

EPILOGUE

Precisely, the entire exercise so far made in the preceding chapters has provided a scope to understand the uniqueness of the political history of merger in the backdrop of a general ambience. Such an attempt has definitely helped to understand the sophisticated historiography of colonial South Asia in general and India in particular. To put in a different way the study of the history of relationship between the newly born Indian Union and the Princely States helps to understand the compulsions of the emerging post colonial democratic regime in India and the declining feudal political authorities of the Princely States.

The compelling reasons behind the active interest of the newly born Indian Statecraft had been to integrate all the Princely States who occupied at least, two fifth of the Indian sub-continent. Such an accommodation of the Princely States would help to strengthen Indian political geography both from strategic and politico-economic viewpoints. The consolidation of the political culture in the name of democracy and Indian nationhood had been of high order during those days immediately after independence. The need for the extension of social roots of our political democracy

and the replacement of the aristocratic feudal authoritative power structure had compelled the newly born democratic political regime to provide a general call to the Princely Indian States to be integrated with India. The result of such call had created mixed responses and reactions among States of Princely India which can well be categorised as under.

The first category of Princely States was deeply interested to join India almost unconditionally. The second category of States had shown their interest to join Indian Union subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions of socio-economic relevance. The third category of States denounced joining India and had been interested in joining Pakistan. The fourth category of State had been reluctant to join India or Pakistan and intended to remain sovereign independent State with the commitment to keep their distinctive political identity in the sub-continent either as a single political unit or as a confederate union of the Princely order. The fifth category of State while intending to merge with India claimed for separate provincialhood under the Indian State structure.

The politics of under currents, the factors and forces actively operating behind the process of bargaining between the Indian states and the Princely India are many which have been broadly discussed both in general and in particular terms in the principal body of the dissertation. Presumably one can logically argue that the results of such bargaining have ultimately questioned the

primary edifice of both the political and economic theory of feudalism. The newly emerged democratic political regime had an objective purpose to establish a sovereign national or supra-sovereign state structure where the merging units get marginalised and can not even play the role of quasi-sovereign or infra-sovereign units of the sovereign national state structure. While dealing with the Princely States and getting them merged with the Indian fold, the economic theory of feudalism had remain completely uncared for. To be precise, economic theory of feudalism rests upon the justification of the existence of multilevel governments in the federation division of functions and financial resources between various levels of governments and provision of various types of federal financial assistance to reduce vertical federal imbalances. In fact, no uniform policy based on a definitive economic and political theory had been applied for while the units of Princely order had been merged with the newly evolved Indian democratic political order. Thus one may logically argue that the politics of expediency had played principal role during the bargaining process of merger of the Princely States with the Indian Union.

The objective denouncement of the claims of Princely States by the Indian Union had been due to the fact that the Indian leaders intended to ignore completely the erstwhile political status of the feudal rulers. This had been essential for the reason that the process of democratic nation building and state building had been

of high order. With this clear-cut objective in mind the Indian Statecraft carefully subsided the term merger and replaced the term by bringing the concept integration the functional, spatial and psycho-cultural aspects of integration, had been given importance. However, the academic exercise so far made on the subject in the preceding chapters had failed to understand the issues of psychological and cultural integrity of the merging Princely States and the Indian Union. Indeed, such kinds of psychological gap and cultural difference have produced worries and constraints in different parts of Indian political soil in the form of regional ethnic assertions. Thus one may argue the process of integration with its ramified ingredients had not been duly attended to. It was not the process of integration rather it had been the process of merger under compulsions which unravels the politico-administrative issues rather than psycho-cultural dimension of integration. This is germane to mention that the Indian Princely States had been given a kind of relative autonomy by the British Government during early forties due to the internal pressure of conservative politics in Great Britain rather than well chalked out decision for the future consolidation of Indian State. Since late forties the position of the Indian States was one of great anxiety. Their security and political integrity had been in jeopardy. Neither the Princely States did have

machinery to combat the deteriorating communal situation. The immediate solution was to bring the Princely States under the fold of Indian Union. Such a compelling situation demands a hectic political deliberation and quick decision. As a result the politics of expediency had started playing the principal role and consideration of other theories and issues had been given a backseat.

Colonial India had been experienced with two distinctive political geographies; (a) Directly British administered provinces; (b) Indian States under the suzerainty of the British Crown. The Government of India Act 1947 while creating two dominions candidly provided the position of the Indian States in future providing them independence of either remaining sovereign or joining India or Pakistan. The British administered provinces and the Indian States were so intrinsically linked and welded together that it was impossible to think an independent India in isolation of the Indian States. The States Department was created to settle the issues which claimed for a kind of organic bond to be forged between the Government of India and Indian States, after taking into consideration, the preservation of the integrity of the country. The hectic initiatives taken by the Head of the States Department, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, provided no room for deliberation for the Princely States geographically contiguous with India. Thus the option provided in Government of India Act 1947 had ultimately turned into compulsion for the Princely States to join India. One

can, therefore, argue that there is the territorial boundary of Independent India. They exist as a result of a particular mode of transfer of power from British Colonial rule and of political negotiations between the leaders of independent India and the **rulers of Independent States.**

The study on the dynamics of state formation reveals the fact that Indian State like her counterpart in Europe and Asia does have a history distinctively of her own. It has been shown in the study how the Indian State has come to be what she is and what might be expected of her. The study has sought to do about trajectories of state formation in India, a unique political entity facing major uncertainties, crisis and challenges. The study has provided a general background to the deeper understanding of what is possible in development and what are her historical conditions and limit. It should logically be concluded that Indian State (not Rajya or Samrajya) is relatively a modern construction, its institutional forms and trajectories differ but also within her Asian counterparts.

While venture to understand the fundamentals of the relationship between newly emerged state, one should appreciate the nature of the dominant state and its relationship with the civil societies essentially agrarian and feudal by nature. Such a study is partly connected with social theory and partly with the domain of existential politics. There is a consensus among social scientists that conventional wisdom about the State and its nexus with

society, whether it draws upon liberal theory or its relates to radical theory, seems to be totally inadequate to the immensity of the problems which challenge the edifice of the modern state. The anguish and unfulfilled aspirations of the Princely order and their people provide a compelling reason for a re-consideration of a kind of ideological understanding of the state and the same time as one re-examines the institutions which provide the operational framework of such relationship in an era of popular democracy. The study so far made on state formation has either placed India as a 'civilisation state' or a 'native state'. However, such a nomenclature does not call for any change in the formal and informal structure of the political system devised by the Constitution or grow as a natural phenomenon. Nevertheless, such an over reaching identity provides a liberal space necessary for the articulation of diverse social identities within a single political system.

Notwithstanding the fact that the diversified and variegated nature of the development of civil societies in India (Erstwhile British administered provinces) and many 'Indias' (Big and small principalities geographically contiguous to India), the unanimity so far reached during late forties had been to consider the urgency of building a strong Indian State ignoring the separate processes of State formation experienced by the Indian Princely order. Thus, integration of the India states had been a sine-quo-non. The

constitutional rhetoric of the new Indian State placed emphasis on three distinctive principles of modern state system: Sovereignty, political democracy and a bounded form of socialism. Evidently, despite irredeemable triteness, these principles seemed to convey some important truths about the nature of the Indian State. Thus, three distinct tasks the Indian State had accomplished during the process of integration of the Indian State. The first had been the task of creating a Weberian monopoly of violence bringing the process of Princely States under the disciplining control of the dominant State. The second was the task of making the integrated State responsive through institutions of popular participation. The third had been the conversion of the State and its bureaucracy into a major instrument of social change and distribution of welfare. The newly born Indian State had sought to telescope all these objectives into a single process and into a relatively short period of time. The historical efforts of the Colonial State and its nationalist successors accomplished all these tasks. However, experience and dissatisfaction with the performance of the Indian State have given rise to an interesting debate about what should be done on its various failures while integrating both functionally and spatially the Indian Princely States to the fold of Indian State. The declining tendency of the centrality of the Indian State prompts us to suggest to evolve certain basic apertures and insulators^{to} sub serve tensions

started ^{fl} following sublimely at different erstwhile integrating parts of the present Indian State structure.

The study of Cooch Behar in the northeastern canvas has amply proved that the principality of Cooch Behar had been and still has been a periphery of the Indian State. Since the region and her people have a common distinctive trait, it has its own historical antecedent too. The people of Cooch Behar, to be specific, are Rajbanshis who shared common cultural emblems such as race (Indo-Mongoloid distinctively different from Aryans or Dravidians of the Indian main stream), Language (dialect), dress (unlike of northern or southern people of India), diet or a combination of them. The people of Cooch Behar have a self-ascribed awareness or distinctiveness which altogether lead to mobilisation through the use of ethnic symbols for socio-cultural and politico-economic purposes.

Keeping in view the Indian context, the region under study can well be designated a periphery of Indian mainland, periphery of productive organisation of the country, periphery of dominant political economy of the country as a whole and periphery in terms of being different from the dominant races of the country as well as politico-administrative perspective in particular. Such kind of peripheral studies resulted into psychological insecurity, emotional alienation and a feeling to be left out in the power sharing arrangement. All these constraints had directly or indirectly

influenced the mindset of the ruler not to join the Indian State structure but to live in isolation as a separate autonomous political entity. In fact, these deeply rooted causes have been manifested in the form of assertions of social movements even after the fifty years of merger of Cooch Behar State with the Indian Union.

Historically, Cooch Behar was not an integral part of the directly British administered India and did not have much strong political and legal relationship with it. The rulers and native aristocrats of Cooch Behar viewed the Indian Government with fear and suspicion and it is this that eventually took the shape of a political issue. The Rajbanshis the local natives of Cooch Behar forming majority of the population can be easily distinguished from the outsiders by their physical appearance. On the other hand, the newly evolved Indian State craft did nothing to remove the fear in their minds that taxes and an alien culture would be imposed upon them. The local aristocrats along with the ruler had a feeling that with the merger of their State into India they would get slowly alienated from their lands and that Indianisation of the area would take place. All these issues are important areas of concern, which have still remained unattended and unanswered. No political leader of national stature had been serious and displayed an enlightened sense of commitment and duty to this merged periphery.

All these unsettled areas during or immediately after the merger of Cooch Behar State with the Indian Union have ultimately

given birth to a form of ethnic unrest in the recent years to achieve a better life materially and culturally aggregated in a group. In fact, historical factors have a major role in giving shape to unrest. The Indian system with its institutions and policies has not quite been able to cope up with the diverse demands of a pluralist society and has not been able to satisfy the rising expectations of the people. Thus the urgent need is that the political leaders and administrators both at the centre and the State level become serious and displayed an enlightened sense of commitment and duty towards the periphery composing of erstwhile principalities. The fundamental postulate of integration of the Indian States had been to tie up the heterogeneous socio-political forces by a single thread of nationalist main stream. Methodologies applied in doing so had not been proper and the obvious result has been alleviation of the merging units towards the national development process. The essential need is for greater psychological and emotional integration of the merging principalities with that of mainland India.

The study of relationship between East India Company or later on the British Indian Government with the Princely States provides a unique historiography to understand the nature and character of the imperiums under the direct or indirect control of strong imperio. The East India Company began their stride without a strip of Indian Territory. To quote Meson, 'A warehouse was

expanded into province; a province into an empire." However, such development did not take place over night. Treaties entered into with Indian States in the early stages aimed at no more than the maintenance of the Company's privileged position in trade against its rivals. It was in the process of protecting its commercial stake in the country that the Company under the leadership of Clive actually laid the foundations of the British Empire in India. The policies taken by the East India Company and later on by British India Government had certainly been perused for the extension of their area of influence and ultimate subordination and subjugation of the Princely States to the altar of the British authority.

Thus the relationship between the East India Company or later on British India Government with the Princely States corroborates the fact that the British undertook policies and strategies vis-à-vis the Princely States for the best satisfaction of economic and political interests of the British in India. The British interest in Cooch Behar had been essentially political. The protection of the northeastern flank of their expanding empire was their principal concern. However, the economic interest was also not negligible during the late eighteenth century. The Princely State Cooch Behar was identified as an alternative trade route to Tibet through Bhutan and Assam via Cooch Behar. In order to obtain free access it was essentially important on the part of the British to exert hold and command on this tiny State Cooch Behar. Thus even

since the dawn of British Indian empire this tiny state was considered as a principal element in the British expansionist agenda. The internal feuds with in the rank and file of the Royal family of Cooch Behar helped the East India Company to gain a smooth access to the internal administration of the Cooch Behar State. It has been shown in our study that since the period of Wellesley's administration the authority of the Company had been greatly increased and during the period of King Harendra Narayan confrontation between the king and the East India Company had been on the rise and with in a passage of time the entire state of Cooch Behar was brought under the complete control when Harendra Narayan's heir occupied kingship. It has been shown in the study that the East India Company had purused certain policies following a consequential design, however, when applied to Cooch Behar the policies observed in breach and Cooch Behar state had come under total control of the British administration with little autonomy and authority left for the Maharaja of Cooch Behar.

The policy of subsidiary alliance pursud by the East India Company ~~had~~ ultimately helped to bring most of the Princely States under its complete control and command. In addition, the policy of complete subordination and isolation accelerated the pace of subordination of the Princely States to the mighty East India Company. ^{The period} From the early nineteenth century till the mid of nineteenth century witnessed the most important changes in the

relationship between the Princely States and the British authority. The entire period had experienced a metamorphosis of the Indian States from a congeries of quasi-independent units, some openly hostile, antagonistic, doubtful and resentful. In response to such assertions the East India Company had to abandon its policy of ringfence and non-interference as well as system of subordinate alliance and by replacing those policies by a generous policy of cooperative partnership. However, such policy was not maintained while we study the relationship between the British authority and the Princely Cooch Behar. In fact, after the death of Maharaja Harendra Narayan there had been hardly any attempt undertaken by the rulers of Cooch Behar to express their resentments and worries against the growing control and dominations of the British authority over this tiny Princely State.

British policy towards the Princely States underwent a fundamental transformation after the Sepoy Mutiny which the modern historians termed as the 'First War of Independence'. It was unanimously concluded that the most fundamental cause behind such upsurge had been the policy of wholesale annexation of the Indian States with one pretext or other. Indeed, the realisation that the Princes could play as one of the bullworks of British rule led to a radical change of policy which found expression in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858. Under such proclamation the

Indian Princely rulers were proposed to be given the right of adoption of child and they were assured that no harm would be done so long they were to be faithful to the Crown. Thus the politics of friendship had replaced the erstwhile British policy based on politics of coercion. Old policy of jealousy and suspicion against the Indian States was given up and States were brought together by providing them room to act an active agent of the British Empire. However, this does not mean that the Indian States were provided with much authority and freedom of action. Moreover, the British paramountcy over the Indian States was unquestionably established and strengthened by the declaration of Lord Canning in 1858, "The Crown of England" stands forth the unquestioned "ruler in India".

The following years were occupied with the task of evolving a new machinery for controlling the States and this was duly accomplished. A Political Department was constituted under the direct charge of the Governor General. This new Department had Residents and Political Agents in all States or group of States on behalf of the Governor General. The Political Department exercised complete control over the Indian States. The role of the Resident was so enormous in deciding and settling issues in the Princely State of the concerned Resident had led Prof. Panikkar, a celebrity on the affairs of the Indian States, to comment that, "all those who

have direct experience of Indian States know that the whisper of the Residencies is the thunder of the State and there is no matter on which the Resident does not feel to give his advice. His advice was ususally an order or a command”.

After the First World War, a high power committee was constituted for bringing about possible reforms and changes in Indian administration. The Committee was chaired by Montague and membered by Chelmsford. The Montague-Chelmsford report submitted in 1918 had paid glowing tribute to the Princes for their support to British authority in the First World War. The report suggests that, “The political stir in British India could not be a matter of indiffeence to the Princes, since hopes and aspirations were apt to overleap frontier lines. So the authors of report recommended that the reforms in the States could not be brought about as a direct result of constitutional changes in British India, they could come only through the permeation of ideas. It was stressed that the rulers of the States and politicians in British India should respect each other’s bounds”.

The British intention had been to form a nexus with the Princely Rulers to have a strong foothold against the growing democratic assertions taking place in the directly British administered provinces. During this period British policy towards Princely States had resulted a kind of cordial relationship. The Montague Chelmsford ^{Report} assumed that rulers be ensured that no

constitutional changes could take place ^{which} would impair the rights, dignities and privileges secured to the Princely order by treaties or by established conventions. In fact, Montague report had provided scope for the Princes to revitalise their political position. During December 1919, the conference of ruling Princes gave birth to the historic organisation of Chamber of Princes and such organisation was recognised by a Royal Proclamation on 8th February 1921. Thus during this phase of relationship between the British Government and Princely India had been that of a cordiality rather than supremacy and domination. The British conservative mind down through ages have had always a weak corner for the Princely aristocracy developed in India and the reflection of such weakness can well be corroborated from the fact that despite liberal democratic ethos cherished by the British people in bringing constitutional reforms in Indian State structure, the British authority intended to make a balance by considering the interests of the feudal aristocracy and liberally educated rising democratic forces in India. The attempt to make such balance had been primarily because of the fact that the British authority intended to strengthen the imperial edifice in India. To make their mission a success the British authority had played a kind of concessional politics to keep the feudal elements in India under control and to

use them as and when necessary against the potential anti imperial force in India.

The following years since 1857 have certainly witnessed fundamental departures in the policies and strategies of the British Government while dealing with the Indian States. Such a change in the British policy towards the Indian States had been due to the compulsions of the imperial power to maintain the imperial domination over the Indian sub-continent. With the intention to repair whatever damage made in the earlier relationship with the Indian States, the British authority had been cautious to exert control over the Princely States and to achieve this they preferred to follow the policy of the politics of friendship rather than the policy of taking coercive measures.

The establishment of the Chamber of Princes in the early twenties provided ample scope for the Indian Princes to bargain with the British authority in order to gain status and prestige. The Chamber of Princes had been a consultative body whose importance laid in the fact that besides ending the long standing policy of isolating the Princes from one and another, it helped to stimulate corporate feeling and to encourage cooperation among them. Being a member of the Chamber Cooch Behar State had been able to establish such relationship both within and without. Under the joint claims of the Maharaja of Cooch Behar and Jaipur as well as Baroda for the necessary arrangement of statutory protection to

combat nationalist upsurge in Princely India, the reaction of the British Government was very prompt. The Indian States (Protection against disaffection) Act XXIV, 1922 had been passed. Immediately after the passing of the Act nationalist activities were completely banned in Cooch Behar. Thus one may argue that the British relationship with the Princely States during the year had provided a new position to the Princely States with the objective notion to combat the anti imperialist forces in India.

During the late twenties the British Government appointed a specific committee headed by Butler to review the existing relationship between the British Government and the Princely India. Along with majority of the Princely States the ruler of Cooch Behar had welcomed the nomination of Butler by sending greetings to Mr. Butler. The bulk of the Butler Committee's work was done in England and Sir Lesley Scot was appointed by the rulers of the Indian States as their councillor to interact with the Butler Committee. However, the report of the Committee did not touch the mind of the rulers rather the rulers were completely dissatisfied with the contents of the report. The Indian States had surely in mind that the Committee would provide them much more independence and autonomy, however, they had been in vain. On the other hand, the Indian nationalists outrightly rejected the content of the report of the Butler Committee for its imperial design and attempt to satisfy the feudal interests.

The rejection of the report of the Butler Committee by the Princely States compelled the British Indian authority to provide some new arrangements. The recommendation of Nehru Committee had ultimately provided a possibility to call for Round Table Conference to be represented both by the Indian nationalist leaders and the rulers of the Indian States. The consecutive Round Table Conferences, however, had not been able to provide any positive solutions. The protracted negotiation between the rulers, leaders of India and the British authority had ultimately proved to be a failure. Following years had experienced a tremendous political upheavals in India and in the mid forties the Indian Independence Act had ultimately come to a kind of solution to all kind of bargainings. The Act intended to satisfy both the nationalist, communal and feudal interests in a single package. By way of creating Pakistan Dominion, the Act of 1947 intended to satisfy the communal elements in India and by way of providing full options either to remain independent or to join either of the Dominions to the Princely orders, the Act designed to satisfy the feudal elements. The protracted negotiations and bargaining soon after the creation of the Indian Dominion had ultimately subjugated the feudal force to the altar of democratic force.

With the passage of India's Independence in 1947, the territories of British India were partitioned on the basis of award of the Radcliffe Commission which undertook the task of drawing the

lines of division on the map of British India. There had been nearly six hundred Princely States over which the British exercised paramountcy without actually incorporating those territories into the provinces of British India. As it has been stated in the structure of the dissertation that according to the terms of the Transfer of Power the lapse of British paramountcy meant that the rulers of those States regained full sovereignty with the option of either joining India or Pakistan. There had been tremendous diplomatic activity on the part of the new political authorities of India and Pakistan in the days immediately preceding independence to get the Princes to sign the Instrument of Accession to their respective dominions. Under the leadership of Vallabhbhai Patel an attempt was made to put together a single consolidated territorial entity over which the newly independent Indian States would exercise sovereignty.

As depicted in the study, the Princes were first asked to concede to the Indian Union only without the power of defence, external affairs and communication. Merging States were invited to continue participation to the Upper House of the Dominion Legislature under the new Constitution. Ultimately, however, most of the rulers of the states contiguous to the territory of India (Five Hundred Fifty Four in ~~Number~~^{the}) agreed to join. From ~~the~~ depiction

in the preceding chapters it has also been shown that the Princely States were scattered over many regions - in Kashmir and in Punjab, in Rajasthan, in Gujrat and Saurashtra, in the Deccan, in the Vindya regions of Central India, in the Chattishgarh area in Orissa, in Travancore, Cochin and Mysore, on the borders of Bengal and in the Khasi hills. Immediately after accession, a concerted attempt was made by the leadership in Delhi to consolidate the territories of the State into larger administrative units similar to the Provinces. The legal form of seeking the consent of the ruler was maintained in each case, but the political argument of the inevitability of popular democratic rule was frequently used, often with falling effect. The ruler of the small Princely territories were persuaded to allow their territories to be merged with the neighbouring British administered Indian provinces. Nearly two hundred and twenty Princely States were merged into provinces in this manner. The bulk of the States were, however, clustered in several contiguous areas in Kathiawad, Rajasthan, Punjab, the Vindhya and the Central India. Six such unions were formed by integration, viz., Saurashtra, Vindhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Patiwala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), Rajasthan, and Travancore-Cochin in incorporating nearly three hundred ten States. Mysore one of the largest States became an administrative unit on its own, as did a few others. Each Union had its own Constituent

Assembly to draft a Constitution for a responsible Government, and most rulers though they would prefer some kind of federal arrangement within their Unions. However, some of the States had active democratic movements, often allied with the Indian National Congress which played an important role in shaping the political relations of the State with the Indian Union. Ultimately, however, with the making of the Constitution of India in 1950, all of the Constituent States of the Unions resolved to adopt the Indian Constitution.

There had been difficulties and problems with accession in many areas including Cooch Behar as has been depicted. Some of the important cases may be mentioned, for example, Junagadh, a tiny State in Kathiawad surrounded by Indian territory, the ruling Prince signed up for Pakistan. The neighbouring ^{states} had all joined India, the population was predominantly Hindu and there was an active Congress movement in the State which demanded unification with India. Such issues still raise the crucial question of whether independence was to be seen ⁿ as the result of a legal Transfer of power from one authority to another or of the assertion of the democratic will of the people. On this question Pakistan insisted that with the lapse of the British paramountcy each ruler had the right to join India or Pakistan irrespective of the geographical location of the State or the ethnic composition of its population. On the contrary India's argument was that if negotiations with rulers

did not produce a satisfactory results, the most fair and democratic way of resolving the matter would be to hold a plebiscite among the people of the State. However, India had not always been firm to this principle while one can observe that despite declaration of Jawaharlal Nehru plebiscite was not held in Cooch Behar. One can see, therefore, that there is nothing natural or immemorial about the territorial boundaries of independent India. They exist as the result of a particular mode of transfer of Power from British Colonial rule and of political negotiations between the leaders of independent India and the rulers of the Princely States.

While undertaking a postmortem of the history of merger of the Princely State Cooch Behar, one can well identify after necessary dissection that the people of Cooch Behar, in the general sense of term, did neither evoke interest in merger issue nor they were seriously attended either by the local decision makers or by the Indian Government. In fact, the ethos of nationalist state building and institution building had received primary consideration in the agenda and the local community aspiration of the Cooch Behar State were not given importance.

It has been amply proved, thus, that any discourse on merger of the Princely States with the Indian Union has been the story of ultimate surrenderance of the Princely States to the Mighty Indian State Craft. The merger of Cooch Behar with the Indian Union had been the outcome of such contention. It has been shown that both

the objective and subjective condition behind the process of merger varied from one geography to the other and respective socio-economic and cultural background of the Princely States. For Cooch Behar the merger study has had three important constituents; (a) the bargaining for remaining independent; (b) the option of merging with Pakistan and (c) the ultimate merger of Cooch Behar with India. These distinctiveness of Cooch Behar has given birth to different kind of events and issues which have been delineated in the principal portion of the study. The small tiny State had been more or less administratively linked with British authority, the merger process has completed the aspect of political integration. It has also been identified that despite politico-administrative linkages, the tiny Principality of Cooch Behar belongs to northeast from the socio-cultural considerations. Such a unique kind of identity registered tensions in the form of pressure while the bargaining process of merger had been at its culmination. Ultimately, however, the principality of Cooch Behar had merged with India and become a part of district of West Bengal.