

Chapter-III

TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY GUJARAT

The nineteenth century witnessed new avenues in the life of the tribal communities of Gujarat. The change was embedded in the colonial rule, which was quite intrusive not leaving even the forest dwellers untouched. The present chapter attempts to explore the gradual transition the tribal people passed through due to intervention of the British rule, British motivated native princely states and the Christian missionaries. The chapter is divided into three parts:

1. Tribals in the British Gujarat.
2. Baroda State and the welfare of the Tribal.
3. Christian Missionaries work for the Tribal welfare.

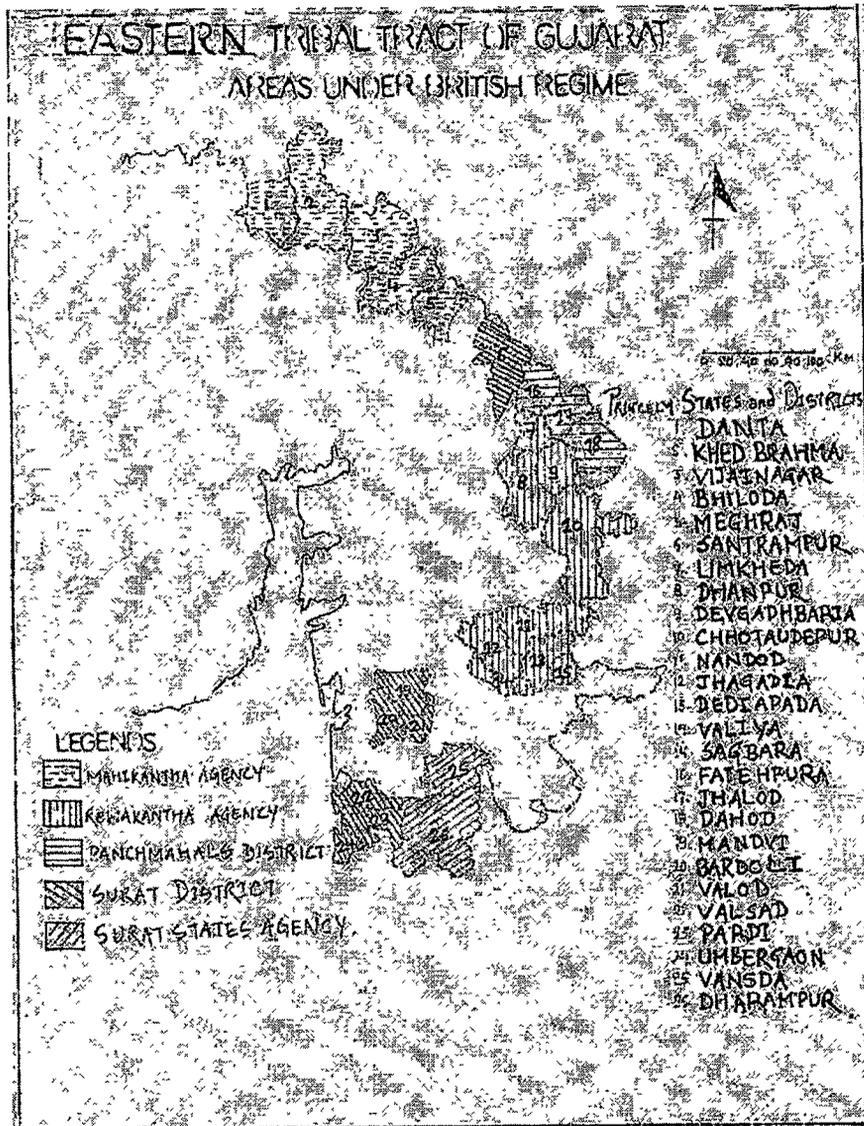
I

The native princely states coming under direct British rule were:

1. Mahikantna, Idar inclusive of seventy nine petty states.
2. Rewakantha with Princely States of Rajpipla, Devgadhi-Baria, Lunawara, Balasinor, Santrampur, Chhota-Udepur and fifty three petty states.
3. Surat States Agency included Dharampur and Bansda states.¹

¹ From L. C. Burton, Political Agent Rewakantha, No 29/95 of 1871/ No. 1569, Sub: 'Native States' contribution to make up the salary of the Educational Inspector in the Native States.' Vol. No. 86-A/PD, Native States, 1871, MSA

Map of Gujarat showing the British administered parts



The British territory of Bombay Presidency was comprised of twenty four districts excluding the town and island of Bombay, and was divided into four Commissionerships. The northern division constituted of Ahmedabad, Kaira, Panchmahals, Surat, Thane and Bharuch.² In the

² *Report of the Administration of Bombay Presidency* for the year 1889-1890, Bombay, Government Press, 1990, p. 3

course of the chapter the districts of Panchmahals and Surat will be taken into special consideration. In short the area that fell in tribal tract of British – Gujarat constituted Mahikantha Agency, Panchmahals, Rewakantha Agency, Dangs and Surat States Agency.³

An understanding of the tribal societies makes us understand that an experienced major alteration under the colonial rule required an in depth inquiry and social understanding. The notion of colonialism as a homogenising force is common to both of the dominant historiographies; neo-colonialists and nationalists.

When scholars attempted to study aborigines' culture, it was part of the wider cultural study of the commoners under the imperial rule. Moreover, it turned out to be matter of great satisfaction that the scholars of modern India started paying attention to the marginalised themes of tribal societies. The description is a small attempt in the study of the past of these people under the imperial rule, during the nineteenth and twentieth century. ⁴ The two centuries were marked by the attempt of the British rule to curb the turbulent communities located in the intermediate regions of the Princely rulers and British imperialists.

The spirit to cross the region of forested tracts between the coastal belt and the eastern plains required to subdue the turbulent and independent communities which resided in the intermediate zones of Vindhya, Satpur, and Sahyadri hill ranges.⁵

³ See, Chapter I, Part I and II of the thesis respecting geographic and ethnic features of this region.

⁴ See, Shirin Mehta, 'Social Consciousness of Historyless: A study of Folk literature of Tribals of South Gujarat during the Colonial Period.' *Indian History Congress: Proceedings of the Forty Eighth Session*, Goa, 1987.

⁵ 'For the purpose of recruiting the mercenary army, the Bhil Corps came into existence. After occupying Khandesh in 1818 the British regime had to deal with the Bhils who seemed to have resorted to their usual tactics of raiding from the shelter of the hills, preparatory essaying a settlement of claim as with the new government.' See A. H. A. Simcox, A

But this drive against the floating soldiery had a profound significance for the internal structures of the little kingdoms of the forests. For which mercenary of their own communities were vital to the existence of centralised politics in such areas. In his attempt to subdue certain chieftains in the mountains, Khandesh and Princely states of Baroda. J.P. Willoughby reported in 1823 that the capture of Bhils was very difficult due to three main causes:

- The difficult nature of the country in which they were concealed.
- The assistance they undoubtedly received from the inhabitants of the villages.
- The difficulty which on this account existed of procuring correct intelligence of their movements.⁶

For the purpose of the taming the countries dominated by these tribal was a difficult task. British government gradually took over all of them. After the decline of the Marathas, the Peshwa's share of Ahmedabad and its dependencies passed to the British government in 1818. This transfer of country near the Mahikantha brought to light the lawlessness and mismanagement existing among the tributaries there and resulted in the British takeover of the administration of these territories from the Gaekwads.⁷ The Agency was divided into six districts including all the possessions of the Maharaja of Idar and his family.⁸

Memoir of the Khandesh Bhil Corps, 1825-1891, Bombay, and Co., 1892, p. 109. (For details see Map of India)

⁶ During his trusteeship in Rewakantha J.P. Willoughby also planned to employ a Bhil chief and forty men to secure information but his early attempts failed to recruit any such Bhil Corps. See John D. Roger, 'Colonial Perception of Ethnicity and Culture in Early Nineteenth Century Srilanka' in Peter Robb (ed.) *Society and Ideology: Essays in South Asian History*, Delhi, OUP, 1994, p. 108; and A.H.A. Simcox, op. cit, 131.

⁷ Framroz Sorabji Master, *The Mahikantha Directory*, Rajkot, 1922, p 1; 'The Mahikantha Political Agency comprised of sixty four States of which save the States of Edur were considerably very small many of the States marched with the Marwar and Meywar country, and the border which included many Bhil villages, which probably was the most disturbed and dangerous tract of country in Western India.' See *Report of the Administration of the Bombay Presidency, 1886-1887*, Bombay, Part IX.

⁸ "In this division were included the talukas of Idar and Ahmadnagar with their dependencies of Modasa, Marsol, and Bayad and those of Tintoi, Danta, and Malpur together with the



The state was always threatened by the outlaws and their raids. The people of the Mahikantha Agency were well known for their turbulent and aggressive nature, and remained active in their revolt against the authorities, which kept the rulers on their toes. For instance Modasa became the centre of the freedom movement. It responded to call of the national leaders during various phases of the freedom movement. Quite a few persons of the town were politically conscious and they actively participated in the freedom movement. Shri Mathuradas Laljibhai Gandhi and his companions had the credit for launching freedom movement in the district. In 1905 when the entire country was swayed by the nationalist fervour of *Swadeshi* Mathuradas Gandhi, Joitram Bhatt, Mohanlal V. Gandhi and Chandulal S. Butalia responded to the call given by that the national leaders delivered a series of lectures against the Government and the people were advised to boycott the foreign goods. In 1921-1922, when Non-Cooperation movement was at its peak, a no-rent payment was launched in western Indian region of Mahikantha.⁹ The movement was a result of British policies in connivance with the Princely States. The joint rule of these two powers increased the land revenue burden on the subjects to exorbitant levels.¹⁰ The result was no-rent movement by the tribal of Mahikantha Agency.¹¹

pattas of Pol, Pal, Poshina and Harsol, all more or less subject to Idar." See *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government, No. XII*, NS and *Memoirs on the Mahikantha* prepared in May 1845 by Captain J. R. Kelly, Bombay, 1855, p. 287; Also see, *Mahikantha Administration Report* for the year 1889-1890.

⁹ "The no-rent payment movement was the chief event of the Bhil people. The movement originated in Mewar and rapidly spread over Idar and Danta States. The movement came to a stand still when the Bhils of the Idar state came to terms with States negotiations in 1922-1923. The Bhils of the states became quiet as their grievances were redressed.' *A Review of the Administration of the Bombay Presidency* for the year, 1921-1922, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰ Sec. of Government, Political Department, Bombay and Dt. 06/06/1872, Sub: Mahikantha-Danta, Prayer of the Kunver of the Raja of Danta to allow administering jointly with his father: the affairs of the Estate of Danta: Comp. No. 1252/ Vol. II /No. 81/1872/PD/MSA/Mumbai.

¹¹ The movement was led by a tribal leader named Motilal Tejavat from Udaipur. "Trouble among Bhils' F. No. 460-A/1922/HD (SPL) /MSA/Mumbai; M.K.Gandhi, 'Danger of Mass Movement', extract from *Young India*, Dt. 02/02/1922, F. No. 460-A/1922/HD-SPL/MSA/Mumbai; For details see Denis Vidal, *Violence and Truth: A Rajasthani Kingdom Colonial Authority*, Delhi, OUP, 1997

With Motilal's march into the Gujarat territories, the wave of Bhil rebellion affected most parts of Mahikantha.¹²

Panchmahals:

The British modernised the administration of the Panchmahals for effective control of the surrounding turbulent areas. Panchmahals was put under the charge of Political Agent of Rewakantha for the years 1861-1864. It was transferred to the Collector of Kheda in 1864 and placed under the management of an officer styled 'the First Assistant Collector and Agent to the Governor'. After the British took over the administration of the Panchmahals in 1861 it was exempted from the existing regulations. The laws were reformulated owing to its backward condition. As a result it was treated as a non-regulation or scheduled district under the Scheduled District Act-1874, and the Local Extent Act, 1874.¹³ The District was dominated by the tribal communities of Bhils. The Bhils were ignorant about the technique and practises of agriculture, their life dependent more on forestry. Panchmahals district was also frequently affected by the recurring monsoon failures.

¹² "The manager of Pol State of Mahikantha visited the states Political Agent and complained about the expansion of Bhil struggle in the state of Pol. he informed that the Bhils of the ,who had hitherto held aloof from the movement ,have suddenly assembled in gangs and announced their intention of paying no revenue. The Bhils were rendered no forced labour and obeyed no orders from the State officials. As a matter of fact failure to collect revenue was a serious matter to the state". Copy of the letter from Political Agent, Mahikantha, No. ADM27/ Feb. 1922, F. No. 460-A/1922 /HD, SPL, MSA Mumbai

¹³ "A large measure of discretion was, therefore, allowed to the officials both in the collection of revenue and in the administration of civil justice. Strict rules of procedures yielded to the local exigencies and the judicial and executive departments were to a great extent combined in the same hand. Though for revenue purposes, it was a part of the Kheda district. By the Panchmahals Laws Act, 1885, the District ceased to be a Scheduled District...it became a regulation District with effect from I may 1855. By this Act, laws in force in Kheda were made applicable to Panchmahals." Secret Files *Trouble among Bhils*, Telegram No. 80226 dt. 21/10/1922, F. No. 460-A/HD(SPL.), 1922, MSA, Mumbai. Also see Prahalad Chandrasekhar Diwanji, *Guide to the Bombay Presidency*, 1920, and G. D. Patel (ed.), *Gujarat State Gazetteers: Panchmahals District*, Ahmedabad, 1972, pp. 512-513. "All enactments which were in force in Panchmahals not in the district of Kheda which were repealed and special provision was made for pending proceedings .Such separate identity of the district continued till November 1933. The Collector was then relieved of the charge of the Political Agency and a measure of the economy, the district was amalgamated with the Bharuch district in 1933. Thus it lost its separate identity as a district. The arrangement continued up to March 1945 and from April 1945 the Panchmahals district was de amalgamated from the Bharuch district and was made a separate district under a separate Collectorate." G. D. Patel (ed.), op. cit, pp 512-513.

Consequently these people often failed in paying their revenues. In spite of that, the constant rises in revenue rates lead them to suffer famine conditions.¹⁴

Rewakantha:

The British rule began in Rewakantha when Willoughby, the Assistant Resident at Baroda, was sent to Rajpipla to inquire into the opposing claims. At the close 1821 Willoughby was made in-charge of Rajpipla and spent nearly three years in putting its affairs in order. In 1823 he also settled the positions and tributes of the chiefs of the Sankheda-Mewas to the north of the river Narmada.¹⁵ During the British reign in the territory to extract the revenue and tribute display of force was no longer needed. The crimes of robbery and cattle stealing were to a great extent been suppressed and disputed boundaries had been fixed.¹⁶

Nevertheless several popular uprisings were experienced in the Rewakantha areas. Among them was the Naikadas revolt, the popular upsurge in Sankheda and Pandu-Mahwas and peoples agitations in Baria State. All these skirmishes were manifestations of the discontent among the people regarding the new system of revenue administration.¹⁷ The major population of Rewakantha consisted of

¹⁴ *Administration Report: Land revenue Administration Report, Part-II 1907-1908*, Collectorate of Panchmahals, Compilation No. 5111/ Pt. IV, Vol. No. 131, 1909, RD, MSA, Mumbai.

¹⁵ "In 1826 Willoughby was also appointed first Political Agent of Rewakantha." J. M. Campbell, Op. cit., p. 6

¹⁶ *Rewakantha Giras*, F. No. 1-23/D. No. 936-937/ S. No. 936-937/1875-1939/Bro9/Southern Circle/ Baroda. "In the Rewakantha the land revenue was collected directly by the state officials, or by farmers to whom villages were leased for a fixed or an indefinite number of years. The former system of leasing villages to headmen or moneylenders was giving way to direct state management. The reason for the change was that, except those wit few people and scanty tillage, where it was for their interest to attract settlers, village have been found to suffer lasting harm from the contractors' exactions." *Bombay Government Selections*, XXIII, p. 313

¹⁷ The details regarding these movements can be studied from sources as follows; J. P. Willoughby, *Historical Sketch of the petty State of Baria in the Rewakantha*, 1826, pp 134-136, sub: *Rajpipla Survey Settlement*, From A. Shewan, Administrator Rajpipla State to The Political Agent Rewakantha, dt. 19/02/1890, No. 3133 of 1889-1890,

tribals mainly Bhils. The Bhils were considered turbulent by nature and equally ignorant about the vicious practises of the learned classes which many a times made them loose their assets.¹⁸ Apart from managing Princely States British Government substantially interfered in the lives of the tribal people. Efforts were made to extricate Bhils from their pathetic state of indebtedness. But due to unimaginative execution of the policy; not every Bhil could take the advantage of it and majority of them continued to suffer from indebtedness and ignorance about the cumbersome administrative order.¹⁹

(5) The states under the political supervision of the Collector of Khandesh consisted of independent states of Surguna and groups known as the Mehwas States and the Dangs, of which one group lied on the north-west of the Collectorate between the Tapti and Narmada river, and the latter on the south-west of the Pimpalner taluka between the state of Baroda, Bansda, and Dharampur. The Surguna state was to the south west of the Dangs. The Dang group was made up of a number of petty estates each under the management of its own chief.²⁰ The Dangs consisted of fifteen small states lying between Khandesh and Baroda. In the Dangs the main inhabitants were Bhils, Warlis and Koknis. To these tribal communities cultivation was principally carried on by the kokanis who moved from village to village or from one area to another as the exigencies of their calling or the oppressions of the chiefs prompted them. The village Patils mostly belonged to this class. The revenue was

Comp. No. 1603, Vol. VII, No. 199-Rewakantha/ PD/1890, MSA/ Mumbai; Sub: Baroda-Chandod Giras, F. No. 58-B, D. No. 896, S. No. 286/1919-1941, HPO/BRO-Southern Circle, Baroda.

¹⁸ Extracts from paragraphs 26 and 49 of the Administration Report of the Lunavada State for the year 1904-1905, Comp. No. 1193; Administration Report of the Rewakantha Agency and the Rajpipla, Lunavada, Baria, Santrampur, Chhota-Udepur and Balasinor State in the Agency for the year 1904-1905, *Sub: Annual and Periodical Reports*, Vol. No. 19/1906, JD, MSA, Mumbai, p. 19

¹⁹ Bombay Presidency Gazetteer, Vol. VI, Part-A, 1880, p. 105; For further details regarding British Government measures to eradicate indebtedness among tribals see Letter from R. C. Brown, Political Agent, Rewakantha, Vol. No. 19/1906, JD, MSA, Mumbai/ p. 19.

²⁰ *Report of the Administration of the Bombay presidency 1886-1887*, Bombay, 1887, pp 117-118

derived from a plough tax and numerous cesses. The revenue was collected by the chiefs of each estate in person, in an annual tour during which he and his followers were gratuitously maintained by the *patils*. At the customary durbars held at Pimpalner by the political Agent; the Chiefs were brought to the consent to the demarcation of their forests and steps were taken towards the improvement of the *Abkari* system.²¹

The Surat district was composed of district parts. The first consisting of the Chorasi taluka bounded on the south partly by the sea and partly by the river Tapti, and on the east by the territories of the Sachin and Baroda State. The other two princely of Dharampur states and Bansda were under the supervision of the British Political agency and for a long duration remained under debt of the Bombay Presidency. As a result the condition of tribals in these territories remained at its worst.²²

Socio Welfare Activities for Tribals in The British Gujarat:-

The arrival of British in the tribal tract of Gujarat brought several administrative changes. The changes adopted directly or indirectly also affected the social structure of these regions. With the coming of the British came new system of public works department and so arrived the overall shift in trend of settlement pattern. Though these changes were gradual they certainly paved the path for social transformation in these societies.²³

²¹ *Report on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency for the year 1887-1889*, Bombay, 1889, p 93.

²² For details see Gujarat Customs Duty: Regarding the levy of inland duty in Gujarat, No. 2822 of 1870, Comp. No. 835, Vol. No. 24/PD-Gujarat, 1870, MSA-Mumbai and Surat administration Report, 1889-1890, Comp. No. 1997, No. 233, Vol. No.-III/PD, 1890, MSA-Mumbai.

²³ For social change in the tribal societies see *Protest in Western India*, Delhi OUP, 1998, p. 1 and Pushpendra Surana, *Social Movements and Social Structure (A study in the Princely States of Mewar)*, New Delhi, Manohar Pub. 1968, pp. 112-119.

It is interesting to note that along with the changes brought about by the British administrators, some tribal leaders were working for the socio-religious reforms in their own societies. A salient features of some of these Messianic movements is that though started in a small way they got linked with the larger nationalist movements. This happened to the Devi movement of south Gujarat.²⁴ The Devi movement was not anymore different from other movements of tribal of India. The movement through seemed to be about purification, it was meant for uniting the tribals for their objective of better life.²⁵

Changes in Tribal Societies through Education and Medical Services:

Educating tribal communities required different skills as compared to the depressed classes, like teachers were required to stay in the forest regions. The educational activities were limited to the Idar state in the north east of Gujarat. There were twenty two schools In Idar state in 1887-1888. These schools were maintained from a local fund raised by imposing a cess of one-sixteenth levied on the *Khalsa* lands.²⁶

Though there was increase in the number of pupils attending the primary schools in Panchmahals there was no education worth mentioning for tribals. The British educational department dealt with the education of these special communities. In the village Garbada of Dahod division a Bhil School was opened but it hardly meted the standards of education.²⁷ Later on the guidelines followed at Dhanka

²⁴ Surjit Sinha, 'Tribal solidarity and Messianic Movements', *Contribution to Indian Sociology*, No. II, December 1968, pp 112-119.

²⁵ David Hardiman, 'Adivasi Assertion in South Gujarat: The Devi Movement 1922-1923' In Ranjit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies-III: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, 1984, pp 196-197 and David Hardiman, 'From Custom to Crime: The Politics of Working in Colonial South Gujarat' in Ranjit Guha ed. *Subaltern Studies: Vol. III*, OUP, 1989, p 165.

²⁶ The status of education in other minor princely states was also the same. 'Introduction', *Report Public Instruction in Bombay, 1927-1928*, Bombay, 1929, p. 128.

²⁷ Sub: Administration Report, 511 Part.IV, *Land Revenue Administration Report*, Part-II for the year 1907-1908 of the Colectorate of Panchmahals, Comp. No.-511, Pt. IV, Vol. No. 13/1909, RD, MSA.

Schools of the Baroda State were adapted to these Schools.²⁸ A farm was developed at this school which instructed agricultural practises to the young pupils.

In the Surat district, two schools started for the children of tribal communities at Godasamba and Waghchippa in the Bardoli taluka.²⁹ Apart from opening schools, the British officials made efforts to increase the number of students on the rolls. For this purpose a special post of educational inspector was created.³⁰ Educational growth made its way in Rewakantha as well. In the year 1864 there were about ten primary schools in the whole division.

Schools for tribal children in Rewakantha Agency³¹

S.No.	Secondary Schools	No. of Schools	No. of Students
1	Lunawada	1	181
2	Devgadh Baria	1	100
3	Rajpipla	1	208
	Schools Primary		
4	Lunawada	11	283
5	Devgadh Baria	11	187
6	Rajpipla	10	270
7	Udaipur	5	125
8	Balasinor	2	377
9	Santrampur	1	48
10	Kadana	1	23
11	Sankheda-Mehwas	4	106
12	Pandu-Mehwas	2	33
13	Bhadarwa	1	33
	Schools for Tribal Girls		
14	Devgadh Baria	1	13
15	Lunawara	1	24
16	Rajpipla	1	17
17	Balasinor	1	49

²⁸ See Part –II of the Chapter of this Thesis.

²⁹ *Report on Public Instruction in Bombay 1927-1928*, Bombay, 1929, p. 128.

³⁰ From S. P. Kelly, Agent to Government, Surat to H.E.M. James, Commissioner Northern Division, Sub: Administration Report of the Sachin, Bansda, and Dharampur States under the Surat Agency for the year 1889-1889, Comp. No. 1997, No. 233, Vol. III/PD, MSA.

³¹ Rewakantha Annual Report 1870, From L. C. Burton, Political Agent- Rewakantha, Comp. No.-213, Vol. No. 102, Vol. I, 1870-1871, PD, MSA, Mumbai.

All the schools in the Rewakantha were examined yearly by the deputy Inspector of the circle acting under the order of the educational Inspector.³²

With such efforts of British Government the number of educated tribal students gradually started increasing. In year 1920 not only the number of Primary and Secondary schools increased in these territories but attempts were also made to make higher technical education feasible to students of such communities.

Medical Services:

Under the British rule the new medical practises were introduced among the tribal of Gujarat. These included introduction of allopathic medicines through Primary Health Centres and promoting vaccination against epidemics prevalent in tribal societies.³³ Initially the vaccination was not accepted by the tribal people. But slowly with the spread of education and missionary encouragement the modern health care practises were accepted.³⁴

The British rule was marked by the sea changes in the Indian society; somehow no part of the Indian sub-continent remained untouched by it. In their march to subdue people of India they spared neither the elite nor the masses. To every part of Indian society, they

³² Ibid. p 43

³³ Sub: Backward Classes-Gujarat District Primary Schools For Backward Classes, Dt 25/02/1921, F. No. LC/ 1045, Education Branch, MSA, Mumbai, Pp 19-20.

³⁴ R. E. Enthoven (ed.), *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, Vol. VI-B, Rewakantha, Bombay and Surat Agency, Bombay, Govt. Central Press. 1904, p. 3 The Comparative Study about the statistics shows us the facts about acceptance towards Medical services by the tribal communities which are as follows:

S. No.	Year	Patients
1	1893-1894	142
2	1897-1898	90
3	1901-1902	83
4	1902-1903	84

The figures show no drastic change; rather the figures are declining proving that medical facilities of Primary Health Centers were not much accepted by the tribal communities.

brought changes according to the European norms they initiated western education system, the administration and judiciary was also set according to the western model. Such changes certainly had several negative and positive impacts on the Indian society and its people.

When British administrators entered the forest regions of Indian sub-continent they came across tribal communities. To bring these communities under the sway of their administration was certainly their target for which they adopted strict measures of administration. To make the environment more suitable for their entry they introduced welfare services and health services. These services certainly had some positive affects on the tribal societies as their world view expanded due to opening of vision towards the outer world.

II

The Baroda State and Welfare of Tribal

The Baroda state had a reputation of being one of the most progressive of the Indian states. It was in advance of British India in many fields of material progress.³⁵ The following pages of the chapter discuss the welfare measures respecting the tribal undertaken by the Baroda state. The details are sub-divided as follows:

- (i) Socio- economic condition of tribal in nineteenth century Baroda state.
- (ii) The reign of Sayajirao-III and welfare of tribal communities.
- (iii) Socio-economic welfare of tribal communities of Baroda State.

³⁵ David Hardiman, 'Baroda – The Structure of a Progressive State' in Robin Jaffrey (ed.), *People, Prince, and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in the Indian States*, Delhi, OUP, 1978, p. 107.

³⁵ David Hardiman, 'Baroda – The Structure of a Progressive State' in Robin Jaffrey (ed.), *People, Prince, and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in the Indian States*, Delhi, OUP, 1978, p. 107.

The relations between the Baroda State and tribal were quite problematic in the early decades of nineteenth century. A slight improvement came due to changes adopted by the British administration.³⁶ Whereas the tribal communities constituted nearly one third of the entire population of the Navsari division, in the Baroda division they just constituted fifteen persons per million.³⁷ The tribal in the Baroda State were mainly engaged in the agricultural practices, though some among them practices slash and burn kind of shifting agriculture.³⁸

The reign of Sayajirao-III (1881-1939) inaugurated various beneficial projects of practical utility for the tribal communities his state. These reforms were implemented through the revenue, forest and educational departments. One of the most remarkable reforms was the establishments of boarding schools. In these boarding schools the children's of Dhankas and other tribal communities were provided with the boarding and lodging facilities. The primary education was imparted to these students with additional training in other vocational courses such as carpentry, horticulture, ironsmith etc. Concerned about bringing educational reforms among the tribal and other backward classes Sayajirao-III pointed out that:

³⁶ 'Certain superficial adjustments were made indicting the system of Subsidiary Alliance and the British Indian State membership in the early nineteenth century.' For details see M. P. Kamekar, 'The Role of the Bhils in the British -Baroda Conflict 1820-1840' in *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 1982, p 245; 'The miserable state of the Baroda in the early nineteenth century resulted in the rising of various tribal revolts, among one remarkable revolt was that of Naikadas of the Rewakantha and Sankheda Mehwas in 1858 to 1860. During 1857 Indian revolt against British rule several tribal communities from western India also participated in which the most affected region was Baroda States *Ranipradesh*. After decline of revolt, Taty Tope seceded to the jungles of Baroda division (mainly regions of Chhota Udepur and Sankheda) and aroused tribal communities of the territory. During this period several revolts took place among which the main revolts were roused by the Naikadas of Rewakantha and Sankheda Mewas 1858-1860' for details see, V. G. Khobrekar, *Disturbances in Gujarat (1857-1964): Historical Selections from Baroda Records*, BRO, Baroda, 1962

³⁷ *The Baroda State Administration Report*, 1882, p. 95.

³⁸ The Western sub-division of the Navsari division rich in agrarian land were known as *rasti mahals* and the forest tract were known as *ranimahals*. *Ranimahals* of the Navsari division were: Songadh, Vajpur, Vyara, and Mahuva. 'For details see, *Census of India 1891*, Volume-XXIV, Baroda, Part-V, Bombay, 1894, pp 14-15

Education is the basis of all reforms and is the only way of salvation from our present condition educationally our people are little better than beasts, the vast infant mortality, poverty, these were among the ills bought by ignorance and were stunting the moral and material advance of the country. In the training of education would follow a higher and purer life, the improvement of agriculture, the increase of wealth, and so the aggregate of social welfare would be increased.³⁹

Two schools for the depressed classes were opened for the by the Baroda State in 1882. All the necessary school facilities were extended free.⁴⁰ The children of Koli, Bhil, Dhankas, Waghers, and such other forest tribes started receiving free education. A boarding house for the Dhanka children was opened at Songadh in 1885 and other two in Vyara and Mahuva in 1892. Education slowly started showing effects on the forest people. Previously they were simply ignorant and addicted to drinking. They started an association called 'An-Arya Hitvardhak Sabha' (Non-Aryan Welfare Organisation). Under this association people were made aware of the vices of drinking liquor and were impressed on the need to curtail the ruinous expenditure on occasions of funeral and wedding. The tribal boys who finished their studies in these schools got employment as teachers, *talatis* or village accountants. Majority of them, of course, took to their ancestral occupation of agriculture.⁴¹ The Dhanka Boarding schools were in many ways were different from the

³⁹ Stanley Rice, *Life of Sayajirao-III, Maharaja of Baroda*, Vol. II, London, OUP, 1931, p. 8.

⁴⁰ "The year 1906-1907 marked an important milestone in the educational history of Baroda State. It was in this year that primary education was made free and compulsory all over the state. The result was that the number of schools for the depressed rose rapidly, and a special inspector was appointed to inspect these schools." See, *Baroda Administration Report*, 1932, p 180.

⁴¹ Ramesh C. Dutt (ed.), *Baroda Administration Report 1904-1905*, Baroda, Baroda State Press, 1906, pp 225-226. 'From the Songadh Boarding School also the education for tribal women was initiated. Primarily four girls passed out in 1906. They were sent to teachers training college at Baroda. Here each of them received higher education and settled themselves in the field of education.' *Correspondence regarding Education of Kaliparaj Girls*, F. No. 30, D. No. 473, S. No. 85ED, BRO-SC, Baroda.

other boarding schools financed by the Baroda State. Many new experiments were done in their teaching style. The government also ascertained certain rules for their teaching staff.⁴² Special arrangements were also made by the Baroda State to upgrade the girls education of backward classes. The three Dhanka Boarding Schools for boys also had special arrangements for the girls and an exclusive boarding school for girls was also opened.⁴³ Awakened to the health services duty; the Baroda government started medical in its tribal dominated areas. Dispensaries were opened at Sankheda sub-divisions of Baroda and at Songadh, Vyara, Kathore, and Mohwa of the Navsari division.⁴⁴

Land Reforms:

In 1922-1923, reports of land-rights and riots were registered in the Baroda State. Very largely it were the tribal people of Navsari division who were involved in the land disputes. After hearing the

⁴² The following were the duties of a masier of ranimahar. Apart from teaching, the teacher was required to assist the people giving them explanation about their accounts with government or with a private banker. They also taught them different occupational skills. '*Rules about village Schools and Teachers*', F. No. 3, D. No. 572, SW. No. 85/1891/ED, HPO/BRO-SC, Baroda. 'Several other measures like installation of a school, a library, a water tank, and a committee for forest fires were adopted by the Baroda State for the every Kaliparaj village. As told by elderly tribals of Vyara division during field trip of Vyara on 17/07/2002.

⁴³ Status of Girls Boarding at Navsari Prant (Division):

S. No.	Year	No. of Boarding Schools	Total No. of Students	Girls
1	1926	7	336	50
2	1932	7	355	50
3	1934	7	389	50
4	1937	7	363	50
5	1946	7	391	49

'Correspondence Regarding Education of Kaliparaj Girls', F. No 30, D. No. 473, S No 85/ED, BRO-SC, Baroda. "Further, in order to supply teachers from their own community it has been decided to send to Raniparaj boys and girls to Baroda College for higher Studies. To give technical education, boys were sent to Kalabhavan from 1933 onwards." *Baroda Administration Report, 1935-1936*, Baroda, Baroda State Press, 1937, p 273

⁴⁴ *Report on the Administration of the Baroda State for 1883-1884*, Bombay, Education Society Press, 1886. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the Baroda State used to visit all these sub-divisions of Baroda and Navsari, for constant improvement. The CMO was also responsible for the health problems of Dhanka Boarding School. '*Diaries of Chief Medical Officer*', F. No. 35 to 45, D. No. 480, S. No. 99/MD, BRO-Baroda. "Later the CMO's recommendations were also considered. But on a close scrutiny of files realized that CMO's suggestions about the raniparaj boarding were not at all considered by the Huzur Political Office, Baroda State" See *Actions Taken After CMO's Navsari Diary*, No. 63, Subha Office Navsari, Dt. 02/10/1890, Baroda F. No. 37, D. No. 480, S. No. 99/MD, BRO-SC, Baroda..

case, of the tribal communities of the State a commission was appointed by Sayajirao-III.⁴⁵

Efforts were made to eradicate their many of traditional malpractices. He abolished *veth*, the custom by which land owners could compel members of the tribal communities to work in their fields without remuneration. The tribals were prey to indebtedness due to their poverty and ignorance. Under these circumstances they were being slowly ousted from their lands by moneylenders. To stop the tribal lands slipping into non-tribal hands an Act was passed by the Baroda State.⁴⁶ After passing the Debt Regulation (Conciliation) Act, several agricultural reform actions were taken by the Baroda state. Measures such as promotion of cash crops and conserving manure were taken in the *ranimahals*.⁴⁷

Cooperative Movement: Along with the legislation for the protection for land, co-operative societies had been organized to finance them. In order to facilitate lending, cooperative societies, agricultural banks and land mortgage banks had been allowed to accept the *raniparaj* lands as mortgage without the consent of the *naib subas*.⁴⁸ During the year 1913-1914, there was a steady and continuous progress in the co-operative movement in the state. All the Agricultural Banks extended Loans to the societies in their respective talukas, and slowly stopped providing loans to the individual *khatedars*.

⁴⁵ Stanley Rice, op. cit. p 227.

⁴⁶ "The Debt Conciliation Act, 1936 prevented alienation of land. The Legislation was meant to reduce the burden of agricultural indebtedness through conciliation. The act was applied at first in the Sankheda, Shinor, and Karjan talukas of Baroda division and later on extended to the Mahuva, Songadh, Vyara and Mangrol talukas of the Navsari division." See *Baroda Administration Report: 1944-1945*, Baroda, 1946, pp 110-111.

⁴⁷ A beginning had been made in the joint sale of the cotton at the village Kapura in Vyara taluka. The experiment was being watched with great excitement by the neighbouring tribal population.'

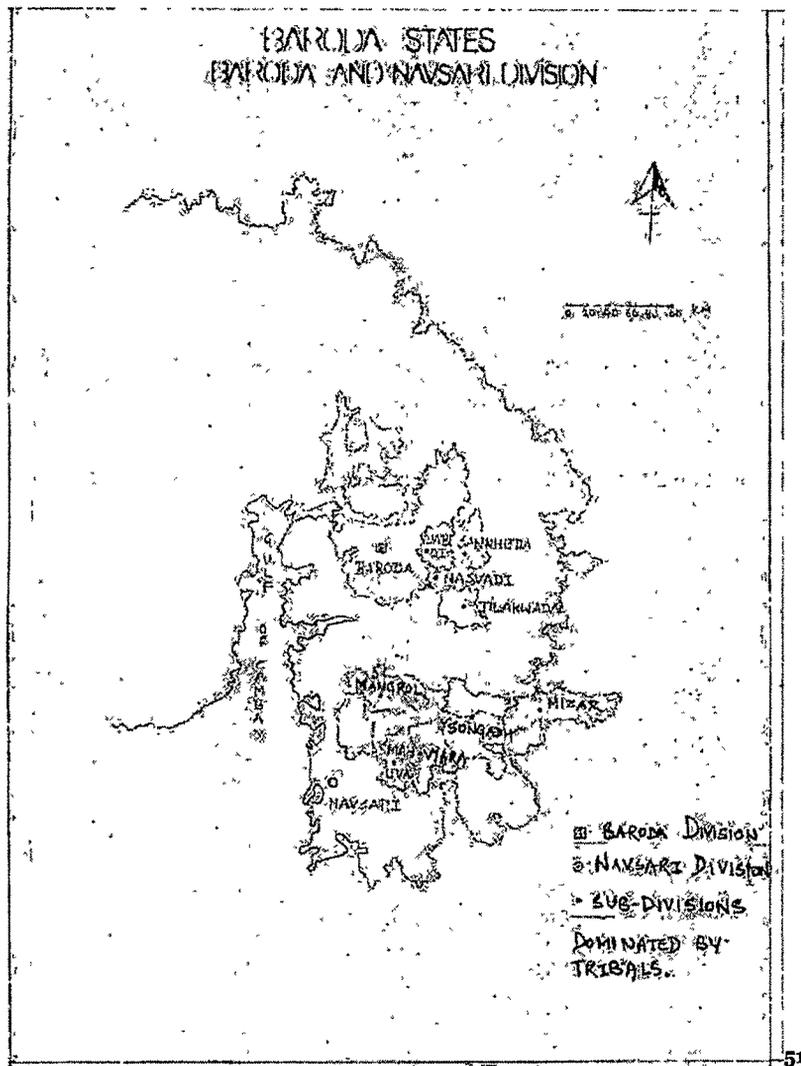
⁴⁸ 'A point was made for the benefit of the tribals of Baroda state that land so mortgaged to cooperative institutions cannot be alienated on one years lease.' See *Baroda Administration Report: 1944-1945*, Baroda, 1946, PP 110-111

There were fifty two Agricultural Societies in the Navsari District. In Vyara and Songadh a few kaliparaj societies were organized though all of them had not started work. A marked tendency was observed among the agricultural societies to take to other forms of co-operation. This meant activities for the welfare of its own members.⁴⁹ The tribal women's contribution in co-operative society was equally significant village thrift societies worked very well among women⁵⁰. With the success shown by the agricultural banks among kaliparaj people there was a further increase in these activities.

⁴⁹ "A number of societies purchased seeds and the domestic requirements of their members in common. Some of them purchased improved farm implements such as iron plough, land - hoes, chaff- cutter etc. A few Societies sold all the cottons and other agricultural products of their new members together and realised good profits". See *Baroda Administration Report: 1933-1934*, Baroda, 1934, p. 131

⁵⁰ *Baroda Administration Report: 1936-1937*, Baroda, 1938, pp, 193-199.

Map of Baroda state where tribal communities dominated



During the Gaekwadi rule multifarious welfare works respecting the Tribal had been under taken. The state used caution not to disturb their culture. The reign of Sayajirao saw tremendous growth and enlighten among the tribal of Baroda state. Education brought in their world view, while economic reforms in agricultural and co-operative societies brought upward movement in their socio economic status.

⁵¹ Map of Baroda State where tribal communities dominated.

III

Christian Missionaries and Welfare of the Tribals in Gujarat

In the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh in 1910, deliberated and reflected that there was no other religion other than Hinduism which needed to be so carefully studied by the Missionary. There was no other Country other than India where the mistakes and ignorance of Missionary was likely to produce such harmful results. It is no part of our work as Christians to destroy Hinduism, nor to go out of India with any feeling of racial or religious superiority, but to serve India in the spirit of Christ himself to be servants of mankind⁵².

By the close of the 19th Century the Christian missionaries working in India came to adopt local ways of dress, and living found in any urban centre of the world.⁵³ Christian Missionaries have generally been criticised and condemned over the point of religious conversion, quite often ignoring their positive contributions on socio economic front. Conversely some just speak about the rehabilitation works of the Christian Missionaries forgetting as to how religious conversion set in a process which led to some kind of disorganisation among people and encouraged negative trends. Mahatma Gandhi had been quite critical of conversion and wrote: they are not examples of real conversion. If a person through fear compulsion, starvation, or for material gain or consideration goes over to another faith, it is a misnomer to call it conversion.⁵⁴

⁵² Sushil Kumar Pathak, *American Missionaries and Hinduism: A Study of their Contacts from 1813 to 1910*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1967, p. i

⁵³ Krishna N. S. Sahay, *Christianity and Culture Change in India*, New Delhi: Inter India Pub., 1986, p. 16

⁵⁴ Arun Shourie, *Missionaries in India: Continuities, Changes, Dilemmas*, New Delhi, Harper Collins. 1997, p. 4

Mahatma Gandhi's reaction to Christianity was primarily based on Politico-Economic grounds. But such readings often display one side of the picture. For Gandhi was a man of religion, an avowed *sanatan* Hindu. As such, he could have no hatred for any other religious faith. His displeasure was not with Christianity as such but with the Christian Missionaries. About Christian Missionaries he once wrote:

I have returned at several missionary meetings to tell English and American missionaries that if they could have refrained from telling India about Christ and had merely lived to life enjoyed upon lived to life enjoyed upon them by the 'Sermon on the Mount', India instead of suspecting them would have appreciated their living. I do not believe in people telling others of their faith, especially with a view to conversion. Faith does not admit of telling. It lived and then it becomes propagating.⁵⁵

Mahatma Gandhi believed Christian Missionaries instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work such as education, medical services to the poor and the like, use these activities of their for the purpose of proselytising which certainly should be withdrawn.⁵⁶

It is instructive to keep in mind that when the missionaries came to India their motive was to spread the message of Christ. But along with it they served the people born out of the Christian ethos of love & service especially of the poor & the weak. When the Missionaries entered Tribal regions they enthusiastically indulged in

⁵⁵ 'Mahatma Gandhi's strong view against conversion made him unpopular among Christian camps and they often send him letters for clarification.' Bharatan Kumarappa (ed.), *M. K. Gandhi: Christian Missionaries their places in India*, Ahmedabad, Navjivan Pub House, 1941, p. 26.

⁵⁶ M. K. Gandhi, 'Foreign Missionaries' *Young India*. Vol. XIII, No. 17, 23-1931, pp 83-84.

proselytisation. As a result some missionaries eventually managed to become priests to some tribal groups.⁵⁷

It is often asked why tribals turned towards Christianity. Was it for hope of social justice and emancipation? Tribals came to Christ in the desire for relief from evil spirit for a moral, peaceful and dignified life. Christianity appealed to the hill people because it had been associated in their minds with the idea of progress. Christianity in the past had meant hospitals, education and a larger rich material life. More so, Christianity had vast sociological implication. After the people had embraced the Christian faith, several type of socio-religious and economic reforms had to be brought about to appreciate and suit the Christian way of life. Spread of education especially among the girls. All these together attracted tribals towards the Christian faith.⁵⁸ Defending their position against attacks the missionaries claim that:

If there is no evangelism and no mission, then there can be church. If missionaries had not gone to these and sacrificed themselves; then not only would there not have been a church but many people would have been saved, medically and spiritually.⁵⁹

The beginning of Christian missionary activity in Gujarat started from Sabarkantha. Rev. C. S. Thompson came to the village Kherwara in 1880. Under the leadership Rev. Thompson (1887 to 1893) the

⁵⁷ The tribals in most cases were of strong on material culture, highly suspicious of foreigners. The geographical terrain was hostile to Brahminical missionary endeavors. The sacred orders of the tribals were too far removed from 'Vedic dharma'. in Raj Sunder, *The Confusion called Conversion*, New Delhi, Traci Pub., 1988, p. 104.

⁵⁸ Krishna N. Sahay, *Christianity and Change in India*, New Delhi, Inter India Pub. 1986, p 44

⁵⁹ Vinod Kumar Malviya, *Anglican-Contribution to the Church of North India in Gujarat: With special reference to church growth among the Bhil people of Northern India*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Dublin (available at CNI Bishop House, Ahmedabad), pp 102-103. (In the following discussion the missionary activities in Gujarat will be taken district wise from north to south.)

Christian Missionary Society (hereafter CMS), expanded its educational work in Sabarkantha.⁶⁰ With the positive growth shown by CMS, British Government took keen interest and kept regular vigil on its activities. A report submitted on the status of education.⁶¹In the Idar state gives the information as follows:

Status of C M S Schools in Idar State from March 1898 to March 1899

Villages	Boys in III std.	Girls in III std.	Boys in IV std.	Girls in IV std.
Chetalia	1	-	55	1
Lusaria	7	-	51	-
Bilaria	10	-	62	-
Ghoradar	19	-	78	-
Sarsan	4	-	26	1
Bavlia	10	-	41	2

During his work with the tribal communities of Idar state at first Thompson found the Bhils very timid and suspicious. Gradually, however, his knowledge of medicine enabled him to overcome their fears and as he went from village to village, patients came for treatment, and stayed to listen to the gospel. Small schools were opened for both boys and girls at Kherwara and Thompson who was joined by several missionaries spent much of his time in travel. It was not until 1889, however, that any of the Bhils accepted the Christian

⁶⁰ The remarkable achievement of missionaries of Kherwara was baptizing some bhagats. The number of bhagats of village Lusadia got baptised. Ibid. p. 66. "The beginning of the CMS goes back to 1840 when the East India company had raised several regiments of Bhil soldiers with a view to preserving peace in these remote and troublesome tribal areas; and one of these regiments, the Mewar had its head quarters at Kherwara (in Rajasthan). The stone Church of Kherwara was built originally for the use of European officials living at the station. The wife of one of the officers stationed here at this time happened to be the daughter of E.H. Bickersheth. Later Bishop of Exeter in England, and she wrote to her father suggesting that the CMS should begin missionary work in the area. The challenge was accepted and in 1880, the first missionary, the Rev. C. S. Thompson arrived and began work in Kherwara." See Robin Boyd, *Church History of Gujarat*, Madras, The Christian Literary Society, 1981, p 63.

⁶¹ *Information Related to Bhil Mission Schools under Educational Department*, F. No.-46, D. No. 51, 1898-1899, Political Department, BRO-SC, Baroda.

faith. In that year a member of the Bhagat sect called Sirka Damor was baptised, along with his wife and four children.⁶²

Between 1887 and 1893 the CMS expanded its educational work in Sabarkantha by opening schools at Lusaria, Biladia, Bavlia, and other places. In this work encouragement and patronage was provided by some of the ruling chiefs of the area, especially the Maharaja of Idar and the Rao of Ghoradar. Thompson turned his hand to literature and prepared a simple catechism and a translation of a part of the Book of Common Prayer in the Bhil dialect, as well as Bhili-English grammar. He was a very effective pioneer missionary; he gave his life for the people in the great famine in Idar state he died due to cholera at village Jhanjhavi near Bavila in 1900.⁶³

Along with the educational work the CMS also worked on the health issues of the tribals of the region. In 1880 Rev. Thompson and his wife Dr. Margaret reached Kherwara and there they started treatment of bhils. Initially suspicion surrounded their work but later on patients in thousands came for the treatment as their services brought favourable results.⁶⁴ In 1889 Rev. Colonel Outram and his wife Anne Outram came to the Idar and were stationed at Bhiloda subdivision. There they started famine relief work along with a dispensary and boys orphanage. Mrs. Outram opened a girls orphanage and a school. In 1901 they gathered a bhagats meeting at Lusadia after which twenty-two conversions were made. Later in 1905 the medical units of Lusadia were expanded with two Wards, servants' quarters and stables

⁶² Robin Boyd, *Op cit*, p 63.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p 64.

⁶⁴ Letter from Political Agent of Mahikantha, to the Chief Secretary to Government Political Department, Cons. No. 84, D. No. 1553, dt. 28/07/1887, Administration report 1886-1887; Mahikantha-Political Agent, F. No. 34, Annual Administration Report 1886-1887, Crown Public Records, Baroda Record Office, Baroda..

for new buildings. After the construction of the hospital at Lusadia the different activities of the CMS became more prominent in Lusadia.⁶⁵

Church activities in Panchmahals:

The activities of CMS covered only a small hilly tract of Gujarat inhabited by the Bhils, whereas a large territory was not touched by any reform activities. To respond to this challenge new mission came into being; the Jungle Tribes Mission (JTM) of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. To take the gospel to the Bhils of Panchmahals district the JTM was established by missions enthusiasts with ministers and layman this was sanctioned by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in 1890. It was a faith mission which whose missionaries were to be laymen. The first two missionaries of the JTM were William Mulligan and G. W. Blair. They began their work in Panchmahals in January 1892 at Dahod. They soon began programme of evangelistic preaching in the surrounding districts. By going for tours in the interior parts of these districts they manage to reach to the people. In 1893 they were joined by J. H. McNeil, a Scot man who had two years of medical training.⁶⁶

The next work was opened in Jhalod where Blair stayed for three years. The first baptism took place on 26th March 1898 when a young Bhil called Narsing Jagli was baptised. In 1900 work was initiated in Santrampur and the Head Quarter for the JTM was established at Godhra town. In 1906 no fewer than seven different

⁶⁵ "After 1905, Lusadia became the main center of all the activities from where coordination of cooperative credit societies, educational trusts, orphanages and several other activities were done." Interview with Surji Timoti Suvera, village Lusadia on 20/05/2003

⁶⁶ "The ultimate aim of the mission was to proclaim the gospel and establish the church, the body of Christ. It was obvious that after the opening of the mission work the missionaries and the sending body were anxiously longing to see its first fruits. The pious and the faithful convener, Dr. Morgan, waited impatiently for news of the first convert. He wrote; "Daily my prayers are for you and your work. I think I would be satisfied, did I know one case of decided conversion. This would put the seal of God to our mission. The request was made by the missionaries at home church to pray earnestly for the divine blessing upon their labours. The mission board conveyed this appeal to Irish Congregations with a suggestions to organize a special prayer meeting." Robin Boyd, Op. cit p. 70.

missions were working among the Bhil people.⁶⁷ Rev. C. S. Thompson of CMS was the first missionary who started medical services among the Bhils. The JTM started its medical services in 1893 through Mr. and Mrs. McNeil. They served in Dahod for thirty years, laying the foundation of medical work in the Panchmahals. In 1939, the Hamilton Mc Cleerly hospital was opened in Dahod that continues to work till date.⁶⁸

In the South Gujarat, the important region of Christian missionary activity was Rewakantha Agency and Bharuch district. The Church of Bharuch was built as far back as the time of the Company in 1816, but no work was done in the interior tribal regions. Father Samada had been working in the town for a number of years but he was not able to make any contact in the adivasi land. It was only in 1960, that he was invited to villages which had Protestant connections. The church of Brethrens had established several centres not only in Bharuch and Ankleshwar but also in the interior, right up to Umala and Tapura in the Rajpipla line. The church also started work in villages of Dediapada and Sagbara taluka. The first contact were made through Protestants and as the prospects were promising and new priests were coming in Father Gomes sent father carricas, Avara, Galdos and Moreta. New villages

⁶⁷ Vinod Kumar Malviya, *The Contribution of The Irish Presbyterian Church to the Life, Witness and Growth of the Church in Gujarat with special reference to the Rev. James Glasgow And Robin Boyd*, University of Belfast (unpublished Ph.D. thesis available at Bishop House, Ahmedabad, 1993), p 28. "Out of these six church bodies, two were united Free Church of Scotland and the Canadian Presbyterian Church were in areas outside Gujarat. The remaining four were the CMS, The JTM, The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Salvation army and the Church of the Brethren, all these churches began to grow in the Panchmahals." Ibid. p 70

⁶⁸ "Another dispensary was opened in Jhalod, which was later closed down .the last missionary of the Irish Presbyterian church, Dr. Jean Shannon took up a new project in 1974, and the community health programme with a dispensary in Panapur. The aim of this project was to promote education towards the eradication of the many preventable diseases in cooperation with the Government. To provide medical supplies, financial crisis, identifying suitable staff and traveling throughout the districts along difficult tracks. In addition to all these difficulties they had to face problems guaranteed by ignorance, superstition, poverty, caste, and language barriers. Yet because of their love for god and commitment people they worked hard and provided the best medical services possibly serving many lives." Vinod Kumar Malviya, Op. cit. pp. 30-40.

were contacted, two primary schools were opened and the first baptism administered in Vakhatpura, Talodra, Vadsol, Kavachia, and Jambuda.⁶⁹

When the famine of 1898 affected territories of Rajpipla State in Rewakantha Agency, the Church of the Brethrens was the first mission to work among the famine stricken tribal communities of the area of the Rajpipla state. During the famine of 1899-1901, the missionaries, S. N. McCann and D. J. Lickhty started the work and appointed one Nathabhai Bhagwandas in Kumasgam to organise relief work. At about the same time the work was begun in Jhagadia, Rajpardi, Undi and Ametha. In 1904, D. J. Lickhty bought land for mission compound in Valia and living there. Work in Jhagadia was opened by E. H. Ebey in 1907. The outstanding Gujarati leaders in this area were the Rev. Nanjibhai Ramjibhai. Gradually schools were established in villages throughout the area and workers put in-charge to them. The original congregation of Valia was sub-divided and several new churches were established.⁷⁰

Church missionary in Dangs and Valsad:

The church activities in the Dangs began only after independence through a few Protestant mission, they entered the territory but with meagre influence on the local communities.⁷¹

⁶⁹ The area where all these fathers were working was vast and in early sixties there were no proper road communications. As the work increased the need was felt of dividing and each father residing in his own centre. Father Carricas went to Talodra but died during the famine years. Father Galdos went to Zhankhvav and Father Arava to Dediapada and Father Moreta remained in Bharuch." *Navi-Juni: Stories of the Gujarat Jesuit Family*, No. 1, March 1972, pp 23-29.

⁷⁰ "By 1907 more than 300 people in the area had accepted the Christian faith and in that year the first Congregation that of Valia was organized with 22 baptized members and two evangelists-Abhesingh Sajan and Iliabhai Hosingbhai of whom the latter acted as a school teacher, evangelist and a preacher." Robin Boyd, *Op. cit.* p 73.

⁷¹ "Such churches are evident till date in many parts of the Dangs. In these churches the local village tribals visit every evening and pray to Christ. The local priest of their own community sings the prayers in Dangi dialect, so the religion becomes more intense to

In Valsad Wilber B. Stover began the missionary activity. Here the first gathering on the Church took place on 3rd April 1898, when thirteen people were converted and baptised. Same year a severe famine broke out in south Gujarat which made Wilber Stover to expand his work in other parts of the Valsad and area around.⁷²

Christian Missionaries had been active in the tribal belt of Gujarat since the late nineteenth century and they have steadily grown. In their institutions they introduced modernist ideas in the tribal communities. In mission schools, students and people of tribal communities are given the facilities and exposure to the latest technology, bringing them closer to the mainstream. With the conversion activities in parish premises the challenge was posed to other religious missionaries resulting in the growing hostilities among different religious groups. Its impact could be seen in the religious riots that occurred in tribal belt of Gujarat.⁷³

them." Field trip to Dangs at village Moti Dabhas in March 2003. During my stay with the villagers I experienced such practices of praying. Also see Satyakam Joshi, "Tribal Missionaries and Christian Faith: Sadhus' Understanding Violence in the Dangs", *EPW*, Vol. 36, Sep. 11-17 1999, pp 2667-2675. "In case of Surat, Christian Missionary activity was a very late phenomenon, and it was only in later 1960's that Christian Missionary was established at Vyara. Prior to that local tribal communities and State authorities annihilated such penetrations." See *Sub; Forest: Surat grant of permission to the Rev. J. M. Pettinger to build a house on Ahwa Plateau*, Comp. No. 78, Vol. No. 166/1908, RD, MSA

⁷² Robin Boyd, op. cit., p.70

⁷³ See Satyakam Joshi, op. cit...