Shuja-ud-Daulah.

Territorial Changes: The treaty resulted in significant territorial gains for the East India Company. The Nawab of Awadh ceded the districts of Kora and Allahabad to the Company.

Financial Obligations: The Nawab of Awadh was required to pay a large indemnity to the East India Company to cover the costs of the war. This payment further strained the financial resources of Awadh.

Political Subordination: The treaty established a new political order in which the Nawab of Awadh became increasingly subordinate to the East India Company. This marked a shift towards Company dominance in Indian politics.

Implications for Awadh: The treaty had profound implications for the Nawab of Awadh and his state. Awadh increasingly became a dependent ally of the East India Company, which would later have far-reaching consequences for the region.

The Allahabad Treaty of 1765 was part of a series of agreements and events that facilitated British expansion and influence in India, ultimately contributing to the decline of indigenous powers and the establishment of British paramountcy over much of the subcontinent.

1.1.2 How Warren Hastings Handled the Nawab Wazir

Warren Hastings, who served as the Governor-General of Bengal from 1772 to 1785, dealt with the Nawab Wazir (also known as the Nawab of Oudh or Awadh) during a pivotal period in British colonial rule in India. Here's how Hastings handled the Nawab Wazir and the broader context of his governance:

Establishing Control: Hastings aimed to establish British control over Awadh, which was a significant princely state in northern India. He sought to influence and manipulate the Nawab Wazir to further British interests in the region.

Financial Reforms: Hastings introduced financial reforms in Awadh to strengthen British control. He placed officials in key administrative positions to oversee revenue collection and expenditures, often to the detriment of the Nawab's authority.

Political Subordination: Hastings pursued policies that gradually subordinated the Nawab Wazir to British authority. This included exerting influence over the Nawab's decisions, especially in matters of governance and diplomacy.

Revenue and Tribute: Hastings negotiated agreements that obligated the Nawab Wazir to pay significant sums of money to the British, either as tribute or compensation for British military support and protection.

Supporting Allies: While Hastings sought to control the Nawab Wazir, he also supported allies within Awadh who were favorable to British interests. This strategy allowed Hastings to exert indirect influence over the region.

Expansion of British Influence: Under Hastings' leadership, the East India Company's influence expanded across northern India. The control exerted over Awadh was part of a broader effort to consolidate British power and secure economic and political advantages.



Challenges and Controversies: Hastings' policies towards Awadh were not without controversy. They raised concerns among other Indian rulers and contributed to tensions within the East India Company's administration, eventually leading to Hastings' impeachment in Britain. To defend his realm from the Marathas' invasion in 1772, the year Warren Hastings took office as governor, Shuja-ud-daulah had little choice except to request British military assistance. Warren Hastings made the most of the circumstance. He coerced Shuja-ud-daulah into signing a new pact that changed some terms from the Allahabad treaty. To summarise the new treaty's terms, they are as follows:

1. Allahabad and Kara districts, which were transferred to the Emperor from the Nawab Wazir of Awadh in the treaty of Allahabad, were permanently given to Shuja-ud-daulah.
2. The alternative was for Shuja-ud-daulah to pay the East India Company fifty lakh rupees.
3. Additionally, it was agreed that anytime British soldiers were forced into Shuja-ud-daulah's service, he would cover the expenses, which were set at a rate of lakhs and ten thousand rupees per brigade every month.
4. A permanent residency at Lucknow was imposed on Shuja-ud-daulah.

An age of total British domination over Awadh affairs was inaugurated by the pact. Following in his footsteps, Shuja-ud-daulah dutifully carried out the treaty's requirements. As a result, the East India Company eventually gained control of over half of Awadh's territory, reducing the kings to the position of a feudatory. After the English won at Buxar, they took charge in Awadh. From a position of power, they dictated the terms of the Allahabad Treaty. When the theory of might was put into practice and the Nawab of Awadh recognised the English's superiority, steps were taken periodically to subjugate Awadh to the evil plans of the English imperialists. No opportunity was spared to exploit and cheat Shuja-ud-daulah ever when he came into direct contact with the East India Company. The English company's bullying treatment of Shuja-ud-daulah was on full display in the 1772 revised treaty. The greedy and relentlessly demanding British bureaucrats who dictated the company's fate in this country even made money off of his death. The Calcutta council allegedly sought to increase extortion funds from and put stringent conditions on the next Nawab shortly after Shuja-ud-daulah's death. The treaty with his father, Shuja-ud-daulah, "died with his death," brazenly declared Asaf-ud-daulah. As a result, the council was adamant that the new Nawab sign a new pact. The idea of such a step repulsed Asaf-ud-daulah. But after much back-and-forth, he finally gave in, and the English were able to force Asaf-ud-daulah to sign a new pact. On May 21, 1775, the Treaty of Faizabad, so termed, was signed. The treaty updated some of the articles of the preceding treaty and incorporated the following terms:

1. All lands owned by Raja Chait Singh, including the mint and Kotwali of Varanasi, should be assigned to the East India Company by Asaf-ud-daulah under full sovereignty.
2. Awadh's British military support for a brigade was to be increased to 260 thousand Rupees a month, with no change to the brigade's strength.
3. The Nawab was ordered to fire all foreigners serving under him.
4. All outstanding debts dating back to his father's reign were intended to be paid by Asaf-ud-daulah.
5. In exchange, the East India Company would confirm that the Nawab's domains and their dependencies will be protected. The Nawab was provided with the services of a second brigade, known as the Temporary Brigade, for this specific reason.

On top of everything else, Asaf-ud-daulah consented to hire a couple of English officers to keep his riotous men in line. Beyond inciting a mutiny among Nawab's soldiers, this arrangement effectively severed any ties between the two of them. He was practically deposed as a result of this action. Actually, the English placed Awadh into a condition similar to the Nawab of Bengal's. Warren Hastings presided over a worsening of Awadh's financial situation as the Company's demands on the Nawab of Awadh continued to rise. Despite the East India Company's best efforts, yearly demand on Awadh did not exceed Rupees 100 lakhs until 1781, and the company's receipts could never exceed 70 lakhs. There was a shortfall of almost



1,808,000 rupees for Awadh as a result. Even though Awadh was in serious financial trouble, the East India Company had been successfully exploiting the city as a safe haven for their funds up until 1786. Due in part to poor administration and in part to the English's excessive meddling in Awadh's internal affairs, the kingdom's revenue had dropped significantly, making it impossible to satisfy the company's increasing demands. Despite Asaf-ud-daulah's best efforts, the English continued to meddle.

The Begums of Oudh

After that, we have the Oudh Begums' case. Asaf ud-Daulah was unable to fulfil his duties because the Bengal government, which was controlled by the Triumvirate, severely reduced his revenues compared to his father's. He responded to the Bengal government's threats by saying he could have paid his bills if the British hadn't given the Begums the treasure that rightfully belonged to him. In direct opposition to the Governor-General, the majority of the council had voted to provide that assurance. Now that the Triumvirate had disbanded, though, Hastings felt free to revoke the pledge. On top of that, the excuse that the Begums were highly suspected of being Cheyte Singh's supporters came up again. After Hastings revoked the assurance, the wazir took possession of the treasure; the Begums rebelled, but Hastings stepped in because they were officially considered to be in a rebellious situation. Although the wazir was able to enforce his claims with the help of the British, he treated the Begums and their supporters with an oriental approach, just like he had treated the Rohillas. Despite this, the Begums were eventually placed on a fairly liberal allowance.

In both instances, the urgent necessity to restock the exchequer undoubtedly motivated Hastings, and the reason for his severe actions could only have been an extremely dire situation. Needless to say, there was a critical shortage, and the Governor-General's decision seemed routine when viewed through the lens of local norms and customs. The third issue is the dispute between the Supreme Court and the council, as well as the settlement that ended it. It has been used to tarnish Chief Justice Impey's reputation more than Hastings'.

As we have seen, the English judges deputed to India asserted their exclusivity under the Crown, ignoring both the Indian council and the domestic directors and proprietors. It appears that they considered it their unique duty to hold government officials accountable. Until the administration came to a near halt, the company's officers were constantly hauled before the Calcutta court by every wane, with some complaint, real or imagined. Finally, the council, who were in charge of the army, had no choice but to reject the court's directives. We could not stand by and watch this situation worsen. No one wanted to strip the Supreme Court of its rightful power, but Hastings saw no way it could be legitimate if it tried to defy the government. By all accounts, the nawab's officials had ordinary criminal jurisdiction throughout the nation, while the company's revenue officers handled fiscal and civil concerns, with the former being the more pressing of the two. In order to establish a court of appeal in Calcutta, Hastings divided the civil and fiscal courts and offered Impey, who was an official of the company, the presidency of this new court. In this way, the Chief Justice was entrusted with the practical oversight of the legal administration; but, as an officer of the firm, he was also accountable to the council in that capacity.

1.1.3 . Shuja-ud -daula and Asaf-ud-duala

One might say that the nawabs of Awadh lived the high life. They made their ceremonial and court etiquette quite ornate and spectacular because they loved to put on a show. Their court was a model of magnificence and splendour. The celebrations and decorations cost astronomical amounts of money. To a large extent, their rituals mirrored those of the court in Delhi. In essence, the Awadh court mirrored the imperial court of Delhi in its ostentatiousness, while in form it mirrored the cultural traditions of Persia. Even though the Mughal court had managed to hold on to a great deal of authority and prestige until Nadir Shah's 1739 conquest of Delhi, the world has been able to see its decline ever since. In several regions of the empire, the centrifugal tendency became apparent as provincial governors effectively severed all ties with the titular emperor, despite their formal claims of devotion to his authority. In the Mughal



province of Awadh, Sadat Khan established a new dynasty as ruler, shielded from Delhi's influence. His successors brought Awadh, Faizabad, and Lucknow's courts up to par with Delhi's in terms of opulence and splendour. Both Lucknow, constructed by Nawab Asaf ud Duallah, and Faizabad, by Nawab Shuja ud Duallah, were magnificent capitals. Although they claimed loyalty to the Mughal emperor and avoided outward manifestations of Muslim sovereignty—such as having their names included in the Khutbah or having coins bearing their names struck—the Nawabs of Awadh acted more independently in practice. Even though he was powerful, the prince of Awadh "did not venture to use the style of sovereignty," as Macaulay put it. The od wazir of the Mughal empire was an additional title he bestowed upon the nawabs and viceroys. Similar to how the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony in the previous century would proudly declare themselves the ruler's grand chamberlain and grand marshal, despite their independence and many rebellions against him.

You may refer to Nawab Asaf ud Duallah as "Nawab," but in reality, he was the ruler of the country, as stated in the Gangnam of Nawab Wazir Ali. While there are no specific accounts of the investiture ceremonies of Nawab Shuja-ud Duallah or Nawab Asaf ud Duallah, we do have an account of the Darbar of Prince Ali Gauhar at Allahabad written by Mir Kindersley, along with a handful of accounts of other later Awadh rulers whose ceremonies were likely comparable. These narratives state that the Darbar hall was elegantly furnished for this event. The Masnad, the seat of honour, was formerly covered with embroidered gold cloth with jewelled fringes and was roughly the size of a small bed sheet. There was a railing on three sides of it. A square canopy, adorned with costly stones and supported by golden rods, was fastened to the four corners of the masnad. The red velvet canopy and couches were adorned with golden and pearl details. An extensive border of sizable pearls dangled from the edges of the canopy. The red velvet and gold Chatr, adorned with red pearls, hung over his head. It was fashionable for a nobleman to hold a morchhal on either side of the masnad. On the masnad, the ruler sat cross-legged.

Ordinary life

Following the customary practice of the time, the nawabs went about their daily lives. Information regarding the duration is lacking. Nevertheless, hints may be found in many works that indicate they had set work hours. During Ramzan, Nawab Shuja-ud Duallah kept the fast and prayed five times a day. Rumour has it that he never stopped keeping these rituals. So, he got up early, prayed, and got to work on his regular regimen. State matters consumed nearly all of his time. He established a pattern for himself that his successors continued. Every morning, with all the proper ceremonial, Nawab Shuja-ud-Duallah would walk out to observe the freshly constructed city of Faizabad and the army marches outside the cantonments. He would direct his sidekicks to demolish every illegal structure they came across on the route. Around nine in the morning, he had his Darbar. The assembled nobility and distinguished officials stood in accordance with their ranks. The department secretaries read out their notes on various themes. Among Shuja ud Duallah's peculiarities in the Darbar, one practice stands out. In the past, he would review the financial reports that his diwan rajah Surat Singh would provide. Half of the money went to the Bahu Begam, who, following the Buxar disaster, gave him all she owned, including her nose ring, in order to settle a portion of the war indemnity and restore their reputation. Nawab Wazir kept the remaining three quarters for himself, while the treasury received one quarter. To complete the aforementioned transactions, Nawab Shuja ud Duallah needed approximately three hours of his morning time. After leaving the Darbar, Shuja ud Duallah would go to the bahu Begum's female apartments for lunch and prayer. Six different locations contributed meals and specialties to the dining hall. The main kitchen, or bawarchi Khana-i-bururg, was one of them. Hasan Raza Khan, also known as Mirza Hasan, was the minister of Asaf ud Duallah who oversaw the event. The daily outlay was 2,000 rupees. The second one was Mirza Hasan Ali's little kitchen. Amber Ali eventually took his place. The kitchen of Bahu Begaum was another. Mirza Ali Khan's second kitchen was that of Nawab Salar Jang. Dhaniya and Paniya were the slave girls that showed up for lunch. Under Fazal



Azim's supervision, the main kitchen's dishes were brought in from outside. He was fully aware of the potential trouble that these slave ladies could cause on certain instances. He spoke well of them, treating them like sisters, and was constantly trying to flatter them. A fly was discovered in one of Fazal Azim's dishes at one point. When was the meal served? Shuja ud duallah wanted to know. Dhaniya, a slave girl, was aware that Mirza Hasan and Fazal Azim would face punishment if they told the truth. Salar Jung's Kitchen was her quick response. Thankfully, Nawab Shuja Ud didn't say a word to him.

The Shuja ud duallah had a short siesta after lunch. Then he would go to his smaller palaces, known as Khurd mahal or the mansions of his secondary wives. In this way, Shuja ud duallah occupied the lady's quarters with entertainment till the afternoon prayers. Afterwards, he returned to the public hall of audience to attend to the state's numerous business till sunset. Unlike before, Shuja ud duallah sat on a high cane seat adorned with luxurious brocade, rather than the state cushion. The Bahu Begum's castle was his nightly haunt. He would be fined more than 500rs by the Bahu Begum for his culturally insensitive attitude if he did not show up. Asaf ud duallah's daily life was different from his father Shuja ud duallah's due of their temperament and nature. In contrast to his father, he developed a drinking problem throughout his early professional years. During the winter, Asaf ud duallah would often travel by elephant, and after he showered in the morning, he would read aloud from the Quran while his tutor, or Mullah, corrected his accent. He got in his car and headed straight to one of his gardens after reading the Quran. On occasion, the ladies would accompany the royal procession.

The Prince Ali Gauhar Reception

While escaping from Delhi in May 1757, crown prince Ali Gauhar—later Shah Allam II—came to Awadh on route to Allahabad. With all the usual pomp and circumstance, Shuja ud Duallah was welcomed at his first reception on January 2, 1759, in the Mohan district of Unnau, which is fourteen miles from Lucknow. He bowed low before the prince and gave him the state conveyance, a nazar of one hundred and ten gold pennies. The 72 gold pieces that were offered by his officers and attendants were also named nazars. After that, Shuja ud Duala brought him to the large, freshly set camp and gave him shelter there. In addition to a set of tents and baggage carts, the prince received a tray covered with gems, a number of trays filled with priceless stuffs, and one lakh rupees. A variety of entertainments were planned in his honour. A prince takes a quick look at the gifts sent by the Nawabs. He brought Shuja ud Duallah to his tent and gave him his own turban as a token of his admiration for this.

Meeting with Naib Wazir, also known as Munir ud Duala

From Calcutta, Munir ud Duallah set off for Allahabad, the temporary imperial headquarters, in March 1770 to reassume the position of naib Wazir. While the route, he stopped in Faizabad, where he was warmly welcomed by Shuja ud Duallah. On the sandy beach of Ghaghara, there was an incident involving a battle between two semi-wild elephants. The triumphant animal pursued the defeated one as it ran away.

On the ensuing day, a magnificent ceremony took place, featuring performances by around 5,000 dancers, actors, actresses, and musicians of varying calibres.

Reception of Bahu Begum

Writing to Asaf ud Duallah following the London order, Warren Hastings urged him to make amends with his mother. The adoption of Asaf ud duallah's daughter was scheduled to take place in Lucknow, so he proceeded to Faizabad and respectfully asked the Begum to attend the wedding. Ten elephants, ten bullock coaches, and fifty thousand rupees were supplied as travel costs by Asaf ud Duallah after she accepted his offer. He left his mother and grandmother in charge of the Haveli Baoli home. He added luxurious carpets and other furnishings to the haveli. Afterwards, he made a citywide proclamation. They are rulers, as well as vicegerents, of these dominions and cities, both large and minor, according to Asaf ud Duallah. In this metropolis, the people are the topics.

1.1.4 Cornwallis's Relationships

Due to territory mismanagement and nonpayment, Cornwallis's relations with Awadh began



on a sour note. A large army subsidy was something the Nawab was unhappy about having to pay. Furthermore, he was burdened with substantial expenditures related to the Fatehgarh Brigade, despite its practically uselessness to him. And therefore it was his wish that the Fatehgarh Brigade should be disbanded. Nawab had two demands, and the Governor General supported none of them. On the other hand, the East India Company and the Nawab Wazir of Awadh signed a new treaty on July 21, 1787, after extensive talks. The Nawab was released from all of his debts by the pact. He was to exercise complete autonomy inside his own domain. He was given the assurance that his internal administration would be unfettered. Additionally, the East India Company's expenditure on protecting Awadh's territory amounted to Rs. 50 lakhs an annum, which the Nawab was told would be the only future demand for payment. Cornwallis, a prominent British military and colonial administrator, notably served as Governor-General of India during the late 18th century. His tenure (1786-1793) intersected with the unfolding dynamics of British relations with Awadh, a significant princely state in India. Cornwallis's interactions with Awadh were pivotal and shaped by political and economic imperatives.

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Subsidiary Alliance: Cornwallis, like his predecessors, sought to expand British influence in India through alliances. He furthered the subsidiary alliance system, aiming to establish British control over Awadh's military and foreign affairs. In 1798, under Lord Wellesley, this strategy was fully realized when Awadh signed a subsidiary treaty, effectively binding its defense and foreign policy to British interests.

Financial Reforms: Cornwallis pursued fiscal reforms in Bengal, seeking to stabilize British finances and reduce corruption. However, these measures inadvertently strained Awadh's economy. Revenue demands often exceeded Awadh's capacity, leading to significant economic strain and dependency on British financial support.

Political Tensions: Cornwallis navigated complex political landscapes, balancing relations with Awadh's Nawabs and competing local power brokers. His policies contributed to internal tensions within Awadh's court, ultimately weakening indigenous power structures and facilitating British dominance.

Legacy of Subjugation: Cornwallis's legacy in Awadh is marked by a transition towards British hegemony. His administrative and military strategies laid the groundwork for subsequent British interventions, culminating in the annexation of Awadh in 1856, following the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Major Reforms Introduced by Lord Cornwallis

Permanent Settlement

- In Bengal and elsewhere in India, Cornwallis instituted the Permanent Settlement of land revenue.
- As a result of this arrangement, land was transferred from farmers to Zamindars or landlords, who were essentially relegated to the position of tenants. At any moment, the Zamindars might have removed the farmers from their land.
- While he kept the other 9% the Zamindars were required to pay the British 89% of their land revenue.
- The method established a set rate of land revenue for a period of ten years.
- The transfer of riches from India to Britain was hastened by this arrangement.

Service Reforms

- The East India Company entrusted Cornwallis with responsibility for their services in an effort to root out corruption in the nation.
- Regardless of their links to higher authorities, he instituted regulations that permitted only qualified individuals to join the services.
- Europeans were given high-ranking positions and Indians were given lower-ranking ones, such as peons and clerks.
- The corporation did away with its private commerce entirely.

Justice System Changes





- Cornwallis set up courts at the federal, provincial, and state levels. The Calcutta Supreme Court was the highest court in the country.
- Civil and criminal proceedings were heard in different courts.
- After Cornwallis did away with court costs, solicitors were given the power to set their own rates.
- People might sue government officials if they were to make a mistake.
- Additionally, he outlawed cruel and unusual penalties, such as the amputation of limbs, noses, and ears.

Battle of Third Anglo-Mysore

- Tipu Sultan of Mysore attacked the British-friendly territory of Travancore in 1790, prompting Cornwallis to declare war on him. In the second Anglo-Mysore War, Tipu had previously refused to release English prisoners.
- Tipu Sultan lost a lot of territory to the British after this conflict. Consequently, Malabar, Dindigul, Baramahal, and Coorg were all captured by the British.



1.1.5 Aspects of Sir John Shore's administration

Things altered while Sir John Shore was governor general. He thought it would be best to reinforce the cavalry forces sent to keep Awadh safe. Shore wanted the Nawab of Awadh to shoulder some of the additional financial load, which went against the provisions of the Cornwallis Treaty and added to the expense. Shore acted alone in making his decision. No one paid attention to the Nawab's complaints. On March 20, 1797, despite his helplessness, he reluctantly agreed to Shore's suggestion, but only on the condition that the increased charge would not go over Rs. 5,500/-per annum. Another example of Shore's authoritarian behaviour towards Awadh was his appointment of Tafazzul Hussain as minister to Asaf-ud-daulah, which went against the Nawab's wishes. It is worth noting that Tafazzul Hussain was seen in Awadh46 as a symbol of the English influence.



Fig. 1.4: Sir John Shore

Source: https://www.indianetzone.com/42/sir_john_shore.htm

The position of Nawab was filled by Asaf-ud-daulah's eldest son Wazir Ali following his demise. Wazir Ali was initially strongly in favour of the British. Although Saadat Ali was presenting representation and pushing claims, he duly conveyed his feelings of cordiality towards the English and Tafazul Hussain to the Governor General, who duly acknowledged the succession in Awadh. Wazir Ali's turn against the English, troop formation in Lucknow, and plot to kill minister Tafazul Hussain were all things that Shore soon learned about. While Shore was at Jaunpur, Tafazul verified these reports. Wazir Ali was prone to violent outbursts, according to Tafazul as well. Also, he hated being told what to do and was against the British government meddling in his personal matters. Tafazul Hussain's report was entirely relied upon by Shore. He hoped that Awadh would eventually break free of British rule, although he was opposed to that possibility. He came to the realisation that the Nawabi of Awadh needed to be replaced. The British government told Resident Cherry to initiate talks with Saadat Ali, who was eager to acknowledge British dominance. He and the English eventually reached a deal on January 21, 1798. Awadh also saw a revolution, though it was not as severe as the one in Bengal. Wazir Ali was removed from office without providing any reason. Saadat Ali became the new Nawab49 with the support of the English army. Thus, Awadh was fully conquered by the English, and their Resident became paramount. During Sir John Shore's time, the relationship between the British East India Company and Awadh underwent several



developments:

Policy of Non-Intervention: Sir John Shore's approach towards Awadh was characterized by a policy of non-intervention. This policy was influenced by his belief in maintaining friendly relations with Indian princely states while avoiding unnecessary interference in their internal affairs. Shore was cautious about extending British control directly into the internal administration of Awadh.

Support for the Nawabs of Awadh: Shore generally supported the Nawabs (rulers) of Awadh in maintaining their autonomy and authority within their state. This stance was partly motivated by strategic interests, as Awadh served as a buffer state between British territories and other Indian powers like the Marathas.

Economic and Administrative Reforms: Sir John Shore encouraged economic and administrative reforms within Awadh to strengthen its governance and revenue systems. This was done partly to ensure stability and prosperity within the region, which in turn benefited British interests.

Maintaining a Balance of Power: Shore's policies aimed to maintain a delicate balance of power in the region. Awadh was a key ally for the British, and Shore sought to ensure that Awadh remained stable and capable of managing its internal affairs independently.

Treaties and Agreements: During Shore's tenure, various treaties and agreements were made between the British East India Company and the Nawabs of Awadh. These agreements often addressed matters of mutual cooperation, trade, and military support.

Military Cooperation: The British and Awadh collaborated militarily during this period. Awadh provided troops to support the British in various conflicts and campaigns, reflecting a level of military cooperation and alliance.

End of Shore's Tenure and Subsequent Events: After Sir John Shore's tenure, the relationship between the British and Awadh continued to evolve. Subsequent British governors-general adopted varying policies towards Awadh, with some later moving towards greater direct control and eventual annexation of the state in the mid-19th century.

1.1.6 The System of Wellesley and Subsidiary Alliances

The System of Subsidiary Alliances

The power dynamic in India shifted from the kingdoms to the British when the British East India Company and Indian princely states supposedly established the Subsidiary Alliance System. In establishing the British Empire in India, this policy was important.

Lord Wellesley advocated for subsidiary alliances while serving as Governor-General of India (1798–1805). The French governor-general Marquis Dupleix came up with the name. After the War of Buxar, the first monarch to form a subsidiary alliance was the Nawab of Awadh, and the first notable one was the Nizam of Hyderabad.



Fig. 1.5: Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)

The Subsidiary Alliance System: A Definition

A pact between the British East India Company and the Indian princely states was established through Lord Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance System. Under this system, the princely nations gave up their independence to the British in return for security.

Founding Father of the Subsidiary Alliance Organisation

System for Subsidiary Alliances: French East India Company Governor Joseph Francois Dupleix came up with the idea of the subsidiary alliance. It wasn't until Lord Wellesley's reign (1798–1805) that it really came into its own, as he abandoned a policy of non-intervention in

favour of forming subsidiary alliances. The British Empire's sway in India was greatly enhanced by this change in strategy.

Subsidiary Alliance System Attributes

A princely state's ruler in India was required to grant financial assistance to the British military forces stationed there and to permit their presence within their territory as part of the subsidiary alliance. Furthermore, the monarch was compelled to dissolve their own armed forces and grant permission for British forces stationed within their realm to establish a subsidiary alliance. The maintenance of the British troops was also the responsibility of the sovereign. The loss of their territory to the British might happen if they don't. In exchange, the British government promised to protect the Indian state against both outside and internal rebellions, but they frequently failed to deliver on this promise. It was illegal for the Indian government to make alliances with other countries and they could only hire Englishmen as consultants abroad. Reducing French influence was the goal of this approach. The last step in turning India into a British "protectorate" was significantly reducing the power of the Indian king in matters of war and diplomacy. The Indian court also had a British delegate.

Methods for Establishing Subsidiary Alliances

- In the first phase, local leaders were offered a permanent army by the British in return for a set sum of money. In the Second stage, in exchange for a yearly sum, the British promised to keep a constant military presence for their partner.
- In the third stage, the allies' help within their borders was exchanged for a fixed yearly payment, while the British maintained a smaller subsidiary army.
- In the fourth stage, Lord Wellesley ordered the formation of a permanent subsidiary force to be stationed within the partner's domain.

Advantages of Subsidiary Alliances

- ❖ Thanks to the subsidiary structure, the British East India Company was able to increase their resources and eventually become India's most powerful corporation.
- ❖ The local government lost power as a result of the increase in military power and influence. Because most battles took place inside the allied states, the potential for damage from wars was reduced.

Disadvantages of Subsidiary Alliances

- ❖ The British gradually took over valuable regions and resources that were previously held by the ancient Indian monarchs.
- ❖ People in the original state fell into poverty because they had to shoulder the financial burden of supporting the subsidiary force.
- ❖ Disruptions and protests ensued when the unemployment rate rose as a result of the surplus of soldiers.
- ❖ When local rulers lost power, Indian patriotism took a nosedive and the British were able to exert more influence.

1.1.7. Territories relinquished in the Treaty of 1801:

The Treaty of 1801, also known as the Treaty of Lucknow, was a significant agreement signed between the British East India Company and the Nawab of Awadh (Oudh), Saadat Ali Khan II. This treaty resulted in substantial territorial changes and had profound implications for the political landscape of Awadh and British India. Let's explore this treaty in depth, focusing on the territories ceded and its broader impact:

Context and Significance:

The Treaty of 1801 was signed against the backdrop of political and military developments in India. Awadh had been facing internal instability and external threats, particularly from the Marathas and the rising power of the British East India Company. The Nawab of Awadh sought British assistance to secure his position and protect his territory.



Fig. 1.6: The Carnatic Treaty was signed at Chepauk Palace by Nawab Azim-ud-Daula and Major-General Arthur Wellesley.

Territories Ceded:

The specific territories ceded by the Nawab of Awadh under the Treaty of 1801 included:

Rohilkhand: One of the major regions ceded was Rohilkhand, an area located to the northwest of Awadh. Rohilkhand was strategically important due to its proximity to the British territories and its economic significance.

Allahabad and Kora: The Nawab also ceded the districts of Allahabad and Kora to the British. These areas were key centers along the Ganges river and held considerable economic and administrative importance.

Impact and Consequences:

British Expansion: The Treaty of 1801 marked a significant expansion of British territorial control in India. The acquisition of Rohilkhand, Allahabad, and Kora expanded British influence and control into previously independent or semi-autonomous regions.

Strengthening British Position: The treaty further solidified the British East India Company's position in India, allowing them to exert greater influence over Awadh and adjacent territories.

Decline of Awadh: The cession of territories weakened the Nawab of Awadh and eroded the autonomy of his state. Over time, Awadh became increasingly dependent on British support and intervention.

Precedent for Further Annexations: The Treaty of 1801 set a precedent for subsequent British actions in India, where princely states and territories were gradually brought under British control through treaties, alliances, and sometimes direct annexation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the period between 1740 and 1856 in India witnessed a significant transformation marked by the decline of indigenous powers and the ascension of British dominance. Events such as the invasions by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, coupled with the conflicts involving Sikhs, Marathas, and Afghans, weakened the Mughal Empire and opened the door for British expansion. Under the leadership of governors-general like Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis, the British East India Company solidified its control through treaties and reforms, particularly impacting regions like Awadh. These policies strained local economies and governance structures, ultimately leading to the annexation of Awadh after the Indian Rebellion of 1857. This era laid the foundation for British paramountcy in India, shaping the trajectory of colonial rule and significantly impacting the course of Indian history. The transition from indigenous rule to British hegemony reflected broader geopolitical shifts and set the stage for further colonial expansion and reforms in the subcontinent.

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