



## GEOPOLITICAL HISTORY OF AUNDH STATE

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### ABSTRACT

*The Pratinidhis of Aundh were originally chieftain and had made commendable contribution in the Maratha Polity since Chh. Rajaram's regime. The Geographical situation of Aundh State was administratively very inconvenient and development was badly jeopardized due to scattered territory.*

**Key words** – Princely state, Aundh, Pantpratinidhi, Geopolitical.

### INTRODUCTION :

Aundh was a small princely state in Southern Maharashtra. After the death of Sambhaji, the son of Shivaji-the-Great, the central power of Maratha kingdom was enfeebled, giving rise to many feudatory chieftains. Aundh family was one of them. It is seen that Pratinidhi family rose to eminence during the regimes of Chhatrapati Rajaram and Chhatrapati Shahu. This family performed important operations in the eighteenth century under the Maratha regime.

An attempt has been made in the present Research paper to study and to know the past history of Pratinidhi family, the geographical boundaries of the state, its territorial expansion, different administrative departments in the state, and the geographical situation of the state. The founding father of Pratinidhi family of Aundh was Trimbak Krishnajipant, the Kulkarni of Kinhai village. Parashuram, the first son of Trimbakpant (b.7 December 1660) achieved the title 'Pratinidhi' on his extraordinary puissance from Rajaram Maharaj. When Rajaram Maharaj had gone to Jinji for shelter, Ramchandrapant Amathya, Pralhad Niraji, Parashurampant Trimbak gave stiff resistance to Mughals in Maharashtra and showed their valour and puissance. Rajaram Maharaj, therefore, felicitated Parashurampant Trimbak with the award of the title of 'Pratinidhi' in 1698.<sup>1</sup>

When Shahu Maharaj returned to Maharashtra after the death of Aurangzeb, clashes started between him and Tarabai for power. In these skirmishes Trimbak upheld Tarabai's side. He had to fight wars with Shahu Maharaj from Tarabai's party. When the fort of Ajinkyatara was conquered by Shahu, he arrested Parashuram Trimbak and withdrew his title of 'Pratinidhi'. Then, in 1710, Khando Ballal Chitnis brought about compromise between them and then Shahu returned the title of Pratinidhiship to Parashuram Trimbak, making it hereditary. In the Sanad awarding 'Pratinidhiship' to Parashuram Trimbak it has been concluded as follows:

“(You) preserved the kingdom with such heroic deeds and hence graciously this title has been awarded to you hereditarily. Whosoever from the Bhosale family bears the rule, should keep faith and affection in your family and continue the title, and anyone parting from this will not be happy.”<sup>2</sup>

This shows the worthiness of Parashurampant. He was a brave soldier, expert politician and a diplomat of high caliber. He died on 26 May 1718 at Satara.

#### **SRINIVASRAO ALIAS SRIPATRAO (1718 TO 1746) :**

Srinivasrao alias Sripatrao, the third son of Parashuram Trimbak Pratinidhi, had gone in adoption to his cousin Madhavrao, but Chhatrapati Shahu falsified the adoption deed and took Sripatrao to himself and then on 7 June 1718 awarded him the title of ‘Pratinidhi’ and the robes. Shahu Maharaj was favourably disposed to Sripatrao, because in the regime of Shahu Maharaj he had displayed his heroism and bravery to Chh. Shahu. Sripatrao’s valour became more striking in the campaign started by Balaji Vishwanath against Krishnarao Khatavkar at the instance of Chh. Shahu. Sripatrao participated in this campaign against Sambhaji of Kolhapur also he courageously arrested Sambhaji, his wives and other chieftains and presented them before Shahu. He played important role in the expedition against Siddi by conquering Raigad fort on 8 June 1733. Bajirao-I and Sripatrao Pratinidhi were not in good terms. Srinivas alias Sripatrao Pratinidhi died at Satara on 25 November 1746.<sup>3</sup>

#### **JAGAJIVANRAO ALIAS DADOBA (1746 - 1754) :**

Sripatrao Pratinidhi had no son and hence a problem had arisen about the Pratinidhiship after him.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, Chhatrapati Shahu decided to appoint Jagajivanrao alias Dadoba, the younger brother of Sripatrao as Pratinidhi. The robes of Pratinidhiship were awarded to Jagajivanrao on 17 December 1746.<sup>5</sup> But Dadoba was not as competent as Sripatrao. Dadoba acted according to the whims and views of Shahu Maharaj’s senior wife Sakawarbai.

Nanasaheb Peshwa and Dadoba were not in good terms. Dadoba was involved in the conspiracy hatched by the queen Sakawarbai in regard to the adoption and inheritance matters of Satara Chhatrapati. But as the conspiracies frustrated, they had to face the sad consequences. After the death of Shahu Maharaj on 15 December 1749, Nanasaheb Peshwa imprisoned Jagajivanrao Pratinidhi and his Mutalik (public officer) Yamajipant Shivadev.<sup>6</sup> In Shahu’s regime, Pratinidhis had prestige and maintained awe in Maratha polity and administration. They enjoyed position next to Chhatrapati and were in no way inferior to Peshwa. The situation, however, reversed rapidly after the Sangola treaty and the Pratinidhi lost his prestige.<sup>7</sup>

Later on Peshwa released Jagajivanrao and Pratinidhi on the mediation of Tarabai. He then followed the policy of compromise with Peshwa. He died in 1754.

#### **SRINIVAS GANGADHAR ALIAS BHAVANRAO PRATINIDHI (1754 – 1777) :**

Jagajivanrao had a son, Trimbakrao, but as he had died child, after the death of Jagajivanrao Pratinidhi, the title of Pratinidhi and robes were given to his cousingrandson Srinivasrao Gangadhar alias Bhavanrao on 24 October 1754.<sup>8</sup>

Since Peshwa and Bhavanrao were not in good terms, after 1761 Raghoba Dada withdraw the little of Pratinidhi from Bhavanrao and gave it to his son Bhaskarrao. Thereafter, as Bhaskarrao died just within four months, the Pratinidhiship was given to Naroshankar. Therefore, Bhavanrao Pratinidhi joined hands with Nizams against Peshwas. Having realized the gravity of the situation. Madhavrao Peshwa returned Pratinidhiship to Bhavanrao. Then in 1763, to put a check on Bhavanrao and to set a quarrel in Pratinidhi family, Peshwa again withdraw the title of Pratinidhi from Bhavanrao and gave it to Bhavanrao's cousin, Bhagwantrao Trimbak in 1765; then again the title of Pratinidhi was awarded to Bhavanrao in 1774.<sup>9</sup>

Bhavanrao Pratinidhi was a competent, brave and puissant personality. He was in very good books with Nana Phadanvis. He was included in the 'Barbhai' that was established by Maratha chieftains after the death of Narayanrao Peshwa. He died in 1777.

**PARASHURAM SRINIVAS ALIAS THOTEPANT (1777 – 1848) :**

After the death of Gangadhar alias Bhavanrao Pratinidhi, the robes of Pratinidhiship were given to his minor son Parashuram on 15 September 1777. Bajirao Peshwa-II and Parashurampant did not have good mutual relations. Parashurampant would say – “We are the servants of Chhatrapati. We will not obey Bajirao. Bajirao is treating even the Chhatrapati with injustice”.<sup>10</sup>

Parashuram alias Thotepant was riotous and creating riots with the help of Ramoshis kept by him in his service.<sup>11</sup>

Parashurampant had created tumult in the Peshwa region between the Warana and Neera. A battle was fought between Bapu Gokhale and Parashurampant Pratinidhi at Konegaon near Masur on 27 March 1806, in which Parashurampant was seriously injured and was taken prisoner.

In 1811 Parashurampant was released from the prison by Bajirao Peshwa. Out of his total Jagir of 18 lakhs, Peshwa gave him a Jagir worth only Rs. 2 lakhs.<sup>12</sup>

After the end of Peshwa rule, an agreement was reached between British government and Pratinidhi on 22 April 1820 according to which the status of Pratinidhi was maintained and he was kept at Satara Chhatrapati's command. Parashurampant died on 10 May 1848.

**SRINIVAS PARASHURAMPANT ALIAS RAOSAHEB (1848 – 1901) :**

After the death of Parashuram Srinivas alias Thotepant, his adopted son Srinivas Parashuram alias Raosaheb came to the throne of Pratinidhi on 11 June 1848, when the Chhatrapati Kingdom had been abolished and the rule of Regency Council had begun in Satara. Later on, when the Regency Council went under the British rule, like other state rulers, Pratinidhi also became Princeling of British government. In 1854 the British Government bestowed Srinivas Pratinidhi with the Power of Attorney of Aundh State and merged Karad, the capital place of Pratinidhi with the British territory. Then the Pratinidhi had to shift his capital to Aundh and thenceforth he came to be known as Pratinidhi of Aundh instead of Pratinidhi of Karad.<sup>13</sup>

Aundh state started Progressing since Srinivasrao Pratinidhi's regime. He had a good hold in the British court. British rulers treated him with respect. He had affinity for his subjects, due to which he was called Rajarshi by the people. He died on 27 September 1901.<sup>14</sup>

**PARASHURAM SRINIVAS ALIAS DADASAHEB (1902-1905) :**

Srinivas alias Raosaheb was succeeded to the throne by his elder son Parshuram, Srinivas alias Dadasaheb on 20 February 1902. In his regime British rulers had appointed Jacob Bapuji as the Karbhari of the state. Dadasaheb's regime proved short-lived. He died on 27 August 1905.

**GOPALKRISHNA PARSHURAM ALIAS NANASAHEB (1905-1907):**

After the death of Parshuram Srinivas alias Dadasaheb Pantpratinidhi, his elder son Gopalkrishna Parshuram alias Nanasaheb assumed Paratinidhiship on 3 November 1905. His term of Pratinidhiship also turned out to be short-lived. He was charged of hatching a plot to murder the Karbhari, Jacob Bapuji, by the British Government and dethroned on 12 September 1907.

After this, the British government assumed the administration of Aundh state. Then the third son of Srinivasrao, Bhavanrao Srinivasrao alias Balasaheb was bestowed with the Pratinidhiship of Aundh state by the British Government on 4 November 1909.<sup>15</sup> Among all the rulers the Aundh state saw in twentieth century, Balasaheb proved to be the most successful one. He shall have to be mentioned as a popular ruler, ruling over the state most successfully for the longest period of time.

Bhavanrao Srinivasrao alias Balasaheb Pant Pratinidhi, a graduate of Bombay University, was a popular king with an unmatched concentration of a number of qualities and virtues scarcely ever found together in any one man. He was an intelligent, a lover of books and arts, a good artist himself, an effective Kirtanankar (Kirtan = a religious discourse on some mythological topic held for enlightenment and social awakening), a staunch promoter of swadeshi, the first promoter of Suryanamaskar (an Indian exercise), pro-industrial development and industrious.<sup>16</sup> He was greatly instrumental in the development of Aundh state in his regime, and afforded an unique position to Aundh state as an important state in southern Maharashtra. He was the first state ruler in India to relinquish power willingly and hand over the administration to the Representative Council.

The second son of Balasaheb, Barrister Appasaheb Pant, had a very impressive personality. He cherished broad views and progressive attitude. He held socialistic thoughts, progressive views and broad outlook. Because of these qualities in him he was very popular in his state subjects. He had a lion's share in the revolution that brought about change in power in the state within a period of just one and a half years to two years after his return from England with his degree of Bar-at-Law. He foresaw the political turmoil the country was going to undergo in the near future and, therefore, he urged Balasaheb, his father, to hand over the powers of the state to the people's representatives in the state and brought into force the 1939 Act of Swaraj constitution in the state.<sup>17</sup>

After the enforcement of the Act of Swaraj Constitution in the state, a ministry of People's Representatives came in power and Appasaheb became the first President of the Ministry. The administration and principles of the people's representative government bore the impression of Appasaheb for about 8 years of Aundh state administration.

Soon after the national Independence, merger of the princely states took place in India. Aundh state also became a history; but what was noteworthy or creditworthy for the state was that Barrister Appasaheb Pant was appointed Ambassador of India in many countries. He worked quite efficiently in that position for over a quarter of a century. History will remember him for his democratization of his own state much ahead of the introduction of democracy in the country.

### **GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION AND THE AREA OF THE STATE :**

Considered from the points of view of state expansion and geographic conditions, the history of Aundh state is sad. Once upon a time Aundh state had a vast expanse of land under its sway and would go on expanding with newer and newer expeditions. However, the process of receding started in Peshwa rule.

The original Jagir of Aundh Pratinidhi was worth Rs. 18 lakhs. But in 1806 Bajirao-II imprisoned Parashuram Srinivasrao Pratinidhi and withdrew his Jagir, which was restored to him in 1811 but cut down sizably to worth only 2 lakhs. Of this, Rs. 1,34,737-14-6 came by way of land revenue and the remaining Rs, 65,265-1-6 towards the appointment as Pratinidhi.

Thus, it will be seen that Bajirao Peshwa had given a nominal Jagir to Srinivasrao Pratinidhi, as the actual revenue collection amounted to only Rs. 75,243-2-0. All these developments put the state to a great loss. After the return of the Jagir by the Peshwas, the appropriation of state territory was done thrice by the British government and the state suffered great loss in the compensatory arrangements. In 1842 the Bagewadi Mahal of the Pratinidhi's territory was taken by the British government and in its place 17 villages in Gunadal taluka, Kundal and Alsand in Kundal taluka were given as compensation. In 1854 the British government severed Karad, the capital of Pratinidhi's territory and in its place gave some villages neighbouring Karad in compensation. Aundh then became the capital place of Aundh Pratinidhi. In 1868 the village Kinhai was given to the state as compensation.<sup>18</sup>

In this way, at every compensatory deal the state interest and convenience were ignored, thus putting the state to a great loss. Development of the state was badly jeopardized due to frequent changes in the state territory.

Aundh state was spread over two districts of Satara and Bijapur. Eight villages out of 24 in Aundh and Kundal talukas of Aundh state were situated like Islands. They were surrounded by British territory and the territories of other states. The remaining 16 villages were formed into eight groups of two villages each. Village Manu in Kundal taluka was situated in the south-western quarter of Ogalewadi at a distance of 25.7 Kms in hills and dales. The road to this village passed through British territory. It was next to impossible to protect such a village. Village Chikhalhol in Aundh state was similarly situated at a distance of 28.9 Kms from Aundh. In between there was no state village. Village Kottyal in Gunadal taluka was at a distance of 32.1 Kms from Gunadal and village Hangargi at a distance of 19.30 Kms. These villages were

segregated like Islands. The taluka places in Aundh state were also similarly isolated. Atpadi (a taluka place) was 96.5 Kms away from Aundh and Gunadal was 201.1 Kms by motor-road. The mothertongue of the people of Gunadal taluka was Kannada, except one village, viz., Tankalgi where Marathi was spoken. This village was populated mostly by Maratha families like, Gaiakwad, Mahadik, Katkar, Chavan.<sup>19</sup> This shows how difficult it was administer the state in such diverse geographic conditions.

A large part of Aundh state forming the villages of Maan, Koregaon, Khanapur, Karad and Tasgaon was spread over the Satara district. Two-thirds of the state territory was situated in south-eastern quarter of Satara district and one-third (one taluka) fell in the south-western quarter of Bijapur district. Only 32 villages in Atpadi taluka were situated together. Villages in all other talukas were scattered.<sup>20</sup>

#### **AREA OF THE STATE :**

In 1871-72 the total area of the state measured 882 sq. Kms, 1,126.44 sq. Kms in 1881 and 1,202 sq. Kms. In 1905-06; whereas in 1908-09 onwards it measured 1,262 sq. Kms, that is, 1,28,386.8 Hectares. From this it is revealed that the area of the state had increased. In 1902-03 the area of cultivable land was 92,773.6 Hectares; whereas in 1921-22 it was 1,13,626.8 Hectares; in 1945-46 it was 1,11,779.6 Hectares, of which 80,542 Hectares were Jirayat (arable) 5,987.6 Hectares Bagayit (fit for non-food crops, such as vegetables ad fruits) and 25,250 Hectares were barren. The area under forests in 1891-92 in the Aundh state was 3,986.32 Hectares, which was reduced to 1,720 Hectares in 1902-03, 1,299.2 Hectares in 1920-21 and 1,223.2 Hectares in 1935-36. This means that the area under forests kept on declining invariably.<sup>21</sup>

#### **POPULATION OF AUNDH STATE :**

According to the 1881 census the state population was 58,916, of which 56,237 were Hindus, 2,393 Muslims and 285 Jains and others. The total male agriculturists numbered 13,983 and non-agriculturist males numbered 7,137. According to 1901 census the state population was 63,921, of which 61,047 or 95 percent were Hindus, 2,656 were Muslims and 218 were Jain and others. According to 1921 census the state population was 64,560, 61,488 or 95 percent of them being Hindus, 2,817 or 4 percent being Muslims. In addition, some Christians and Jains also lived in the state but their numbers were negligibly small. The total number of houses in the state in 1881 was 9,538, of which inhabited houses were 8,496 and vacant 1,042. In 1891 the total number of houses was 12,516, of which 10,610 were inhabited and 1,906 houses were vacant. In 1921 the total number of houses was 15,019.<sup>22</sup> According to 1931 census the state population was 76,507 and the number of houses was 12,535.<sup>23</sup>

It appears that the population of Aundh state had kept on fluctuating. Moreover, out-migration of people to big cities like Bombay (hereinafter referred to as Mumbai) for earning livelihood owing to frequent occurrence of famine was also responsible to cut down population in the state.<sup>24</sup>

**AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AUNDH STATE :**

The average total income of Aundh state from all sources in 1872-73 was Rs. 1,24,163-11-00, in 1879-80 Rs. 2,15,551-6-5, in 1890-91 Rs. 2,43,646-9-9, in 1905-06 Rs. 2,53,716, in 1909-10 Rs. 2,75,942-1-0, in 1921-22 Rs. 3,47,189-13-2, in 1929-30 Rs. 4,72,281-6-3 and in 1943-44 Rs. 5,41,560-1-1.<sup>25</sup> These figures show increasing trend in average quinquennial income.

During the seven years from 1872-73 to 1879-80 the average state income showed a rise of Rs. 91,388-5-5, during 18 years a rise of Rs. 1,19,483-0-9, during 33 years a rise of Rs. 1,29,553-11-00, during 37 years a rise of Rs. 1,51,779, during 49 years a rise of Rs. 2,23,026-2-2, during 57 years a rise of Rs. 3,48,118-0-3 and during 71 years a rise of Rs. 4,17,397-0-1.

**KHANDANI (TRIBUTE) :**

Aundh state did not have to pay to British government or any other state any kind of tribute. On the contrary the state received Rs. 1,000 per year from Akkalkot state towards Sardeshmukhi charge. In this regard, A. N. Bhagwat says in his book 'History of Pratinidhi Family of Satara' (Marathi) : "Akkalkotkars paid Rs. 2,000 per year to Aundh state; similarly Rs. 1,000 were being received per year by Aundh state from Jath state towards Babati Ammal (charge on any item/s of revenue). British government also paid Rs. 1,000 per year towards Babi Ammal."<sup>26</sup>

**ADMINISTRATIVE SECTIONS – GENERAL INFORMATION :**

There were in all 72 villages in Aundh state divided into three Talukas and three Thanas for administrative purpose. Upto 1933-34 Aundh state had the three talukas of Atpadi, Kundal, and Gunadal and three Thanas, namely, Kinhai, Aundh and Sangam-Mahuli.

The Atpadi taluka consisting of 32 villages lay on the borders of the Khanapur and Maan talukas of the Satara district and of the Sangola and Malshiras talukas of the Solapur district. The Kundal taluka consisting of 18 villages lay in the midst of the Khanapur, Karad, Tasgaon and Islampur talukas of the Satara district. The Gunadal taluka consisting of 17 villages lay in the Bijapur district. Aundh Thane comprising three villages was in the Khatav taluka. Kinhai and Sangam-Mahuli thanas, which were isolated villages, were respectively in the Koregaon and Satara talukas.<sup>27</sup>

Later on, when it was found administratively inconvenient to have three Thanas, the Thanas at Kinhai and Sangam-Mahuli were amalgamated with Aundh Thana. Similarly, the villages of Vihapur, Belavade and Korti being nearer to Aundh Thana than Kundal, they were included in Aundh Thane in 1930-31 and 1932. Thus, Aundh taluka was formed in 1935 comprising Aundh, Kinhai, Sangam-Mahuli and the above mentioned three villages in the Kundal taluka.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the four Talukas of Aundh, Atpadi, Kundal and Gunadal were formed of equal level and separate Mamledar and Phoujdar (Police Officer) were appointed for each of them.

From the geographical situation of Aundh state it would be seen that it was administratively very inconvenient. Therefore, separate administrative set up had to be maintained for the four talukas, which increased the expenditure.

Towards the beginning of the twentieth century when Balasaheb took the reign of the state he tried his level best to make the state territory continuous. He had requested the British government on umpteen occasions to attach the far-flung and administratively inconvenient villages in the state territory to the British territory in exchange of the villages in the British territory which were near to the state, or at a negotiable distance, or in the border-lying areas of the state so that the state became continuous. But the British government refused the request on the pretext that the subject in the British territory did not consent.

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