

Transportation and the Socio-economic Development of Poona

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Abstract

Transportation has continually played an essential part in the vicissitudes and vagaries that occurred in the life of man since ages. Man, was the first means of conveyance, followed by the sledge and the wheel, which became turning points in the antiquity of transportation. Carts dominated land passage for centuries; the introduction of railways and motor vehicles altered land transportation as the carrying capacity increased and the travel time reduced, giving a stimulus to the communication between people extending the scope of human movement and facilitated the smooth mobility of individuals, goods and commodities. 18th century Poona was rather unusual as an urban centre, where on one side it didn't have the commercial reputation of Surat, Ahmedabad or Burhanpur; nor did it have the imperial heritage of Agra and Delhi. The city's transformation was due to the efforts of a single family that of the Peshwa, who meticulously altered it from an obscure Kasba or market town to the seat of their power and into a flourishing city, the subsequent British Raj era, saw Poona becoming a principal centre which experienced the positive impact of the new means of transportation. Poona's skyline saw the emergence of industries, it also witnessed better passage, which created a favourable environment for socio-reform and political movement, as people could organize quickly bringing them together to unite against an alien rule. This was so as in totality, 19th century India saw better road construction systems come into practice; the railroads and motor vehicles added to the shifting face of the land. This paper looks at the connection of modern conveyance viz. railways and road in renovating the socio-economic and political compass of Poona. As the upgraded, well-organized transportation structure provided a competent, efficient, effective movement of individuals and commodities, thus leading to the conversion and transformation of Poona through transportation.

Key Words: *Poona, transportation, socio-economic, development, transformation*

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