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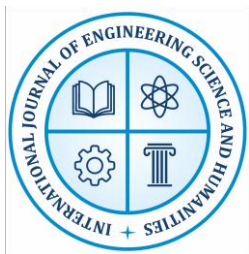
Rao Sheosingh And The Making Of Modern Sirohi: Politics, Power And Regional Identity

Dr. Seema Charan

Assistant Professor, Sanghvi Maatushri Puribai Bhurmal Jain Government College, Sheoganj,
Sirohi (Raj)

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the political role of Rao Sheosingh in the nineteenth-century history of Sirohi. It was not merely because he acted as a ruler or regent that he was important; more significantly, the decisions he made during a time of political uncertainty had an impact on the relationship between the ruling dynasty, the regional authority, British power, and the various local political groups. Rao Sheosingh came to power at a particularly difficult stage in the history of Sirohi. The state was under pressure from outside sources, there were rivalries among the members of the political establishment, disputes over succession arose, and the authority of the ruling family was gradually declining. Sheosingh assumed power in the late 1810s after Rao Udaibhan was removed with the help of a number of nobles and other local interests. The situation that ensued brought about a great deal of political uncertainty. In this situation, Sheosingh looked to the British for protection and support, which eventually resulted in the Treaty of 11 September 1823. The treaty enabled Sirohi to remain a separate political entity, but at the same time placed it within the wider system of British paramountcy. This was a significant point in the political history of Sirohi. The state did not merely lose its sovereignty; rather, the meaning and the boundaries of its political authority were altered under the new arrangement. The paper also deals with the second phase of Sheosingh's rule after 1847. It considers the changing economic and administrative conditions of the state, his interactions with British authorities, the cession of territory at Mount Abu, and Sirohi's position during the Revolt of 1857. These developments indicate that the political changes occurring in Sirohi cannot be seen simply as a result of modernization imposed by the British. Political survival and administrative reform were closely linked to territorial negotiations and the attempt to maintain the legitimacy of the ruling dynasty. The question of regional identity is also crucial for understanding the history of Sirohi during this period. The identity of the state evolved through its connection with the Deora-Chauhan lineage, memories of its territory, ideas of political autonomy, its relations with neighbouring states, and later on, the administrative categories established under colonial rule. Therefore, Rao Sheosingh's legacy is a complicated one. Although his political decisions helped Sirohi to maintain its separate institutional status, this survival came with restrictions that



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gradually transformed the character of its political power. The study is based on a qualitative historical method. It makes use of the available historical sources, examines them in the light of their political and social context, and compares colonial administrative records with subsequent historical research. The study also reconstructs key political events in order to explain why certain decisions were taken and what their consequences were for Sirohi.

One shortcoming in current scholarship is that Rao Sheosingh has usually been treated as just one of the successive Sirohi rulers rather than being presented as the main focus of an in-depth historical study. His contribution to the establishment of the state under British paramountcy and to the development of Sirohi's regional identity has not been given the same level of detailed attention. In this paper, by positioning Sheosingh at the centre of the discussion, an attempt is made to link the history of Sirohi with the broader history of the princely states and the system of indirect British rule in nineteenth-century India. The paper also aims to demonstrate how political survival, negotiation, and adaptation influenced the history of a small princely state during a time of significant political change.

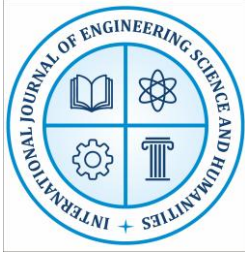
Keywords- Rao Sheosingh; Sirohi State; Deora Chauhan; Rajputana; British paramountcy; princely states; regional identity; sovereignty; indirect rule; nineteenth-century Rajasthan.

INTRODUCTION

The history of nineteenth-century Rajasthan cannot be fully grasped by merely viewing it as a struggle between 'British rule' and 'native rule'. The political situation in Rajputana was far more complicated. Authority was jointly held and constantly negotiated among the rulers, the nobles, the local communities, the neighbouring states, and the British political agents. Recent research into princely India has also revealed that the nearly six hundred princely states were not simply passive continuations of the precolonial era. Instead, their rulers actively responded to the expansion of the colonial power by adapting to British institutions, negotiating with them, and at times working in cooperation with them (Jhala, 2019).

Sirohi provides a significant regional example of this process. Its official relationship with the British began rather late and was closely tied to an internal political crisis and disputes over the legitimacy of the ruling authority. Rao Sheosingh played a significant role during this period of transition. The existing records of the Sirohi rulers indicate two clear phases in Sheosingh's political career. The first occurred in the late 1810s and went on into the early 1820s, while the second started with his return to power in 1847 and continued until 1862.

Both archival and colonial sources describe him as the ruler who asked for British protection when Sirohi was under pressure from Jodhpur, experiencing internal rebellions, and having a deteriorating administrative system. The Imperial Gazetteer states that the political situation had become so unstable that many of the Thakurs had broken away from the state and sought



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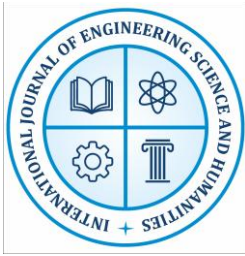
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protection in other places. It was in this situation that Sheosingh made his appeal to the British in 1817. The Treaty of 11 September 1823 was therefore much more than just a diplomatic arrangement; it represented a key step in determining Sirohi's political status in relation to both the British and Jodhpur. The treaty recognised British supremacy while at the same time offering protection to the state. It also imposed certain restrictions on the ruler's freedom in foreign affairs and required him to follow British advice in matters of administration. A contemporary account of the treaty also notes that the British government refused to accept the assertion that Sirohi was politically subordinate to another Rajput ruler. This in effect gave formal diplomatic recognition to Sirohi as a separate political entity.

The phrase 'the making of modern Sirohi', as employed in this study, does not imply that modernity started with Sheosingh or that he was the only person responsible for transforming the state. On the contrary, it describes a slow process by which an earlier regional political entity was altered into a princely state clearly defined in terms of territory and diplomacy under the supremacy of the British. The study therefore examines how political crises, the arrangement of protection with the British, administrative reforms, and the attempts to maintain dynastic legitimacy all influenced the evolution of Sirohi's political identity. In this respect, the period of Sheosingh offers a valuable insight into the broader changes occurring among the princely states of nineteenth-century Rajasthan.

OBJECTIVES

1. To reconstruct Rao Sheosingh's political career within the broader context of nineteenth-century Sirohi history.
2. To look at the internal and external situations which caused Sheosingh to ask for British protection.
3. To analyse the Treaty of 11 September 1823 as a turning point in Sirohi's sovereignty and political status.
4. To investigate the relationship between dynastic authority, British paramountcy, the nobles, and the regional political society.
5. To assess Sheosingh's second phase of rule (1847–1862), including his dealings with the British authorities and the state's reaction to the Revolt of 1857.
6. To explore how territorial politics, lineage, political memory, and institutional change have contributed to the regional identity of Sirohi.
7. To point out the shortcomings in current scholarly work and suggest areas for further micro-regional research on Sirohi.



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METHODOLOGY

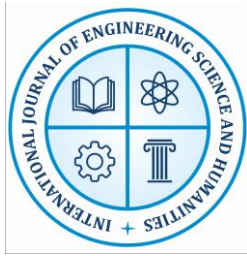
This paper adopts a qualitative and interpretive method in the study of history. It makes use of source criticism and contextual analysis to understand the political developments involving Rao Sheosingh. Rather than accepting any one colonial account as a full and unbiased account of what happened, the study compares the information from a variety of sources. These include the treaty collections from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Imperial Gazetteer, administrative reports, and genealogical and state records.

The historical sources are studied in conjunction with contemporary research on princely states, colonial sovereignty, Rajput political culture, and regional identity. The research is carried out in four main stages. First, the timeline of Sheosingh's political career is rebuilt by referring to different records. This enables the distinction to be made between his first period of rule and his later return to power. Second, the major political events are considered in the wider regional context, especially the claims made by Jodhpur, the internal divisions in Sirohi, and the increasing influence of British paramountcy. Third, the Treaty of 1823 is not studied simply as a diplomatic

The role of Rao Sheosingh in the formation of modern Sirohi is discussed, with the agreement being seen as a significant political arrangement that altered Sirohi's relations with the British and with the neighbouring states. The study then examines Sheosingh's involvement by means of five main themes: politics, power, territory, administration, and regional identity. Great care must be taken when looking at the nature of the historical sources in this study; colonial authors at times depicted the princely rulers as weak or disorderly chieftains who required British oversight, while at other times they showed them as loyal allies of the colonial government. Neither of these views can be accepted without taking into account the circumstances under which these accounts were written. Modern scholars who have studied princely India have also emphasised the importance of going beyond such oversimplified interpretations. Thus, for example, Groenhout (2006) maintains that princely states should be regarded as important subjects.

Sirohi Before Sheosingh: Political Geography and Dynastic Foundations

The political identity of the Sirohi region can be traced back to the long-established Deora-Chauhan tradition. It emerged in a geographically diverse area that comprised the Aravalli hills, Mount Abu, the western Banas region, and the major routes connecting Rajasthan with Gujarat. Colonial accounts of the area highlighted the variety of its landscape, which consisted of hills, forests, cultivated plains, and the roads running through the Abu area. This kind of geography also had an effect on the development of political authority in the region, since Sirohi was not an isolated desert principality nor a fully centralized kingdom but rather had power distributed



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among chiefs, estates, forts, villages, and local networks each of which exercised influence in various parts of the region.

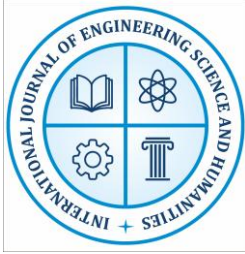
The growth of the town of Sirohi was also closely linked to the development of the region's political identity. According to genealogical traditions and colonial records, Rao Sobha/Sheo Bhān is said to have founded an earlier settlement in 1405, and Rao Sains Mal is credited with setting up the later capital in 1425. As time went on, the capital became a significant symbol of the unbroken succession of the ruling dynasty. So by the nineteenth century the name 'Sirohi' was used not just to refer to the ruling family but also to denote a territory and a political community that shared a common historical memory.

It is important to understand Sheosingh's role in this context. He was not the one who established the regional identity of Sirohi; rather, that identity had evolved over many centuries prior to his era. What he did was to handle and reform this identity that had been passed down to him in light of the political situation in the nineteenth century. The period must therefore be regarded as a transformation of the earlier political system rather than as a total break with Sirohi's past.

Crisis of Authority and Sheosingh's Rise

The reason why Sheosingh came to power was because of a crisis in the system of rule. Rao Udaibhan, who took office in 1808, got involved in the politics of Jodhpur and was said to have been forced to pay a heavy ransom following his arrest. This financial obligation was passed on to the state and as a result led to harsh tax demands. According to the Imperial Gazetteer, Udaibhan was removed from power and put into prison by a group consisting of the nobles and the general population of the state, after which his brother, Sheosingh, was chosen.

This episode shows an important aspect of Sirohi politics—that sovereignty was dynastic yet not free from political opposition. The ruler's authority relied on the support of the powerful nobles and the local elites. It is therefore possible to see Sheosingh's rise to power as representing a deal which led to the restoration of political order. The nobles' involvement was not simply a case of palace intrigue; it proved that political legitimacy was shared between the ruling family and the elite structure of the state.



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The situation was also regional in character since Jodhpur's assertion of its supremacy over Sirohi risked turning an internal dispute over succession into one concerning the rank of states. In the case where Jodhpur tried to take military action, the issue then became one of survival for the smaller state. At the same time, the British were strengthening a network of treaties throughout Rajputana. Therefore, Sheosingh's political difficulty consisted in maintaining Sirohi's separate status without having enough military power of his own to ensure it.

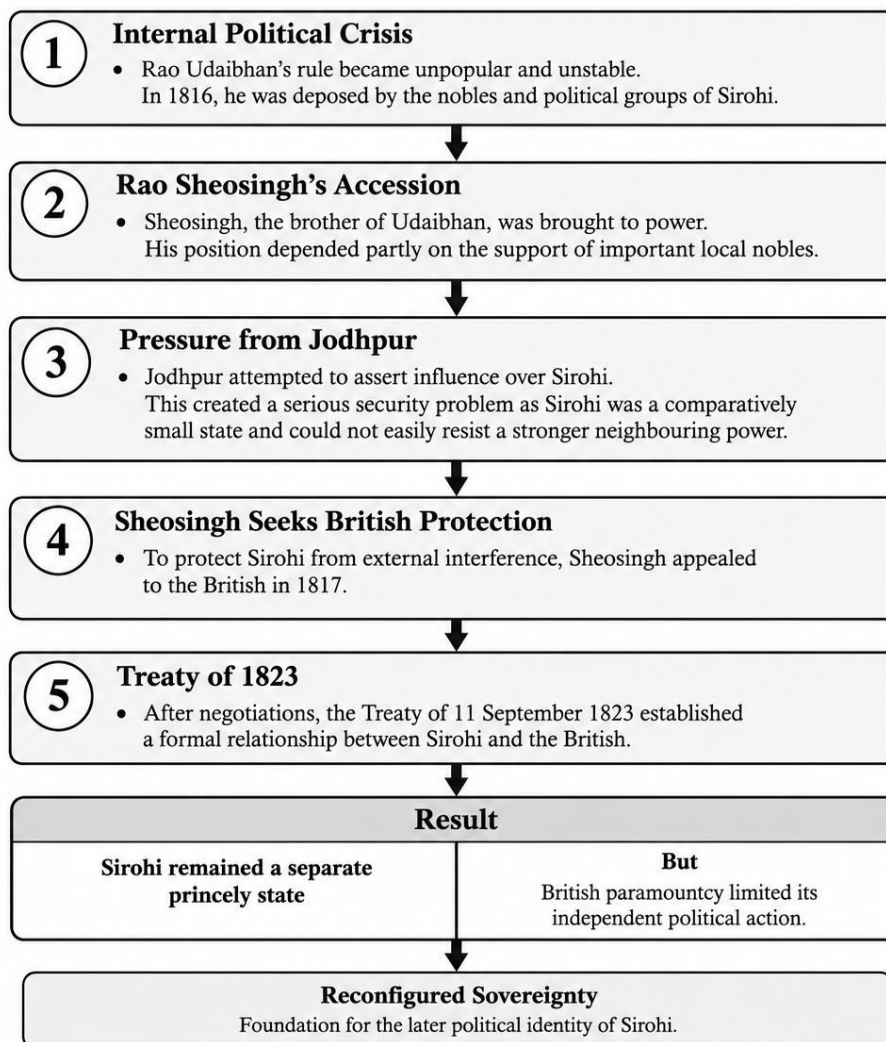


Figure 1. From Political Crisis to Protected Sovereignty: Rao Sheosingh and the Transformation of Sirohi, 1816–1823



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The 1823 Treaty: Protection, Paramountcy and the Re-definition of Sovereignty

The fact that Sheosingh decided to ask for British protection in 1817 has to be seen in the context of the changing political situation in post-Mughal Rajasthan. At that time the British were becoming the foremost political power in the area and were entering into treaty arrangements with a number of Rajput states. The case of Sirohi was different since the British first had to decide if Jodhpur had a valid claim to political supremacy over the state. This final arrangement dismissed the claim and thus enabled Sirohi to set up a direct relationship with the British.

The Treaty of 11 September 1823 was thus a significant yet complicated milestone for Sirohi; it offered protection from external political pressure and enabled the state to keep its separate identity, while at the same time it imposed definite restrictions on the ruler's ability to manage his political affairs independently. As stated in the contemporary records of the treaty, Sheosingh accepted British supremacy, agreed not to maintain political relations with any other chiefs without first obtaining British permission, and promised to govern on the advice of the British political authority. He also accepted a tribute based on the state's revenue. In return, the British agreed to give protection and acknowledged the succession of the ruling family.

The outcome was far from the total disappearance of Sirohi's sovereignty, but rather a major alteration in the way sovereignty functioned. This point is crucial when considering the political history of the princely states. In the case of indirect British rule, the rulers went on to administer their states and stayed officially acknowledged as political authorities, whereas the British became increasingly involved in or exercised control over their external relations and some aspects of internal administration. Groenhout (2006) identifies the conflict between political autonomy and imperial control as a key issue in the history of the princely states, and Jhala (2019) also emphasizes the part played by the rulers and the state institutions in negotiating their position within the colonial system.

For Sirohi the treaty also had a significant consequence: by resolving the issue of its relationship with Jodhpur it contributed to the notion of Sirohi as a separate political entity. In this respect the treaty had a dual effect. On the one hand, British paramountcy placed limitations on the state's political autonomy and, on the other hand, it brought about a certain stability in which Sirohi could carry on as a distinct princely state. The history of the treaty thus illustrates how political authority.

Table 1. Major stages in Sheosingh's political career

Period	Political position/event	Broader significance
1816–1817	Rise after deposition of Udaibhan; appeal for British protection	Internal legitimacy and external security become interconnected
1817–1823	Negotiation with British authorities	Sirohi's distinct political status is



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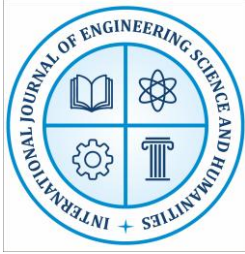
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Period	Political position/event	Broader significance
	amid Jodhpur's claim	tested
11 Sept. 1823	Treaty with British Government	Sirohi enters a formal relationship of protected sovereignty
1823–1847	Udaibhan's second period of rule	Treaty framework continues; Sheosingh remains part of dynastic politics
1847–1862	Sheosingh's second period of rule	Consolidation within mature paramountcy; administrative and territorial questions deepen
1857	Sirohi supports British side during the revolt	Loyalty becomes a political resource within colonial hierarchy
1862	End of Sheosingh's rule	Transition toward later administrative modernization under subsequent rulers

Power Beyond the Palace: Nobles, Local Elites and Political Society

Modern Sirohi cannot be fully understood by looking at the relationship between the ruler and the British. The political crisis which led to Sheosingh coming to power demonstrates the significant role played by the state's nobles and other local political figures in influencing political decisions. Power in Sirohi was distributed among various centres. Even though the ruler had dynastic legitimacy, the real exercise of power relied very much on the support and cooperation of the thakurs, the estate-holders, the officials, and the local communities.

It is also possible to understand why British protection did not amount to a simple replacement of the old political system. Rather, British authority functioned mainly via institutions and relationships which were already in place. The British political agents kept an eye on the state, assisted in the settlement of disputes, and promoted administrative reforms, but the ruler's everyday legitimacy still rested with the dynasty and the existing local networks of influence. Subsequent research into Sirohi has demonstrated that the colonial administration still addressed issues concerning customary authority, revenue, jurisdiction, and local political arrangements. Even though Vidal's study concerns a different Rajasthani kingdom and a somewhat different period, it is nevertheless helpful in illustrating how colonial authority gradually became integrated into the existing political structures through disagreements over law, violence, legitimacy, and competing notions of truth, rather than by merely replacing the earlier systems of authority (Vidal, 1997).



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Sheosingh's political legacy may therefore be seen in part as a result of his skill in handling various groups and interests; his task was to transform an accession which had the support of certain members of the local elite into a more stable political and diplomatic situation. As a result, power in Sirohi was not confined to the ruler himself but was instead developed through ongoing negotiations between the dynasty, the local nobles, neighbouring states, and the British.

Mount Abu and the Territorial Politics of Modern Sirohi

Mount Abu has always held a particular significance in the history of Sirohi since its political and environmental importance went well beyond the borders of the state. To the British, the hilly area became more and more valuable for military and administrative reasons as well as because of its more pleasant climate. As time passed, Abu grew to be an important site in the British political and administrative setup in Rajputana. A subsequent treaty enabled the British to obtain land at Abu for a sanatorium. Historical records mention a treaty relating to the cession of land at Abu in 1843, and later accounts associate this agreement with the establishment of the British sanatorium.

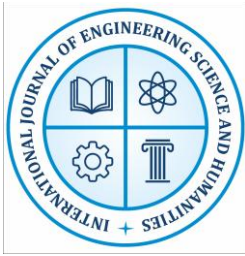
Abu's question was therefore not merely one concerning the transfer of land; it also showed the evolving relationship between Sirohi's territorial authority and British interests. The landscape itself came to be the subject of negotiation since an area which had previously been part of Sirohi had acquired new military, administrative, and strategic significance under the influence of the British. Although Sirohi remained a princely state, certain parts of its territory were slowly brought under new kinds of political and administrative control.

These changes also influenced the way the region came to be understood. Sirohi's identity was no longer connected only with the Deora-Chauhan ruling family or the capital town. It was also associated with the wider Aravalli landscape, Mount Abu, and the political framework of British Rajputana. Regional identity, therefore, developed through several overlapping elements rather than from a single source. Mount Abu provides a clear example of how territorial negotiations during the nineteenth century helped shape this changing identity.

The Second Phase of Sheosingh's Rule, 1847–1862

One should not regard Sheosingh's return to power in 1847 merely as a recurrence of his previous political activities. At that stage, the relationship between Sirohi and the British had become firmly settled. The key political question was no longer whether Sirohi would be placed under the protection of the British, but rather how the ruler could exercise his authority in a state where political freedom was now subordinate to British paramountcy.

The political situation had also changed a great deal. The British had set up more comprehensive administrative systems all over Rajputana, and the princely states were becoming more and more linked to the wider colonial system by means of treaties, political agencies, revenue



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arrangements, communication networks, and territorial agreements. Yet at the same time the ruling princes kept on introducing administrative reforms while still preserving their traditional monarchical systems. As Roy (2020) notes in his research into the princely states, these states operated under agreements with British India and underwent colonial rule as a result of a mix of political and economic pressures. This situation therefore offers a useful point of comparison when it comes to understanding the case of Sirohi.

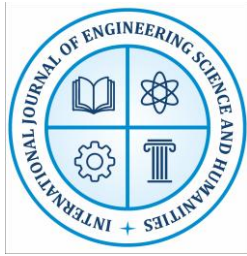
Sheosingh's second period of rule may thus be seen as one in which the political position of Sirohi was becoming more firmly fixed. Although the state had ensured its survival, its autonomy was by no means absolute. Sheosingh had to preserve the authority and prestige of the ruling dynasty while operating within the system of indirect British rule. It should not be inferred from the relative stability of this situation that Sirohi possessed complete independence; the treaty system placed the state within a definite political hierarchy in which British authority was still ultimately superior.

Sheosingh and the Revolt of 1857: Loyalty as Political Capital

The Revolt of 1857 is important for gaining an understanding of Sheosingh's political strategy. According to colonial reference works, the ruler of Sirohi had supported the British during the revolt and was subsequently given a remission of half his tribute. The significance of this event lies in the fact that political loyalty could have practical effects on the state; in the case of Sirohi, support for the British resulted in a direct financial advantage.

Sheosingh's decision can be grasped when considering the general political situation at that time. Sirohi had depended on British protection in order to secure its position against the bigger regional powers, especially Jodhpur; the agreement reached in the Treaty of 1823 had also made the position of the British as the paramount power a crucial element of the state's political security. Since Sirohi's position was based on this arrangement, any serious challenge to British authority could in principle have an effect on the political system upon which the state itself was dependent; thus, supporting the British during the revolt served to protect the standing of the ruling family within that existing system.

The fact that 1857 should not be seen merely as evidence of a blind pro-British attitude in Sirohi must also be taken into account, since the decision had a practical political and economic dimension. The grant of a remission of half the tribute shows that questions of recognition and finance could become involved in the relationship between a princely state and the colonial government; it is therefore possible to regard Sheosingh's actions at that time as forming part of a wider strategy intended for the purpose of protecting the state and preserving the position of the ruling dynasty during a period of great political uncertainty.



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The 1857 incident therefore contributes a further aspect to Sheosingh's political career, illustrating the way in which the ruler operated within the existing balance of power and made use of his connections with the British in order to protect Sirohi's political position and ensure the continuation of his dynasty.

Administrative Change and the Making of a 'Modern' State

When referring to Sirohi under Sheosingh, the term 'modern' should be used with care since the state had not suddenly turned into a modern bureaucratic state during his administration. Rather, changes occurred bit by bit. It became more clearly defined as a result of the formal recognition of its territory, the establishment of regular political correspondence, the obligation to enter into treaties, the organisation of fiscal arrangements, the development of judicial practices, and the increasing communication with the British political authorities. Although the later history of Sirohi included further changes in fields such as revenue administration, transport, and public institutions, these developments were part of a longer process which had started in the nineteenth century.

The broader history of the princely states also demonstrates that changes in administration could occur without bringing about the end of monarchical rule. Jhala (2019) points out that the rulers in various princely states adopted new methods in the areas of administration, taxation, law, education, public health, technology, and representative institutions, yet still ruled as monarchs. The case of Sirohi indicates that a earlier stage of political modernisation was already underway, even prior to the major reforms of the late nineteenth century. The state was becoming more and more organised on the basis of written records, treaty relationships, clearly defined territorial jurisdiction, and regular contacts with the colonial political system.

Sheosingh's contribution to the process was therefore significant, but by no means final. He did not alter every aspect of Sirohi's administration. On the contrary, he helped to establish a more stable political and territorial structure in which subsequent changes could then occur. It was therefore mainly a political and institutional role on his part in the development of modern Sirohi, consisting of securing the position of the state and adjusting it to the changing political situation, rather than involving large-scale technological or administrative modernization.

Regional Identity: From Dynastic Memory to Territorial Consciousness

Regional identity is influenced by factors other than geography; it evolves over time through common memories, symbols, institutions, and the way people see themselves as belonging to a place. In Sirohi, this sense of identity was closely tied to the Deora-Chauhan lineage and to the history of the capital. In Rajput political culture it was customary to associate family lineage with honour, with territory, and with public representation. For example, Bose's study of Rajput



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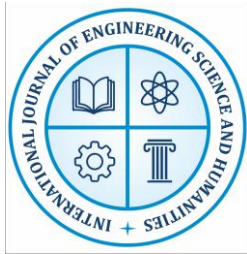
funerary art demonstrates how dynastic memory could be preserved and expressed through commemorative buildings and other forms of political symbolism (Bose, 2015).

In Sirohi the significance of Sheosingh mainly stems from his role in keeping the state as a separate political entity. The 1823 settlement contributed to the continued existence of Sirohi as a distinct political community since it acknowledged Sirohi on its own rather than accepting Jodhpur's assertion of political supremacy. It should be noted, however, that British paramountcy was not what gave rise to Sirohi's regional identity, for that identity had origins which were far older; the British relationship instead offered a new political context in which an already existing identity could persist and slowly evolve.

The fact that regional identity also accounts for why the smaller princely states remained important as political entities can be explained by several linked factors—namely dynastic customs, territory, the local elite, administrative methods, and memories of the past. The case of Sheosingh shows how there is a connection between political survival and regional identity. If the political existence of Sirohi was to be protected, then its name, territory, historical memory, and institutional traditions had to be preserved. In this way, Sheosingh's political career was not simply about keeping power; it was also involved in the broader process by which Sirohi continued to exist as a separate regional entity.

Table 2. Analytical dimensions of Sheosingh's contribution

Dimension	Historical process	Contribution to modern Sirohi
Political	Accession during internal crisis and elite conflict	Re-established a functioning centre of dynastic authority
Diplomatic	Negotiation with British and rejection of Jodhpur's supremacy claim	Secured recognition of Sirohi as a distinct political unit
Sovereignty	Treaty of 1823	Converted independent claims into protected/conditional sovereignty
Territorial	Negotiation over Abu and surrounding strategic spaces	Created layered jurisdiction and new territorial meanings
Administrative	Growing interaction with political agents and treaty obligations	Encouraged documentary and institutional forms of governance
Imperial	Support for British during 1857	Converted loyalty into fiscal/political recognition
Cultural	Continuation of Deora-Chauhan dynastic legitimacy	Connected older political memory with a modern territorial state



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A Model of making a Modern Sirohi

A conceptual model can be proposed according to which modern Sirohi came about as a result of the interaction of five factors: inherited dynastic legitimacy, internal elite politics, pressure from the regional geopolitical situation, the influence of British paramountcy, and territorial-cultural memory. Nothing among these factors by itself accounts for the transformation. Negotiation was the main historical mechanism.

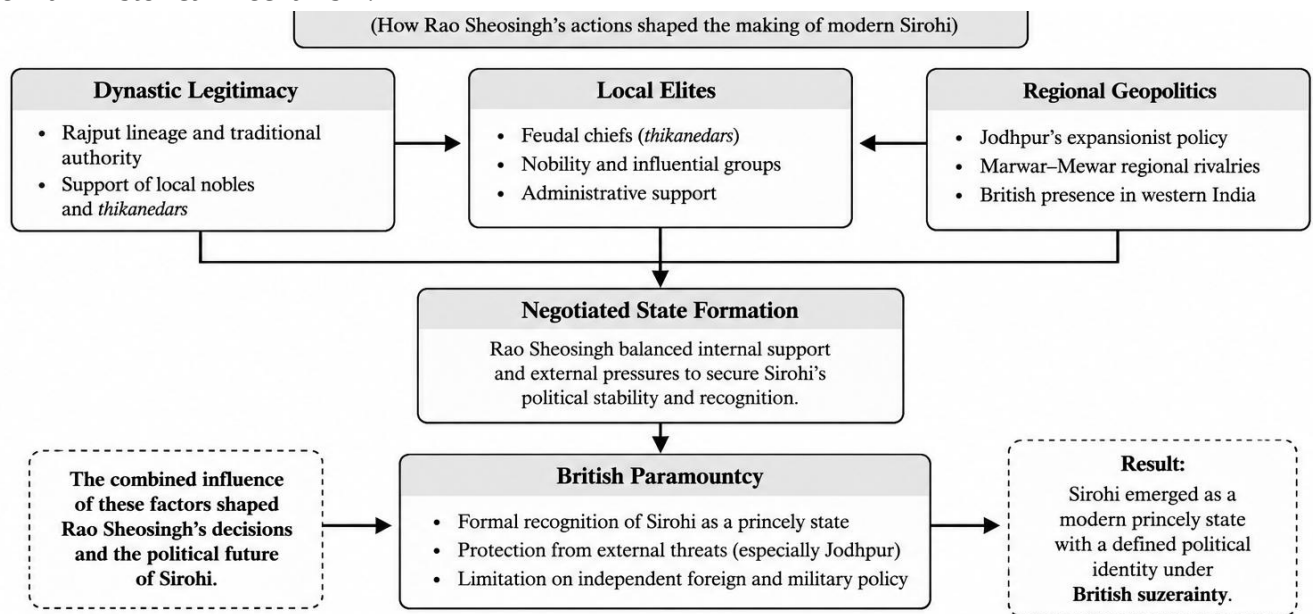
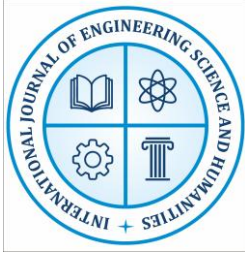


Figure 2. Conceptual Model: How Rao Sheosingh's actions shaped the making of modern Sirohi

Reconsidering Sheosingh: Ruler, Negotiator, or Political Survivor?

Most regional histories have focused on heroic rulers, stressing their military victories, territorial expansion, or outright resistance to imperial powers. This method of writing tends to neglect the role of rulers who administered smaller states and had very different political situations. A different perspective on political leadership can be seen in Sheosingh's case; whereas his significance was not primarily due to conquest, it rather stemmed from his ability to arrange a political settlement which enabled Sirohi to remain as a separate state.

The idea that Sheosingh should be regarded as a modern nationalist is incorrect since concepts like the nation-state and popular sovereignty were not at the heart of political thought during his time, and it would be historically inaccurate to apply them directly to his actions. Rather, his concerns were more directly linked with the security of the state, the status of the ruling dynasty, territorial authority, relations with the local elites, and the obligations resulting from treaties. Nevertheless, the concerns he had and the political decisions he made had effects that went beyond his own era and helped shape the later emergence of Sirohi's regional identity.



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This is one reason why the history of princely states is important for understanding the making of modern South Asia. Modern territorial identities did not emerge only from direct British rule or from nationalist movements. They could also develop through older political institutions that gradually adapted to colonial conditions. Princely states occupied a space between complete independence and direct colonial administration, and their histories reveal how political identities could survive and change within that space.

Sheosingh can therefore be understood in neither of the two simple ways often used to describe princely rulers. He was not merely a ruler dependent on British support, but neither was he an entirely independent Rajput sovereign operating outside colonial influence. His political career developed between these two positions. Sirohi retained its own ruler, territory, and institutions, while its political freedom was increasingly shaped by British paramountcy. It was this balance between preserving the state and accepting new political limitations that defined Sheosingh's role in the changing history of Sirohi.

RESEARCH GAP

The existing literature on Sirohi is useful but somewhat uneven. Gazetteers, dynastic lists, colonial administrative accounts, and regional histories contain considerable information about the rulers, territory, treaties, and administration of the state. However, Rao Sheosingh has rarely been examined as the main subject of a detailed historical study. In most accounts, his career is reduced to a brief entry in the list of Sirohi rulers or to a short discussion of the Treaty of 1823. As a result, several aspects of his political role remain less explored.

Biographical and political gap:

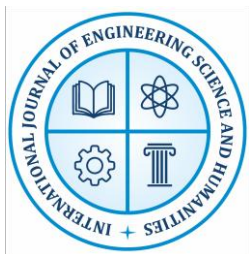
There is limited detailed research on Sheosingh's entire political career. His first period of rule and his return to power in 1847 are often discussed separately rather than as connected parts of his efforts to protect the ruling dynasty and maintain the political position of Sirohi.

State-formation gap:

The Treaty of 1823 is generally discussed as one event in the wider history of British treaties with the Rajput states. More attention is needed to its impact within Sirohi itself, particularly on the relationship between the ruler, local nobles, neighbouring states, and British political officials, as well as on the changing meaning of Sirohi's sovereignty.

Identity gap:

There has been relatively little focused discussion of the connection between Sheosingh's diplomacy, territorial politics, and the later development of Sirohi's regional identity. The relationship between political survival, dynastic memory, territory, and the sense of belonging associated with Sirohi deserves closer attention.



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Micro-regional source gap:

A more detailed study based on Sirohi State records, political correspondence, revenue documents, court proceedings, inscriptions, genealogies, local

CONCLUSION

Rao Sheosingh's importance in the history of Sirohi lies in the political changes that took place during his career. He came to power at a time when dynastic authority, the influence of local nobles, and pressure from outside powers were closely connected. His decision to seek British protection did not simply mean that Sirohi surrendered itself to colonial rule. Instead, it led to a new political arrangement in which Sirohi retained its separate identity while accepting the growing authority of the British. The Treaty of 11 September 1823 was the formal expression of this arrangement.

This study has argued that the settlement of 1823 was an important step in the making of modern Sirohi. In this context, 'modern' does not mean that Sirohi immediately became a modern state in the later administrative sense. Rather, it refers to the gradual development of a more clearly defined territory, a recognized diplomatic position, greater use of documentary and administrative practices, and a changing relationship between the ruling dynasty and external political authority. When Sheosingh returned to power in 1847, he was operating within this already transformed political framework. His actions during the Revolt of 1857 further show how political loyalty could be used pragmatically to protect the interests of the state and the ruling house.

Perhaps the most important point emerging from Sheosingh's career is the connection between political survival and regional identity. Because Sirohi continued to exist as a separate state, its Deora-Chauhan traditions, territorial associations, local institutions, and memories of the past were able to continue, even as their meanings changed under colonial rule. The making of modern Sirohi was therefore neither simply a story of British control nor one of uninterrupted indigenous continuity. It was a gradual and negotiated process shaped by protection, diplomacy, local politics, territory, and historical memory.

Sheosingh's historical role deserves attention in this wider context. He was not simply a minor ruler overshadowed by the larger Rajput states of Rajasthan. His career shows how the ruler of a relatively small state could use negotiation and political adaptation to protect the position of his dynasty and preserve the existence of his state. A fuller understanding of Sirohi, and of nineteenth-century Rajasthan more generally, requires attention to such smaller princely states. Their histories show, at the local level, how sovereignty was adjusted, colonial power was negotiated, and regional identities continued to develop during a period of major political change.



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