MODELS OF THE STATE: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF THE MARATHA POWER IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY INDIA

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Abstract

This article seeks to investigate and examine the character of the Maratha power, which was influential throughout most of India in the eighteenth century. The Maratha state has not been the subject of thorough theoretical investigation, despite its historical significance and the peculiar circumstances preceding its fall by the British colonial power. This study aims to address this knowledge gap by adapting three state models from other fields to the Maratha Empire. The Marathas were the last independent Indian monarchy to fall to the British, and for many a decade after its final ruler was toppled, the territory under Maratha dominion was still considered to be a separate administrative entity. The Maratha state has been called several different names, including marauder, confederacy, and empire, but none of these names have been the subject of rigorous theoretical investigation. This article uses state models as a theoretical framework to learn more about the Marathas. This study does not set out to provide a unifying theory for describing the Maratha state, but rather to investigate the usefulness and ramifications of alternative frameworks for doing so. The essay uses these theoretical frameworks to try and explain the intricacies of Maratha power, such as its political organisation, geographical control, economic systems, social order, and relationships with other states. It provides a preliminary investigation that can help pave the way for a fuller comprehension of the Maratha state. This study sheds light on the nature and attributes of the Maratha power by critically examining historical sources and existing literature. It adds to the scholarly conversation by adapting theoretical models to this specific period of history and establishing the framework for further research. The purpose of this paper has been to examine the Maratha state from the perspective of three different theoretical theories of government. It calls attention to the gaps in our knowledge

of this period in India's history and encourages researchers to look deeper into the complexity of the Maratha state.

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Introduction

For the majority of the eighteenth century, the Maratha Empire was one of India's most powerful. Almost a decade passed between when the British colonial government deposed the last king of India and when the territory he had ceded to them was finally merged into the Bombay Presidency. This continued to happen long after the British colonial government had consolidated its hold over the Indian kingdom. Several people in the middle of the nineteenth century, most notably James Grant Duff, claimed that the British had captured India not from the Mughals but from the Marathas. In India, educated people like V.K. Saran, at the turn of the twentieth century, set out to learn about the Maratha people.

To get a complete understanding of the processes that go into the formation of states, one needs to look into where authority first came from. Land, war and the money that comes with it, and in the context of India, caste, are likely to have been the key factors that determined power in the ancient world. As caste was itself a sign of social mobility in the pre-colonial age, this final point calls for a different interpretation than what has been given to it in colonial and postcolonial contexts. Despite the fact that caste is definitely present, new social groups were included into the caste structure and given caste titles. What I mean by this is that caste titles were given to the new social groups. It is clear from the ascent of the Kayasthas and Rajputs in power throughout the Middle Ages that it was possible to climb the social ladder during that era. It's possible that other sorts of employment or relocating could contribute to social mobility by opening up new doors to power, status, and wealth. An example of a geographically mobile family that also benefited from social mobility is the Bhonsale family, which Shivaji belonged to. The Bhonsale family moved around a lot.

In recent years, there has been a rise in academic inquiry on what is called "the nature of the state," though the Maratha state is often overlooked. For instance, the aforementioned historians were consulted by Stewart Gordon and Andre Wink. Gordon's now-famous studies of the Marathas as "marauders" and Wink's focus on the whole topic of the fitna, which he understood to represent insurrection and its significance in appreciating the nature of sovereignty, were among the earliest attempts to investigate the nature of state development under the Marathas. Both of these research should be treated as exploratory at this point. In light of the fact that the Marathas belonged to the "zamindari stratum" and the eighteenth century was a time of "gentrification of the Muslim Empire," Wink contends that the Maratha state kept some features of the Mughal system. To further, one could utilise the concept of a "successor state," which is more often used to define Rajput kingdoms than Maratha republics. Rich landowners in Maharashtra reportedly spent substantially on real estate in the 18th century, but afterwards turned their focus to profiting through asset transfers. This is according to the research of Sumit Guha. Despite supporting early nationalist literature's depiction of Maratha rule as the "Maratha Confederacy," these studies sidestepped questions of state formation. These studies undoubtedly complemented the original nationalist writings.

Scholars have been interested in the role that the state played in mediaeval India ever from the time of the colonial era. However, it has been the target of a type of 'intellectual imperialism,' as Richard Fox[3] pointed out. This means that the concepts of the state that have been implemented are largely Eurocentric in nature, with an emphasis on bureaucratization, clearly defined territorial boundaries, and a centralised administration led by a monarch who has complete and unquestioned authority.

From their origins in the 'theocratic state' and 'the dictatorial state' of the nineteenth century, discussions about the state may have come a long way. Marx's Oriental Despotism is another illustration of how far we've come. Theoretical models of the state were used in the twentieth century's research far more extensively than they had been in the nineteenth. The feudalism argument, which was prevalent from roughly 1960 to 1980, is illustrative of this. Most of these models have examined mediaeval India, but have typically concentrated on the "larger" empires, such as the Sultanate and the Mughal Empire to the north, and the Cholas and the Vijayanagar Empire to the south.

This essay will attempt to use three different international theories of statehood to explain the Marathas. The state models are providing the conceptual backbone for this particular explanation. The essay is more of an exploratory exercise than a clear model application because no attempt is

made to define the Maratha state in terms of any particular model, and because no attempt to define the state is made at all. Herman Kulke uses an integrative or processural method to understand Orissa, while Burton Stein treats the Chola and Vijayanagar empires as segmentary states. Through the viewpoint of a patrimonial bureaucracy, Stephen Blake examines the Mughals. Some of these philosophers' concepts are used in this article, but only in very chosen places.

It is now general knowledge that Aidan Southall's segmentary state model, which he used to identify the Alur civilization of Eastern Africa, is a dramatic departure from the mainstream Eurocentric norm. Southall utilised this model to characterise the Alur civilization. Stein, following Southall's lead, has defined a few defining properties of the segmentary state. These traits are more general in nature. To begin, there are predetermined "zones" under the supervision of the state. As a result, each segmentary state possesses a central region (sometimes called a nucleus), a middle region, and a peripheral, all of which have varied degrees of autonomy. The authors state that this authority is "most absolute near the centre and increasingly restricted towards the periphery." Typically, the central government has only a limited amount of influence in these outlying areas. Additionally, each division is 'independent' from the others, and frequently, divisions duplicate, on a lesser scale, the central administration that is maintained. According to Stein, segmentary states are structured in a "pyramidal" form, in which all segments have the same amount of power within their own system and defer to the central government equally. Although the central authority claims monopoly of force, it is often constrained in its use because "legitimate force of a more restricted order inheres at all the peripheral foci." The level of authority that is centralised in each individual sector is the primary differential between the two.

Stein contended that countries of this type possessed two distinct types of sovereignty: real and ritual. Only in his nuclear realm did the king exercise 'real' sovereignty; yet, everywhere else in the kingdom, his authority was respected, and he was assigned a 'ritual' place at the very top of the administration. According to Stein, the distinction between "political power" and "sovereignty" lies in the fact that "appropriate power" can be exerted by many people, whereas "full, royal sovereignty" can only be wielded by a king who has been anointed by God. Thus, according to Stein's description, the segmentary state was "distinguished from the usual model of politics," that is, the "unitary state with its fixed territory, its centralised administration, and coercive power." He went on to say that without "any persistent administrative or power structure...the political system may best be described as a multicitizen democracy."

Stein's formulation mainly depended on the concept of several domains of authority in its construction. Only in the core was the sovereign's political rule entirely uncontested; from there, it degenerated into a 'ritual' as one proceeded to the intermediate, and then finally to the periphery. As a consequence of this, the sovereign served in these areas more as a distributor of legitimacy than as an actual ruler; he was given a symbolic or 'ritual' status, and his name was only invoked when it was absolutely necessary to do so. This aspect will be the primary focus of this study as we seek to gain a deeper comprehension of the nature of the Maratha state throughout the 18th century.

The Marathas' position was already tenuous prior to Sambhaji's death. After being hunted and driven out of Western India, Rajaram escaped to the southern Indian citadel of Jinji. The castle was taken from Rajaram and given to Shivaji in the seventeenth century. Jinji was besieged by the Mughals for nine years, ending with Rajaram's capture of the city in 1698. Sadly, Rajaram did not make it back to Maharashtra before he passed dead. Despite Shahu's escape from Mughal captivity after Aurangzeb's death in 1707, conflict continued intermittently in Maharashtra for the ensuing years. Tarabai's adherents continued to oppose Shahu with the help of other people, like the Nizam-ul-mulk (who subsequently became the Nizam of Hyderabad), despite the fact that Shahu and Tarabai's army never fought again after the Battle of Khed in 1707. All three of these powers (Shahu, Tarabai, and the Mughals) fought one another for the support of the Maratha bands, despite the fact that the Nizam of the time was not an independent ruler but rather the Mughal subahdar of the Deccan. After his release, many powerful people who had previously supported Tarabai quickly shifted their allegiance to Shahu. As a result, it's safe to assume that he achieved this result more so than anyone else. According to Shahu, the principle of primogeniture gave him precedence over Tarabai's children because he was a descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji. The name Tarabai was passed down from Tarabai's mother. Tarabai and her husband fought amongst themselves over who should lead the kingdom that had been handed to them.

In 1713, once Shahu and his Peshwa had begun to pull those immediately loyal to Shahu closer together and pay them with saranjam presents, many Maratha sardars had joined Shahu. Balaji Vishwanath, the first of Shahu's Peshwas, gets credit for this success since he was the one who discovered the previous manner of doing things was unsustainable and developed the system that eventually became the norm. Around this period, the term "Maratha Confederacy" began to be used. This was due to the fact that these sardars served as the de facto military commanders of bands with the ultimate goal of forming a unified "state." The idea of a segmentary state also has bearing on the matter at hand.

The altered conditions necessitated the introduction of several adjustments. First, as the swarajya, where Shahu's was the last power as Shivaji's heir, the state had to be built within this core region; second, the state had to expand outside this core region through some form of "acquired" or "delegated" authority. Shahu, a direct descendant of Shivaji, ruled as swarajya over the central region. The Marathas who had become Mughal mansabdars saw their authority challenged, making this a matter of the utmost significance. To rephrase Stein, "sovereignty" and the legitimization of claims to authority, or "ritual" sovereignty, were necessary because the concept of a unified, bounded kingdom was no longer possible. Shahu, the "real" monarch of the Maratha empire, was the only means by which the lineage of the Marathas could be established as legitimate. Shahu was a patrilineal descendant of the nation's founder. Far from being examples of "feudal" organisation, the saranjams and watans in this formulation could be seen as manifestations of the sovereign's authority at various levels.

Keep in mind that the topic of discussion here is not the entirety of Stein's creation of a "peasant state and society," but rather the segmentary state model in terms of the separation between real and ritual sovereignty. This is an important distinction to keep in mind. Only the Chhatrapati could make the claim that they held true power, and in the instance of Shahu, there is no doubt that he did. One can recognise both the real and the delegation of authority in the formal appointment of the Peshwa as well as in the ceremonial presentation of the "Peshwaichi vastre," which literally translates to "the robes of the Peshwa." As a result, the Peshwa was never permitted to wield power on his own, but rather was to do so exclusively in the name of the Chhatrapati. Within the context of this model of a segmented state, the Chhatrapati can be interpreted as the personification of authority or "ritual" sovereignty. Because he personally distributed honorary robes to a large number of sardars, particularly around the time of the festival of Dussehra, one could make the case that the Peshwa amassed both the actual power and the ritual power of the sovereign. This is one theory that has been put forward to explain the phenomenon. The Chhatrapati was also responsible for providing robes to the sardars, but he did so only after consulting with the Peshwa, who had established himself as the de facto authority in the eyes of the Chhatrapati.

Concurrently, Maratha bands ruled by competing rulers expanded Maratha state territory to the north and west. They were able to expand their dominion and fill the royal coffers with the spoils of war. Perhaps domestic administration could have been better organised with more funds on hand (although this is a topic that requires extensive study). The Chhatrapati, however, reaped no material benefits from this (ritual sovereignty), despite the fact that territory was invaded and acquired in his name. The gap between real and ritual sovereignty was emphasised by the fact that

those who had obtained land and/or money kept it (real sovereignty) and the question of rights over territorial and monetary gains was never settled.

Before the year 1761, it's probable that this was the way the problem was viewed by those in power. However, warning signals of approaching issues can be detected a significant amount of time before they really occur. One of the reasons for this is that the state of Kolhapur developed while Shahu was still alive, so creating yet another legal seat of power and laying the framework for prospective rivalries. Shahu's preference was for him to stay in the background, but the fact that he was Shivaji's descendant gave him a stronger claim to power. However, after he passed away, this reduction in quality invariably became a greater source of difficulty. Now, the role of the sovereign in rituals has a tendency to become more institutionalised, and the genuine sovereignty has migrated, along with the capital, to the Peshwas in Pune, even within the nuclear region. This is the case despite the fact that the function of the sovereign in rituals has a tendency to become more institutionalised. Despite this, the outward appearances of sovereignty were maintained, and orders continued to be given in the name of the Chhatrapati.

There were several reasons why 1761 was a pivotal year. Not only did it result in the deaths of many prominent Maratha figures, but it also severely harmed the reputation of the Maratha armed forces. The loss brought up the issue of sovereignty again, and it was blamed on the Peshwas and, by extension, the Konkanastha brahmans. The Peshwas were blamed because power shouldn't be given to individuals who can't properly handle it. For a short time under Madhav Rao I's (1761–1772) rule, the Peshwa were able to restore their power. To prevent the Maratha sardars from challenging his power, he kept the peace among them. The Peshwa lost power once he passed away, and the Barbhai Council took over. This incident marked the beginning of the segmentation of the state because every sardar, including the Peshwa, now had an equal claim to exercise real sovereignty within his own zone, even within the context of the Chhatrapati's ritual sovereignty. Furthermore, this incident marked the beginning of the state's segmentation. For instance, after this time, competition between the Scindias and the Holkars escalated, and Mahadji Scindia became involved with the various groups inside the Delhi court. During the most recent Peshwa, only a remnant of the prior ritual sovereignty existed. Finally, it was the British that re-established the Chhatrapati as a purely titular monarch, giving him a legal standing but removing him from all real or ceremonial power.

There is much discussion on whether or not the term "sovereignty" should be applied to the Maratha State, and what that term actually means. If "sovereignty" is defined as the freedom to

pursue one's own interests within one's own area, then the Marathas may have given up their "sovereignty" when they accepted the sanad from the Mughal Emperor. This is because the Marathas lost their ability to govern autonomously inside their own territory. It's problematic, considering the word's historical basis, that it's almost always employed only in its modern definition. Sometimes the term "suzerainty," which the British created and still use frequently, is more suited to describe this relationship. Chhatrapati desired complete devotion from anyone who worked for him or ruled in his name because he was the suzerain of the kingdom at the time. The Chhatrapati and the Maratha sardars, as well as the Chhatrapati with each other, interacted under the umbrella of suzerainty.

The patrimonial-bureaucratic state is the next paradigm that will be discussed in this study after that. Because of Akbar's efforts to systematise, the Mughal Empire is a suitable illustration of Max Weber's theories on patrimonial kingdoms and bureaucratic states, according to Stephen Blake. This is because Akbar "gave the patrimonial-bureaucratic empire in India its most systematic, fully developed, and clearly articulated form."

Weber contends that the individual who holds power in a patrimonial state does so on the basis of the legitimacy of his own patriarchal family and, by extension, his own personal and traditional authority. Therefore, much as in a family, an individual's personal bonds will decide whether or not that person will be loyal to and accept the authority of another person. As a patrimonial state expands its sphere of influence outside its immediate family and kin, the authority of the state transitions "from the patrimonial, which is domestic and personal, to the purely political, which is military and judicial, and which must be administered by extra-household officials." This change in authority is referred to as the "transition from the patrimonial, which is domestic and personal, to the purely political." The result of this is the establishment of a patrimonial bureaucratic state.

Later in his career, Blake established a distinction between 'patrimonial' and 'patrimonial-bureaucratic' regimes. He observed that patrimonial dynasties had a propensity to be more manageable in size and level of complexity when compared to other forms of dynasties. Even if the administration of a patrimonial-bureaucratic empire was based on the idea of household-dominated control, the scale and dispersion of such an empire needed more complicated strategies for the administration of the empire. It's possible that this will be most obvious in the military services. The household troops, which consisted of a corps of soldiers who were both loyal and well-trained, were frequently the backbone of the system of government in a patrimonial country. The growth of patrimonial and bureaucratic empires ultimately entailed an increase in the size of their armed forces, which led to an inevitable increase in the complexity of those empires' armed

forces. Therefore, it would be tough for the average family to provide adequate care for all of these people. Because of this need, armies were split between the emperor's devoted private home troops and the soldiers of his subordinates. Allegiance was still a key factor for the emperor's subordinates' soldiers, but now it was primarily to their own commanders and, by extension, to the emperor. As a result, the emperor's forces included both household troops and soldiers from the emperor's lower ranks.

Similar to how 'extra-household' officials were introduced as kingdoms evolved from patrimonial to patrimonial-bureaucratic institutions, so too were 'extra-court' officials. Tax collection and the possible resolution of petty disputes were the main responsibilities of these officials. Not a bureaucracy in the modern sense of the word, but not just a family or a group of families, either. There was a hierarchical structure in place, although it was never brought up in conversation. In spite of the fact that promotion required the consent of the Emperor, there was little room for question that advancement within this organisation was dependent on one's level of merit. As a direct consequence of this, the obligation of loyalty was extended to include not just members of the immediate family but also the household employees. The public's perception of the all-benevolent patriarch was strengthened as a result of this, and the distinction between public and private life was muddied as a result. It was difficult to maintain consistent communication with all of the officials due to the fact that they could not all be deemed to be members of the family. Paying salaries was one way for smaller kingdoms to stay in touch with their subjects; for larger empires, the grant of other forms of revenue took the place of financial compensation from the emperor's funds. Paying salaries was one way for smaller kingdoms to stay in touch with their subjects. You would need to find ways to keep in touch with them on a semi-regular basis (for example, during promotions) and prevent them from settling down in one area by relocating them periodically in order to keep this "bureaucracy" under control. Obviously, this scenario could only continue to exist for as long as the patrimonial ruler's power was acknowledged. The natural inclination of the bureaucracy was to move outward as the centralised power began to wane. This resulted in the establishment of smaller kingdoms that were similar to the larger one in many respects. Following this, the patrimonial monarch would take on a new function as the guarantee of legitimacy in the nascent nations, despite the fact that they would have no official power in these governments.

It's possible that the Mughal and Maratha partnerships of the eighteenth century reflected some features of this approach. Although some Marathas joined the Mughal service in the years after

Shivaji's death and the start of Shahu's rule, many remained loyal to Rajaram and Tarabai. In spite of this, the Mughal empire and the Marathas both adopted the practise of cultivating and strengthening local ties at this time, and it became widespread in India during the rest of the eighteenth century. This pattern first appeared about that time. For André Wink, "sovereignty was primarily a matter of allegiance; the state organised itself around conflict and remained essentially open ended..." in India. Wink learned this by reading about India in the past. It's undeniable that there were several shifts in alliances throughout the eighteenth century, whether or not one subscribes to this viewpoint.

The legendary present from the Mughal emperor arrived in 1719. It was obvious that the Mughals were retreating from the battlefield in the face of Maratha attacks as early as 1716. Balaji Vishwanath requested a sanad that would grant Shivaji swaraj (indigenous rulership) over the territory he conquered, as well as Shahu chauth and sardeshmukhi (absolute power) over the six subahs that make up the Deccan. In addition, Balaji Vishwanath requested a sanad that would grant sardeshmukhi to the Deccan's six subahs. 15,000 men would be maintained by the Peshwa on Shahu's behalf, and they would be available to the Mughal subahdar of the Deccan. There would also be an annual tribute of 100,000/-.

If the Mughal Empire were to make this kind of concession, its authority over the Deccan would, in all likelihood, come to an end. In addition to being one of the most enduring legacies left by the Mughal Empire, it is also possible to understand it in terms of the legitimacy it gave. Long after the fall of the Empire, all of the successor states continued to assert their legitimacy in the name of the former empire. Shahu was a result of this system of legitimacy, which was one of the most glaring elements of this imagined empire. The kings of any of the successor kingdoms never used the term "Badshah." Shahu was a product of this system. As a result, it is possible that he believed that a sanad from the Mughal Emperor was required in order to further demonstrate Shivaji's legitimacy. After this event, and up to the year 1761, the Marathas also asserted that they were defenders of the empire and were willing to do whatever it took to maintain their position. In terms of the paradigm, this can be interpreted as the struggle between a patrimonial king (the Mughal) and a bureaucracy (the Marathas).

However, if we apply this concept to relations among Marathas, we might classify the Chhatrapati as the patrimonial leader of the Maratha state. This would be consistent with the traditional view of the Chhatrapati. He was the origin of all power, and Shahu himself was the one who exercised control over it. He appointed others to carry out his directives, but ultimately they were accountable to him. This personal bond was deepened through ceremonies such as the 'Peshwaichi vastre'

ceremony, which was described in the previous paragraph. These links continued to deteriorate throughout the course of the eighteenth century, despite the fact that the Marathas gradually enlarged the land that fell under their control. In the patrimonial-bureaucratic paradigm, however, sardars may be considered as carrying out all three functions (home, army, and administration) under the umbrella of the Chhatrapati's authority. In Marathi culture, sardars did not function as bureaucrats. As the central government's sway waned, the Sardars demanded independence for their domains and eventually banded together to form the Maratha Confederacy. Again, the idea of suzerainty has the potential to be utilised here with more success than in previous contexts.

The 'integrative' or 'processural' model proposed by Herman Kulke is the third conceptual framework that I have put out. This model was motivated by Bernard Cohn's concept of a'small kingdom' for the Benares region. Kulke's investigation into Orissa involved the use of statistics to illustrate the presence of a 'process' by which smaller regional units gradually evolved over time and geography into larger states. Kulke's investigation focused on Orissa. As a result, according to his assertions, the structures of states "evolved," beginning as modest organisations with a local focus and ultimately expanding in terms of size, complexity, and modes of operation. As a result, it is important to "reveal the existence of a methodical bureaucratic apparatus and a sophisticated display of grandeur" in subsequent imperial realms.

As envisioned by Kulke's model of state development, non-Hindu tribal leaders or tribal leaders who were not Hindu initially adopted and adapted to a pan-Indian framework through religious and ceremonial networks. Local elites strove (among other things) to create alliances with local tribe deities in order to consolidate their authority. Eventually, they linked these deities to the pan-Indian beliefs, which demonstrated their expertise with a state culture. The Jagannath temple, which Kulke used as his major illustration, served to support his claim. Once they gained possession of or access to a territory that was capable of generating an abundance of goods, smaller monarchs that were in the second stage of development started the process of putting together a group of professionals who would eventually establish a governing class. The third stage saw the emergence of a regional state, which finally absorbed all of the formations that came before it within its borders and established itself as the most powerful authority in the region.

In order to apply this idea to the Marathas, one could investigate the deshmukhs and other members of the local elite who lived in the plateau region. These individuals were active in the administration of the Bahmani sultanate and the Bijapur kingdom, respectively. The fundamentally religious and ceremonial framework of Kulke is obscured here as a result of the subsequent

adoption of the cult of the goddess Tulja Bhavani as the object of worship. She was, however, a manifestation of Shakti and could be accommodated within the larger pan-Indian context because of this fact. As part of the administrative framework of Bijapur, Shivaji's father, Shahji Bhonsale, claimed the jagir of Pune and its surrounds, which he later gave to his son. Once Shivaji began battling to carve out his own area, he enlarged upon this jagir and made it part of his own dominion. His atomic domain expanded throughout the course of time, which resulted in the establishment of the swarajya. The theological and ceremonial frameworks were formed once more as a result of the two coronation ceremonies, but this time over a larger geographical area and with slightly different symbols.

It is conceivable to apply this paradigm to a later time period, the eighteenth century, in order to study the competing claims that were being made at the time, and to arrive at the conclusion that these fights comprised the first phase (again) of the emerging state(s). For the reason that the state that Shivaji had established was still a living memory; additionally, it was his successors who fought for (and over) the region that was contained within it; hence, they needed to reassume their position, although perhaps with reference to the earlier swarajya rather than to deities. As a matter of fact, there was a power pyramid in operation, in addition to a regional empire; nevertheless, given that this took place in the eighteenth century, there were a great deal of rivalling areas and parties. Every organisation searched for evidence that could validate its claims, and they discovered it by exhibiting symbols of authority, prestige, and power. The introduction of Europeans such as the English and the French required a reorganisation of the previous categories that were in place. It is possible that this is yet another perspective from which to investigate the Marathas' utilisation of French troops and French expertise.

The findings discussed above don't even begin to touch the surface of the original models. Building what Stein referred to as a "peasant state and society" was of the utmost significance for his segmentary state concept. If this topic is to be investigated within a Marathi framework, then the watandari system and the relationships that exist between the state and the various watandar levels require a greater amount of focus and consideration. In the classic text from the eighteenth century known as Adnyapatra, the watandars are referred to as "those who should be controlled" because of their role as "sharers in the sovereignty" of the empire. There has been no research conducted on the question of whether or not this may also be understood in terms of both real and ritual sovereignty. The patrimonial-bureaucratic paradigm presents similar challenges, one of which is determining whether or not the deshmukhs, deshpandes, and other aristocratic families may be construed as "bureaucracy" within the context of this framework. In addition to this, there needs

to be a more in-depth investigation into the ways in which the responsibilities of various jobs in the family, the military, and the government all overlap with one another. It would also be important to investigate, albeit from a slightly different perspective, the transformations that manifested themselves as a direct result of the expansion that took place in the eighteenth century. The topic of whether or not any given model may be reliably applied to practise remains open. As was mentioned in the outset of this piece, a model can be tested to see if it is sound. On the other hand, the application of a model may also pique curiosity about the underlying structure of the understudy state. It may be required to cite the sources from which a model was created in order to show that it is not applicable in the real world. Conversations about topics like accommodation, assimilation, the use of compulsion, and the ability to compromise are crucial within the framework of the Maratha state. Although none of these questions are answered here, this is still an experimental essay as was previously indicated. The study of the Maratha state can be undertaken from a variety of perspectives. The method I've used to write this piece—which involves tweaking established models—could serve as an example. Frank Perlin criticised "Mughal and Maratha centric treatments of economic history," although the late Athar Ali suggested that historians may label the 18th century the "Maratha century." You may read Frank Perlin's critiques here. However, it is crucial to bear in mind that the 18th century was a time of immense vitality and that there were many ways to both acquire and give up power during this era. Prior to the advent of modern technology, the most important variables likely included land and the rights associated with it, political or social privilege (which could have been conferred by birth, caste, or administrative status), and brutal combat. Large-scale investments in property rights by the military in the early eighteenth century were recommended by Sumit Guha as a means through which political and military authority may be commercialised. This was already emphasised before. One may argue that in the early eighteenth century, a new type of political formation emerged with deep ties to a locale but access to higher levels of political power as a result of the convergence of two separate sources of power (land and warfare). This novel form of political organisation has entry to both the grassroots and the highest echelons of government. Next, we must consider the role that familial ties play in both the vertical and horizontal webs.

That the watandars are "sharers in sovereignty" as Ramachandrapant Amatya said may need to be rethought in light of this. He wasn't trying to deny the existence of watandars under Shivaji's rule; rather, he wanted to emphasise that the king didn't encourage the emergence of any new ones during his reign. He was making the case that the king didn't want any new rulers to take his place.

This did not eliminate the threat that the Watandars posed to the empire as a whole, however, because of their strong power base and their capacity to collect stronger support at the local level through kinship, loyalty, or other networks. The next stage is to examine their function in the Maratha state and beyond. Understanding the process of state development necessitates an examination of the inter- and intra-regional contexts in which legitimacy and authority are being asserted. Examples of valid structures that could benefit from a fresh look include the Peshwas' support of the warkari sampradaya, the practise of giving formal gifts on religious holidays like Diwali and Dussehra, and the significance of the Tulja Bhavani symbol to the Bhonsale family. Not to mention all the talk about the 18th century and how important regional powers were politically and culturally.

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