

## CHAPTER - III

✓ ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY IN GUJARAT

In the process of acquiring political upper hand in Gujarat the British carried out themselves huge territories largely in Gujarat comprising the collectorates of Surat, Bharuch, Kheda and Ahmedabad. Here they created their own administrative set-up while through their residents and political Agent at prior Native State courts supervised their respective administrators.

We are primarily concerned by host of Native states ruled either in an enlightened way as the Gaikwars in Baroda or in more despicable ways like several Koli and Garasia chiefs who were always under pressure to create a system which on one side conformed to their cherished western views, at the same time not breaking away abruptly from the familiar and firmly established usages but surely mitigating the harshness of current evils. This approach seemed to have aroused contradiction at different stages, and both the British and the Native systems were constantly in focus with critical comparisons throughout the period of Elphinstone, † when his powers gradually changed the whole gamut of infrastructure giving rise to numerous administrative problems.

I. Problems of Direct and Indirect Administration in Surat:

The Governors of Surat practically independent between the accession of Teg-bakht Khan in 1733 and the capture of Surat by the English in 1759. This period constitutes two sub-divisions, each of 13 years - the first during which Tegbakht Khan maintained an unbroken control over the city, the second, after Teg-bakht Khan's death, a time of disorder and disputed succession.

The old division of power in Surat between the Governor of the town and the commandant of the castle had ceased in late 18th century. The whole control of Surat affairs was in the hands of the two brothers, Teg-bakht Khan, the Governor of the city, and Beglan Khan, the commandant of the castle. Under these circumstances, as city Governor Teg-bakht Khan discarded the old designation of clerk of the crown and adopted the higher title of viceroy or Nawab. At the same time to increase the importance of his own position, he established a new officer a deputy Nawab, and entrusted him with police and other functions. On his accession to power, Teg-bakht Khan found his revenues insufficient for his wants. To improve the state of his finances he adopted

3 courses:

- 1) He made an arrangement with the Marathas for a share in revenues derived from the lands which were once under Surat.
- ii) He attempted to evade the payment of his Rs.3,00,000 subsidy to the 'Sidhi, admiral of the fleet.
- iii) He imposed new taxes on the trade of Surat.

With regard to his relations with the Marathas, Teg-bakht-Khan was not in a position to oust the Marathas from the lands belonging to the districts round Surat, because the Marathas recovered their former lands and were once again on possession of the country upto the wall of the city, though they had been driven out by Pustam Ali (1725) from the districts round Surat, and were under the disorders of Sohrat Khan's Governorship. At the same time Teg-bakht Khan was not inclined to give the whole territorial revenue without a struggle.

He negotiated with Gaikwad and entered into an agreement which said that, an yearly assignment of Rs.2,36,000 should be

made in his favour. Based on this agreement, Teg-bakht Khan allowed Marathas to possess the lands round Surat and collected the revenue from them.<sup>1</sup>

Teg-bakht Khan attempted to keep back for himself a part of the subsidy due to the post of admiral of the Moghal fleet, in which he was helped by a contest between the English and the Sii. He was notioned into such attempts, due to certain motives which are as follows. Since the beginning of Aurangazeb's reign this office had been held by the Sidi's of Janjira. But during the years that followed, the power of Sidi's had declined. Their fleet was not competent enough to match the Maratha fleet. This was evident from their own confusion which spoke of their inability to protect the shipping of Surat. Under those circumstances the English endeavoured to obtain for themselves the position and revenues of admirals at Surat. But as the Sidi was their ally, and an ally whom, in the growing power of the Marathas they could ill-offered to offend, the English were unwilling to attempt to gain the position by force. They had to content themselves by granting passes to traders and by using every effort to induce Teg-bakht Khan to transfer the fleet subsidy from the English.<sup>2</sup> Teg-bakht Khan

who owed much of his success in the late struggles to the English, was at first anxious to please them. But he changed as he found himself more firmly established in his government, so long as the post of admiral was held by a weak chief, Teg-bakht Khan was able to retain a considerable share of the fleet subsidy for his own use. He thought that if English were to be appointed as the incharge of the fleet, he would be forced to pay the full amount of the admiral stipened. Influenced by these motives, Teg-bakht Khan after a long negotiations, refused to favour the English claims to be made admirals of the fleet.<sup>3</sup>

In 1735 in addition to the existing custom dues, Teg-bakht Khan besides introducing a tax on (1%) trade and professions, imposed new duties on all goods passing through Surat.<sup>4</sup> These new taxes yielded a very large revenue and Teg-bakht Khan was able not only to live in a style of great magnificance but to amass so large a fortune that after his death several members of his family were rich enough to engage troops and struggle for the office of governor of the city.

The failure of the negotiations on the subject of the fleet subsidy (1733) caused a mutual dislike in the minds

of Teg-bakht Khan and the English. The governor ill-treated some of the English dependents at Surat, and leaving Surat, remained on the board their ships at Tapti. Referring several invitations to land, they drew up a formal statement of their grievances, and in case of refusal, threatening reprisals on the trade of Surat.<sup>5</sup> In this struggle with Teg-bakht Khan, besides the support of the other European settlers in Surat, the English received help from Damaji, Gaikwar and from many other people of Surat who assumed that, if necessary, they were ready to leave Surat and seek protection under the English in Bombay. The English, however, refused the help of Marathas by contending themselves with the power, which drove away the fleet of Sidi's that was sent to act against them, thereby establishing a blockade at Tapti. In Surat the price of provisions rose to 40% and so great did the discontent in the city because, that Teg-bakht Khan was forced to agree to all the English demands. In February 1735, the guards were removed from their stations over the <sup>E</sup>nglish factory and the nations Merchants and brokers were told that they were again free to trade with the English.

The last 5 years of Teg-bakht Khan's rule in Surat were disturbed by threats of invasion, wild tumults of lawless Abyssinians, groans of impoverished merchants, and remonstrances of Europeans. Invasion was threatened by Nagir Jang, who being in rebellion against his father Nizam-ul-mulk was supposed march to Ahmedabad on his way to Surat. Teg-bakht Khan ordered the walls of Surat to be repaired suspecting that the European factors, secretly favoured the enemy who invited the English chief and council to explain their grievances.<sup>6</sup> The danger of invasion at that moment passed away as Nasir Jang was defeated and was made a prisoner by his father. But again (1742) Nasir Jang was in arms against his father. He appointed a supporter of his by name Aziz Khan, as Governor of Gujarat, so that he can have authority over Surat. Aziz Khan had also obtained an imperial order confirming his appointment and he marched against Surat. The Marathas who were under Khanderao following the outreating Muslims on the 7th December 1743 forced them to give battle at Veraval which resulted into the loss of their leader. At this point Aziz Khan, routed and depressed the Muslim army. Shortly after this (1743) Teg-bakht Khan, desirous of freedom from the cares of government entrusted, all the executive power to his brother Sabdar Khan.

The English and Dutch took an active part in the struggle for succession. But on this occasion they no longer acted together, but became partisans of the rival competitors. Each of them not only furnished Teg-bakht Khan's ally with ammunition and funds, but intrenching themselves in their factories, they fought against each other, though not openly at war. In the state of parties as they stood in 1748, when Safdarkhan was expelled from the Government of the city and forced to retire to Sind, The English found Miya Achan who had married the daughter of Teg-bakht Khan, and the Dutch supported Safdarkhan and his son Wakhan Khan. In 1751 Wakhan Khan promised to grant half of the city revenues, won over Damaji Gaikwar to his side. Miya Achan unable to resist this increased force was driven from the Government of the city and had to take refuge in the castle. He soon lost this command too. For in the same year (1751) the Sidhi sent some cruisers to the Tapti to recover the fleet subsidy which the SURat Government had failed to pay him. These ships reaching Surat in monsoon remained in the Tapti until their leader Sidhi Masud found an opportunity of seizing the castle. The Sidhi and the Dutch now united in recalling Safdar Khan from Sind. Once again resuming charge



of the city in 1751, Safdar Khan was able to induce Damaji Galkwar to accept onethird of the share in the revenue of the city instead of the share one-and-half which Wakhan Khan had agreed to give him. Miya Achan ousted from both his commands, was forced to leave Surat and seek refuge with his allies, that in the English in Bombay.<sup>7</sup>

One hearing of the defeat of their faction at Surat, the English and the Peshwa joined together in a scheme for ousting the Sidhi and Safdar Khan from Surat and dividing between themselves the command of the city. The English engaged themselves in equipping the fleet and attacking Surat from the river, while the Peshwa sent an army under Raghunathrao to act on the land side. But these preparations came to nothing. The Maratha army urgently required in the Deccan was recalled, and the English failing in an attempt to induce Nek Aram Khan, the ruler of Bharuch to join them in their designs on Surat, were forced to retire to Bombay. About the same time the Peshwa obtained from the Gaikwar the one-half share of his interest in the revenue of Surat and so was less disposed to join the English in any attempt on the city. This resulted in a consequence at Surat where the English interests suffered severely. Their

gardens and cattle were taken away from them and the factors were placed in confinement. English made a treaty with Safdar Khan and paid a sum of Rs.2,00,000 for the expense they had incurred and the lays sustained at their custom house. To pay this English indemnity a special 1% tax was levied on all Hindu and on almost all Muslim traders. All European trading under charter privileges were exempted. The levy of this special tax was continued till 1758, when the payment of the English indemnity was completed and the change abolished.<sup>8</sup>

The design for an attack first made by the preident and council at Bombay to take possession of Surat castle, which had been frustrated at the end of December 1751 by Sidhi Masud and which, though received in 1758, had been suddenly called off owing to the scare of a Maratha attack on the island, was again taken up and finally put into effect in 1759. On 2nd February 1759 some rapid developments made the English as the masters of the castle, thus by giving them for the first time, the political power over the Gujarat Coast. The expeditionary force from Bombay reached Surat in 1759 and it brought an important despatch from the Governor-in-Council for the chief at Surat. It stated that they were

forwarding a marine and a Military force with Farish Khan in order to enable the factory authorities at Surat to fix him in the Darbar with the assistance of men of his party and also to take possession of the castle and secure the 'tankha' for their masters, and for the Peshwa. It also stated that care should be taken to preserve his rights in the revenues of Surat. The chief was further instructed to stop all traffic on the river and all communications at all events between the harbour and the town. The instruction also stated that if the Dutch objected to this action, they should be opposed.<sup>9</sup> An agreement was made between proposed to Miya Achan and his party that he should continue as the governor of the city and the English would be incharge of the castle and the subsidy on a condition that Faris Khan is made as Deputy Governor.<sup>10</sup>

During the term of double government (1759-1800) few events of general interest took place at Surat. In 1771 an English expedition was sent from Surat against the city of Bharuch. But the arrangements were ill-planned and the attempt failed. In 1775 an English force arrived at Surat, and along with their ally Raghunathrao advanced to Cambay.

In 1780 on account of the discovery of a treacherous correspondence with the agents of Nana Farnavis, measures were adopted to prevent the Dutch from taking part in the affairs of Surat, once again.<sup>11</sup>

In 1780 after the fall of Ahmedabad, in return for the grant of the Peshwa's territories which were at the north of the Mahi, Fatesingh Gaikwar but his share in the districts of South of the Tapti to the English.

The revenues of Surat during this period were derive from 3 chief sources, land, customs and town dues. Of the greater part of the land revenue was shared between the Peshwa and the Gaikwar. No details for this are available. But the yearly receipts derived from the remaining sources, the Nawab's share of the land revenue, the land and sea customs, and the town dues during the later part of the 18th century show that there had been a decline from Rs.10,38,740 to Rs.8,35,730. During this period this portion of revenues of Surat was shared by 3 claimants, the Nawab, the Marathas and the English. As far as the details are available the Nawab's share had fallen from Rs.6,70,130 to Rs.4,22,860, the

Marathas share from Rs.1,27,500 to Rs.90,000 and the English share from Rs.2,84,110 to Rs.2,47,610.<sup>12</sup>

In 1800 the English were put in the possession of Surat yielding an estimated, yearly revenue of Rs.8,09,350. The arsons of the territory that form the present district took place on two occasions. First in 1804, under the provisions of the treaty of Bassin and second in 1817, in consequence of the treaty of Poona. Under the agreement of 1800 the Nawab was entitled to a yearly allowance of Rs.1,00,000 together with one/fifths share of the annual revenues of the city, after deducting the Nawab's allowance the sums payable to the Marathas and the changes of collection. In 1818, instead of the variable allowance of one-fifth, the Nawab agreed to accept an annual provision of Rs.50,000, raising his total yearly receipts to Rs.1,50,000.

## ✓2. Further Emerging Pattern of British Political Power in Bharuch

The political connection of the English company with Bharuch started from their capture of Surat in 1759.<sup>13</sup> In 1771, Mazad Khan Nawab of Bharuch engaged to pay a sum of Rs.4,00,000 of which Rs.2,00,000 were to be forwarded in

six months and the remainder at state intervals on the whole, the whole payment had to be completed within a term of 2 years. He also agreed to recruit to the Bombay Government regarding the duties collected on English trade and the goods that are imported to or exported from Bharuch under English pass and colour. But Nawab failed to fulfill his engagements. On the 18th November 1772 the English forces stormed and captured Bharuch. The Nawab was killed and several sons of his were left behind. One of them who was called Mirza o-du-din Khan found his way to England.<sup>14</sup>

The court of Directors in a dispatch dated May 1794, informed the Bombay Government about the arrival of Mirza o-du-din Khan who called himself as the descendant of the late Nawab of Bharuch. The Bombay government confirmation having satisfied themselves that with o-du-din Khan was really a son of the late Nawab of Bharuch and had 3 other brothers living, assigned to each of them a pension of Rs.200 a month. With reference to these pensions it was subsequently ruled by the Honourable Elphinstone and confirmed by two successive Governments, that the grant should continue for 3 generations, covenancing, with the last Nawab of Bharuch.<sup>15</sup>

In 1809 the court of Directors specially assigned an additional yearly allowance of Rs.4,600 to the surviving members of the Nawab's family in consideration of some ancestral property, but it was evidenced that the ancestral property had been seized at the time of the acquisition of Bharuch. This allowance was in its nature, hereditary and by the orders of the Bombay Government, in January 1812, the amount settled on each member descended according to the right of inheritance in the late Nawab's family.<sup>16</sup>

The territory acquired by the capture of the city of Bharuch in 1773 corresponded to the existing sub-divisions of Bharuch and Wagra. This settlement as it was then called contained 162 villages and was estimated to yield a total yearly revenue of Rs.5,01,717. Of the whole amount 40% went to the English, and 60% to the Gaikwar. In 1773 under the terms of the treaty (1773 March 6th) concluded between the Government of Bombay and the Peshwa Raghunathrao, the Honourable Company as security for the pay of the contingent supplied by them to Raghunath Rao received in pledge, the districts of Almod, Hansot, and a part of Ankleswar.<sup>17</sup> At the same time the interest of the British in Bharuch was further strengthened by the permanent lesson, in their favour of the

lands of Jambusar by an assignment of Rs.75,000 a year on the revenues of Ankleswar, and by the promise of procuring the remission of the Gaikwar's claims on the revenues of Bharuch. In 1775 by the aid of the British troops Raghunath Rao's position in Gujarat was much improved, under the terms of an agreement made at that time between Raghunath Rao and Fatehsingh Gaikwar. Fatehsingh agreed besides accepting to them the district of Koral, to give up in favour of the British all the Gaikwar's claims on the Bharuch revenues, estimated to yield a yearly revenue of Rs.2,13,000.<sup>18</sup> At the same time Raghunath Rao in return for the aid he had received, made the lease of the lands of Hansot and Amod permanently. A grant estimated to be worth Rs.2,77,000 a year. In 1776 the alliance with Raghunath Rao was broken off and the treaty of Purandhar concluded with Nanaffadnavis, the head of the government of the Peshwa of Poona. This change of policy was accompanied by the restoration on the part of the British of the lessons made by Fatehsingh Rao. At the same time Amed and Hansot were confirmed by the Peshwa and a sum Rs.12,00,000 was promised to the English to meet their expenses in the war.<sup>19</sup> It would seem from the diaries of that period that the government of Nanaffadnavis was not in a position to pay this amount and that in its place the Jambusar sub-division



was allowed to remain under British management.

In 1780 when war with the Marathas was once again declared, Jambusar was still in the hands of the English. When hostilities actually began Mr. Robert Gambier and other members of the civil service cadre at Bharuch taking advantage of the presence of General Goddard, raised some irregular troops and driving out the guards stationed thereby the Peshwa, took possession of Ankleswar, Hansot, Dahej, and Amod. The success gained by General Goddard's forces soon after hostilities began to induce Fatehsingh Rao to come to terms. He agreed again to remit his claims on the revenues of Bharuch, leading at the same time the lands of Sinor on the Narbada, and certain villages in the Bharuch sub-division. But affairs at Bharuch remained in this position only for 3 years.<sup>20</sup> In 1783 the whole possession acquired by the British in Bharuch yielding a revenue of Rs.15,87,079, were handed over to the Peshwa. An exception was made in the case of the sub-division and town of Bharuch. The possessions which 1782 had yielded a revenue Rs.6,14,140 were made over to Mahadaji Sindia in testimony of the sense entertained of the conduct manifested by him to the British army at

Wadgam. (1779) and of his humane treatment and release of the English gentlemen who had been hostages.<sup>21</sup>

For 19 years these territories remained under Maratha rule. The portions first restored to the British were the Peshwas share, the districts of Hansot and Ankleswar south of the Narmada.

On the 29th August 1803 an European regiment, with a proportion of artillery and sepoy, commanded by Lieut. Colonel Woodington marched from Baroda. On the 23rd of the month they encamped within 2 miles of Bharuch. Next morning Colonel Woodington took possession of the suburbs. On the 29th the breach in the fort was declared practicable. By this victory, the lands included in the Bharuch and Wadgam sub-divisions, including 162 villages and yielding Rs.10,54,540 of revenue came under British management. As before, the possession of the town of Bharuch carried with it the right to levy tributes from the petty chiefs of Dahej and Amod. Ankleswar and Hansot after their cession by the Peshwa in 1802 which at first administered from Surat, ever made a part of the Bharuch district in 1805.<sup>22</sup> No further territorial



changes took place till 1817 under the terms of the Treaty of Poona, Jambusar, Amod and Dahej were added to Bharuch. Since 1817 no additions have been made to the British territories in the neighbourhood of Bharuch and on no occasion have those lands been the seat of war.

3. Ahmedabad under British rule.

Ahmedabad came under British rule in 1817 by treaty with the Peshwa at Poona and the Gaikwad of Baroda after the last Maratha war. The Peshwa and Gaikwar had been sharing the revenue from the city. Between 1800 and 1814 on the persuasion of Sindia and the British, who had their own financial and political reasons, the Peshwa had ceased his share of the revenue to the Gaikwad for an annual payment of Rs.5,00,000. Along with his revenues, his share was also used in the administration of the city. The Gaikwad was allied to the East India Company, which influenced much of the Government of the Baroda State, and under this the administration was fairly competent. The city recovered some of its prosperity, until 1812 and 1813, when it was visited by terrible famine and pestilence. When the lease expired in 1814, the Peshwa refused to renew it because he

wanted to preserve his position in Gujarat and to extract more money from the city than he was receiving from the Gaikwad. Three years of devided rule and exactions by the Peshwa's officers followed. But in 1817, under the treaty of Poona, the defeated Peshwa agreed to let his share of the revenues and Administration of Ahmedabad to the Gaikwad in perpetuity and later by separate agreements the Gaikwad, in his turn, agreed to give up all his rights in the city and surrounding country side to the East India Company in return for an augmented subsidiary force of company troops and some territory near Baroda. The justification of this British annexation of Ahmedabad was the financial embarrassment to Gaikwad, who was heavily indebted to numerous sarafs and unable to meet the cost of the subsidiary force. The Bombay Government would have preferred a territory is Kathiawar instead, but the Gaikwad was unwilling. The British Resident at Baroda, however, placed great value on the annexation of Ahmedabad because of its political importance and the commending influence which the sovereignty over the city of Ahmedabad confers on its possessor in the estimation of the country at large.<sup>23</sup> The Peshwa and the Gaikwad were reluctant to yield the city to the British, not just for financial reasons but

for political and sentimental ones also. The Gaikwad and his officers were also strongly opposed to the handing over of his haveli (fort) and the Daskrohi (land around the city) having a superstitions dread of losing every vestige of authority over a city with such a splendid past.<sup>24</sup> The British insisted on having full authority, and in supplemental exchange in 1818 the Gaikwad parted with the Daskroi and Haveli.

When John Andrew Dunlop, the first collector, took position of Ahmedabad on 30th November 1817, the city was in a sad state. The walls were broken down in places, deserted buildings were filled with debris and vegetable growth. People were unwilling to spend any more on the repair of their houses than was needed to prevent them from falling down. Wild animals and even wilder Bhils and Kolis, mounted on foot, roamed within the walls at night or even in the day time. The women and the dyers of the city were accustomed to hiring armed men to protect them while they washed at the tanks and rivers. One of Dunlop's first requests was for more police and more muskets to deal with these murderers.<sup>25</sup>

In the reign of Aurangzeb in the late 17th century, the Octroi (duty on the imports and exports of the city) had been 2½% for Muslims and 5% for Hindus. But the channels of trade were now choked by extortionate and vexatious dues of every sort not only those imposed or increased by the Marathas for revenue purposes, but also many which were collected on behalf of charities or individuals with established customary rights. The Nagarseth for instance in recognition of his dignity and services to the community, had the right to collect a proportion of the dues levied on goods imported into the city. Most of the imports had probably originated with the farmers of customs and local officials rather than with the central government. Total duties on imports and exports into the city were between 15 and 25 per cent, though these enormous nominal duties were far from being realized in practice. There was wide-spread evasion, and Merchants would make private arrangements with the tax collectors, threatening to send their goods elsewhere, if the established rates were enforced. Still the high duties did restrict trade and industry, and depopulated the city since they raised the cost of living, even necessities of life like grain and firewood being severely taxed. To the duties was added the

burden of the insecurities and costs of road transport. In 1818 merchant's were being plundered only 6 or 7 miles from Ahmedabad. These charges were added to the losses of the merchants who suffered from the decline of their princely and aristocratic markets.<sup>26</sup>

At first the British provided little of good for Ahmedabad similar to that which had existed under the Mughals. Andrew Dunlop saw that the city's prosperity could be revived or rather given the right conditions, would revive itself. Ahmedabad was fortunate in her first collector. He combined an optimistic faith in the recovery of the city. He realized the importance, both for the revival of the city and for case of goot of respecting the traditional customs of the people. Like Elphinstone and Munro, he was no more defender of tradition for his own sake but looked forward to a cautious improvement. He was not interested in opening up Ahmedabad as a market for British textiles, rather he looked to the revival of her own indigenous handicrafts.

He asked that the duties on imports and exports into the city to be reduced, though they were the main source

of government revenue from Ahmedabad. He realized that any attempt to collect in full at the old nominal rates, which were not actually paid under the corrupt and careless Maratha administration but were subject to bargaining, would bring about a stagnation of trade. Such wisdom was not always displayed in the early British land revenue collections in India. In Bombay, the customs Committee agreed that 'great encouragement and protection should be extended to the trade and inhabitants' of Ahmedabad.<sup>27</sup> The govt expected that any temporary loss in tax receipts would be balanced by the growth of trade, the drawing of capitalist to Ahmedabad and the larger market which the recovery of the city would provide for the agricultural classes.<sup>28</sup> Even if it had been financially possible, the government would not have wanted to completely dispense with town duties because, in the absence of an income-tax, the merchants and financiers would then have escaped all taxation. However, it recognised that untill trade recovered, the burden on this class should be as light as possible.<sup>29</sup>

From October 1819 the rate of duty was to be 2½% on all imports and exports, except the raw materials of manufacture, which were to be allowed in duty free. All private rights to



collect dues on the trade of the city were to be abolished or commuted for fixed cash allowances from the treasury.

Dunlop later wrote about the reduction in town duties "The liberality of this conduct produced the most favourable impression on the inhabitants, and excited a spirit of commercial activity and enterprize, scarcely to be surpassed".<sup>30</sup> The Ahmedabad merchants at once sent word to their principal markets and received large orders for manufacturers at the new lower prices. In fact the system did not work in quite the simple way Dunlop had intended. An extra duty called the naka was also imposed, graduated to discriminate against small consignments. Most imported goods actually paid about 4%. On the other hand, many imported items in no way connected with the manufactures of the city were exempted from duty.<sup>31</sup> In practice the system was still complicated with vexations and was manipulated to the advantage of the influential, though there is also no doubt that it was a considerable improvement over the period which had existed in Maratha times.

#### 4. Acquisition of Kheda

On the caption of Ahmedabad (1753) the districts of Kheda and Ahmedabad were shared between the Peshwa and the

Gaikwar and remained with them till they made it over to the British partly in 1803 and partly in 1817.

The territories acquired in 1803, along with Dholka, Dhandhuka, Ranpur and Gogha as a part of the Ahmedabad District remained from the date of their cession till 14th May 1805, as in-charge of the resident at Baroda. During that time a European Assistant and the native officers administered according to local usages and the according to the police and justice of the country. In 1805 a collector was appointed with jurisdiction over the ceded districts, belonging to Mahi and those to the west of the Gulf of cambay.<sup>32</sup> In the same year the town of Kheda was chosen to be a large military station. The increase in British possessions that followed the Gaikwad treaty of 6th November 1817, called for fresh administrative arrangements.<sup>33</sup> The territory north of the Mahi was from the 1st Jan. 1818 and was divided into 2 districts of these one was the Kheda district, which was called the Eastern and the other was the Ahmedabad district which was called the western Zillah.<sup>34</sup>

Since the district came under British rule its land administration may be roughly divided into 2 periods. The first from 1803 to 1814 when the revenues of village groups

and single villages were formed to men of capital and village headmen. The second from 1814 to 1862 when details of village management were collected and by degree's land holder's liabilities made simpler, fairer and more certain.

In 1803 management was successful with receipts slightly in advance of the estimates.<sup>35</sup> By preserving the public peace, stopping illegal exactions, granting loans for the village of arable waste, and recovering illegally sold government land, colonial Walker calculated that in 4 or 5 years the revenue might be doubled.<sup>36</sup> Regarding the future management of the district Col. Walker (1805) was of opinion that the tribute of the Rajput and Koli chiefs should not be increased, they should be called on to furnish securities for good behaviour and be forced to give up criminals and engage never to shelter public enemies and with that much of the practice under the Marathas, he recovered by offering the holders two-thirds or three-fourths of what they had paid and except that the district revenue manager 'Kamavisdar' should cease to form the revenue and become entirely a Government agent, the Maratha system of revenue management should, until the state of the country was well known, be continued.<sup>37</sup> Mr. Diggle, appointed as a collector in 1805

met with considerable difficulties in his first year of office. A force of 200 men had to be sent against the Mahikolis, who refused to pay their tribute and in the quarter villages districts were caused by money lenders taking up old debts and trying to recover them under the strict provisions of the English law. During the next 11 years (1805-1815) Col. Walker's counsel against changing the form of revenue management was carefully followed.<sup>38</sup> The district was distributed over new sub-divisions, each a suitable charge for a manager, Kaumavisdar.<sup>39</sup> Villages continued to be formed, some in groups, chiefly to the hereditary district officers, Desai's and Amin Patels and other singly as a rule to their headmen.<sup>40</sup> Except that the practice of recurring securities was gradually given up, that the Government supervision was strict and that more readiness was shown in hearing complaints and checking abuses, the revenue management remained almost entirely unchanged.<sup>41</sup> One of the first matters that pressed for settlement was the claims of the superior land holders girasias. Their way of buying their demands by force caused much uneasiness. In 1808 Mr. Diggle described them as of barbourous spirit, referring right to the spear rather than to any deed among most of them the chief one was to bag more which are forms of blackmail.<sup>42</sup> They increased their demands in the most unfair way. Some-

times villages headmen arranged with the girasia to raise his claim on the village, the headman at first sharing the spoil, but in the end the girasia gaining the whole. Mr. Diggle thought that their claims could not be denied, as they would join together and find easy shelter in the woods and ruins near the Mahi. He suggested that instead of being allowed to buy their claims from the villagers, girasias should be paid from the government treasuries. As government pensioners they would be thought of much of importance. In 1811 Mr. Rowles began to act on this proposal. His first task was to get the non-resident girasias of Kapadvanj to agree that their claims should be paid by government and afterwards the principle was extended to the local claimants. In 1816 Capt. Robertson reported that in Matar, Mahudha, Nadiad, and Napad, managements had been made and that as settled in 1814-15, the total yearly cost came to Rs.20,660.<sup>43</sup> All further claims were subjected to the strictest scrutiny and very few work brought forward. At the same time that they agreed to be paid their claims from the Government treasuries the girasias were made to furnish security for good behaviour bound to help in suppressing on going robberies and warned that any breach of the peace would entered a forfeiture of their allowance.

Between 1805 and 1815 chiefly from the spread of tiage, the land revenue rose from Rs.13,00,150 to Rs.18,21,870 the advance on the original rentals amounting in Gaikwar lands to 27 per cent and in peshwa lands where former supervision had been tax to 90 per cent.<sup>44</sup> From 1812 to 1815 was a time of great prosperity.<sup>45</sup>

From 1814 began the inquiry into the details of village management and the discovery of much irregularity and fraud. In some of the following years especially in the settlement of 1819 the Government demand was greatly enhanced.<sup>46</sup> Helped by the unusually high value of field produced the new rates which were not at first found oppressive. But with the return of ordinary prices complaints of over-assessment became general.

The management of the first 6 years (1814-1819) of this period, though successful in bringing to light and putting an end to many arises, would seem to have arrect in unduly raising the government demand. Marked progress was made in Thasra and Kapadvanj, the poorer and less settled of the 1817 additions. But the plan adopted of leasing Borsad, Mehmabad and the other rich tracts to the highest bidders caused much mischief. In the older lands enhanced

rates were introduced. These at first lightened by the very high grain prices in 1819 and 1820 which in a few years proved burdensome and had to be reduced.

✓/ The Political Scene in Gujarat when  
Elphinstone became the Governor

Until the commencement of the 19th century there was no increase in the territorial possessions of the Bombay Government, and consequently no alteration of the system of administration occurred. Bharuch which was captured by assault in 1772, had to be relinquished in 1779, and was not regained until 1803. During 1759 Surat and the districts surrounding it, witnessed the introduction of certain changes which lasted until 1800 when they were superseded by administrative arrangements based on the model of the district administration in Bengal. Ever since 1759, Surat though remaining under the nominal authority of the Nawab, had been in fact administered by one of the company's servants, which at first was styled as "chief for the Affairs of the British Nation and governor of the Mughal caste and fleet of Surat", and later called, 'Lieutenant Governor', subordinate to the Governor and council in Bombay. In 1799 the last nominally independent Nawab died. The Bombay Government

then arranged with his brother to assume the whole administration of the town and the district, and by a proclamation of the Governor of Bombay on 15th May 1800, the district of Surat as then existing was placed incharge of a collector and a judge and among whom generally the Judge worked as the agent to the governor of Bombay, by being in political charge of the titular Nawab and the petty chiefs of the neighbourhood. During the same period, at Surat, the establishment of a Sadar Adalat, a court of circuit and appeal which territorial possessions in Gujarat were witnessed. It is clear that the system of administration thus introduced into Surat at the opening of the 19th century was followed directly from the system initiated in Bengal by Hastings in 1772 and revised by Lord Cornwallis after 1786.

The final downfall of the Peshwa in 1818 gave the company an enormous addition of territory, which included certain parts of Gujarat.

At first the Judicial and revenue administration of the Gujarat districts acquired from the Gaikwar and the Peshwa between 1800 and 1803 was entrusted to the agent of the



Governor-general at Baroda who, like the resident at Poona in regard to the Deccan, supervised the affairs of North Gujarat, so far as they concerned the company and its relations with the native powers. In 1805, the resident's responsibility ceased, and these ceded areas were placed in charge of a collector armed with powers similar to those possessed by the collectors in Bengal.

The great increase of territory which occurred from the conquest or annexation of the Peshwas possessions in 1818 necessarily involved the establishment of a more extensive administrative system. The newly acquired territories were divided into districts, organised and managed on the lines adopted in Bengal.

In 1819 the Bombay Government was already in possession of considerable territories in Gujarat. As mentioned earlier a large part of those territories in Gujarat had been acquired from the Peshwa and the Gaikwar at the beginning of the century. The Bombay Government appointed Major Walker to administer those territories. He seemed to have been both efficient and idealistic, and he trained up a number of able assistants, soldiers and civilians. Consequently, there

was a revenue of knowledge and experience available at the treaty of Poona in 1817. The end of war in 1818 also, brought further acquisitions in the same area. The whole was divided into 4 collectorates - Surat, Bharuch, Kheda and Ahmedabad. Three of 4 collectors were civilians - Morison at Surat, Shubrick at Bharuch, and Dunlop at Ahmedabad. Both Morison and Dunlop were competent collectors. Shubrick was a man of independent mind and ungovernable spirit. Whenever his principles or his policies were criticized, he was apt to be outspoken to the point of insubordination in their defence. But it was the soldier, captain Archibald Robertson of Kheda, who stood out as an administrator of unusual ability.

During the first two years between 1819 and 1821, Elphinstone paid two visits to Gujarat. The British Districts of Gujarat caused little trouble to the Bombay Presidency where compared to others. The great fertility of soil together with the security of British peace lightened the burden of a high assessment. The Jurisdiction of the collectors were small, considerable latitude was allowed to them as Bombay never had a board of revenue and there was no commissioner of Gujarat, though Gujarat occupied more of Elphinstone's attention.<sup>47</sup>

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The numerous Native States that format the external fringe of Gujarat presented more difficulty. The over throw of the Peshwa had not only brought the Deccan under British rule, it had also made the company inheritor of all the ill-defined authority which he used to exercise in Gujarat as the head of the Maratha Power.

As the only means of security of the tribute, it has been proposed to supersede all most all the chiefs for a term of 10 years or 12 years, farming their lands, and reserving to them a pecuniary allowance.<sup>48</sup> Elphinstone was content to take from them a temporary assignment of a portion of their lands, sufficient to guarantee the payment of a portion of the tribute.<sup>49</sup>

Elphinstone's first measures were to enforce order by a strong military force to fix all liabilities and to exact securities from the chiefs for the payment of tribute and the observance of their engagements in the future. These engagements included the following articles - to refer all disputes to the arbitration of the British government, to protect the passage of merchants and to accept compansation for the privilege of levying transist duties.<sup>50</sup>

In Gujarat, as explained in the earlier paragraphs, the great accession of territories came with the peace of 1818. The district administration which was followed, depended on the later developments. This will be discussed in detail in the succeeding chapters.

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