

INTRODUCTION

From the dawn of its recorded history, an enduring feature of India's state formation has been the struggle for power between its settled cultures and invading forces. The geographical configuration of the Indian subcontinent also played its part in determining the patterns of invasion and settlement, whether by the "land nomads" from Central Asia, who entered northern India through the invasion corridor of the northwest, or by the "sea nomads" of Europe, who crossed the oceans and penetrated the Indian subcontinent from the coastal areas.

The earliest known population movement was by the Indo-Europeans (Aryans) from the Steppe lands of Central Asia, who settled in the Indo-Gangetic Plain and established the North Indian linguistic and cultural tradition. However, the unique configuration of the Indian subcontinent also dictated that most invading forces from Central Asia encountered the barrier of the Hindu Kush Mountains before reaching the plains of northern India. The new waves of invasion that followed—by the Indo-Greeks, Kushans, Huns, and Turkish and Mongol tribes—were launched as military expeditions that crossed the Indus to conquer the Punjab. Most of them lost their momentum by the time they reached the Gangetic Plain. Thus, while a few established ephemeral dynasties of considerable power; they were not able to change the mass of population or cultural core of the Gangetic region.

The other aspect of the territorial history of the Indian subcontinent is that of the geographical divide between continental and peninsular India. The political concept of India as an "empire state" was first developed during the time of the Mauryas (321-184 B.C.) and defined Bharat (India) as stretching from the northern Himalayas to Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) in the south. The ambition of all subsequent Indian rulers was to achieve the territorial and political unification of the Indian subcontinent. Here again, geography played a part; the Vindhya Mountains and the Deccan Plateau provided a formidable barrier to the imperial ambitions of the land-based powers of the North.

In the post-Mauryan period the Indo-Gangetic Plain was subjected to extensive invasions, and periodic attempts at unification were interspersed with long periods of turmoil and conflict. The Gupta dynasty (4th century) was the last North Indian empire to rule from the Gangetic heartland. Their political collapse came in the wake of fresh invasions by Hun nomads in the fifth century.

Muslim rule followed much the same pattern of invasion and conquest, but the introduction of Islam as a new religion and culture proved a critical break in terms of its impact on state and society. The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206 changed the political landscape of northern India, the strategically placed capital of Delhi becoming the new seat of central power.

The next imperial unification of India took place under the Great Mughals from Babur to Aurangzeb (1526-1707). The rule of third Mughal Emperor, Akbar, was renowned for its tolerance and for his fostering of pluralism and a syncretism of Hindu-Muslim culture and civilization. The Mughal Empire was also a warrior state, administered by a new class of military bureaucratic elites (*mansabdars*). The Northwest and the Northeast of the Indo-Gangetic belt became Muslim majority areas, the former by invaders who settled there, the latter mostly by Sufi conversions, while the Gangetic Plain retained its Hindu majority. Southern India developed a maritime tradition and a seafaring economy in contrast to the landlocked economy of the North. The Dravidian culture consolidated its position as the region's major strand of South Indian civilization and the post-Mughal repository of the Hindu cultural traditions of the North.

The "European epoch" of Indian history dawned as an age of maritime power, of Western European authority based on the control of the seas. European expansion to South Asia by sea fundamentally altered the course of Indian history presenting an entirely new set of challenges to the land-based powers of the North *viz.* the Mughals, Rajputs, Marathas, and Sikhs. Not only were the routes, methods of conquest, and patterns of settlement different, but the pressure from the sea had a relentlessness that invasions from land did not possess.

The British, who eventually marginalized all other European contenders (the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese), penetrated inland from the sea through the two great river valleys: the South Kaveri Valley, and the Ganges Valley of the North. Surmounting the Deccan barrier, and in the nineteenth century finally bringing together both continental and peninsular India, the British Raj transformed itself from a sea-based maritime power to a continental empire.

The British Raj emulated and incorporated many of the features of the previous rulers, especially the Mughals, retaining elements of their military and bureaucratic administration. The role of intermediaries (merchants, traders, and moneylenders) and scribal elites, land revenue systems, and mercantile imperatives were common to both empires. Both were

warrior states, and the role of the army drawn from the so-called martial races, was crucial for both. The British, however, had to propagate a new theory of martial races after the Revolt of 1857, when Punjab and the tribal Northwest, instead of Bengal, became the new recruiting ground. The induction of Jat Sikhs, Rajputs, Punjabis, and Pathans into the British Army changed the socio-political history of the Northwest. It has had immense consequences for the successor state of Pakistan, which inherited the strategic “real estate” of the Northwest and the so-called martial races tradition associated with it.

The most significant achievement of British colonial rule was the strategic unification of the Indian subcontinent. It constituted a significant break from the past as the concept of strategic frontiers and boundaries was introduced to demarcate the sovereign limits of the British Empire. However, the demands of the greater British Empire added an extra dimension to imperial frontier making. The strategic and economic interests of imperial Britain and Tsarist Russia led to the “Great Game” in Central Asia between the two powers. The northwestern frontier became militarized and Afghanistan emerged as a classic “buffer state”.

The colonial enterprise was by no means a unilateral exercise. Interactions as well as synthesis were integral to the encounter between India and Britain whose ideologies and institutions had a profound impact on India. Ideas of nationalism and self-determination were crucial in giving an impetus to India’s nationalist movement. Britain’s industrial capitalism had its effect as well on the modernization and industrialization of the state. Railways were great unifiers, both in strategic and economic sense, helping to extend and consolidate British rule.

Decolonization was a critical juncture in the contemporary history of the Indian subcontinent. In the case of British India the distinctiveness of the decolonization process lay in the dichotomy that developed between the secular Indian National Congress’ demand for independence and the Muslim League’s demand for a Muslim homeland—Pakistan. In the stalemate that followed the religious separatism of the minority Muslim community became the determinant factor in granting freedom from colonial rule.

In 1947 British power was “transferred” to the two dominions, India and Pakistan; the former as the primary successor state of British India with Pakistan a secondary successor state. The price of independence was the partitioning of continental India on the basis of the communal majority principle of the “two nation” theory of the Muslim League which asserted that Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations.

State formation at Baroda is one of the less studied themes of Gujarati history. So far there is no secondary source in which a comprehensive study of the formation of the Baroda State from its incipency in the eighteenth century to its maturity in the twentieth century has been done.

Although a lot has been written on the history of the Baroda State since the 1970s by authors belonging to different schools of thought and there have been a number of works in the past 50 years the focus has mainly been concentrated on the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III, the greatest ruler of the Gaekwad dynasty and repetitive biographies of this monarch have come up in the colonial as well as the post-colonial period. The important biographies of Sayajirao Gaekwad III written in the colonial period are those written by Philip W. Sergeant in 1928 and Stanley Rice in 1931 (written during the lifetime of the Maharaja) whilst the important ones of the post-colonial period are those written by V.K. Chavda in 1972, Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad (the great-grandson of the Maharaja) in 1989 and the more recent one by Uma Balasubramaniam in 2019. These three important biographies of the post-colonial period were written after the death of the Maharaja in 1939. It is not as though other monarchs of the Gaekwad dynasty have not been studied by historians the emphasis nevertheless has been on the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III.

Since there is a lot of literature available in the public domain on the Baroda State so it is impossible to review each and every source. So I will review a few selected works which have become landmarks in the study of the history of the Baroda State.

One of the earliest works on the history of the Gaekwad State of Baroda is the unpublished Ph.D thesis of Indra Saxena titled **‘The Early Gaekwads: History of the Baroda State from Pilajirao Gaekwad to Fatehsingrao Gaekwad (1720-1789)’** which was submitted in 1975 from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

This thesis is a study of the initial phase of Gaekwad rule before the intervention of the British i.e. from the founding of the Baroda State by Pilajirao Gaekwad in the 1720s to the reign of Fatesingrao Gaekwad I, the last powerful and independent Gaekwad ruler before the British took over the responsibility of administering the State from the reign of Anandrao Gaekwad.

The thesis is essentially a political history of the Baroda State during the eighteenth century.

The thesis of Indra Saxena is a study of the period 1720-1789 which were the formative years in the history of the Baroda State beginning with the reign of Pilajirao Gaekwad and ending with the reign of Fatesingrao Gaekwad I, who was the last independent and powerful ruler before the British intervened in the internal affairs of the Baroda State. The significance of this period lies in the fact that during their formative years the Gaekwads had to do a lot of hard preparatory work for laying the foundation of their rule in Gujarat. They began their career as mere subordinates of the Dabhade family and had to prove that they were meritorious and capable warriors in order to establish their independent rule in Gujarat subsequently. Initially they had to surmount many hurdles created by the Mughals for the achievement of their goal. The ushering in of internal strife, family dissensions and succession disputes in the Gaekwad family following the death of Damajirao Gaekwad II which was artfully exploited by the Peshwa to his advantage made the process of state formation difficult. Another major player in the contest was the British East India Company which made claims to the territories and economic resources of Gujarat. Subsequently the East India Company as history has revealed became the strongest power and established its rule not only over Gujarat but over the entire Indian subcontinent. The British formed frequent alliances with the Peshwa and the Gaekwad as and when it suited their interests. The early Gaekwads succeeded in emerging strong from this period of turmoil. Fatesingrao Gaekwad I eventually succeeded in establishing himself as an independent and powerful ruler in Gujarat who simultaneously maintained friendly relations with the Peshwa and the British.¹

The thesis of Indra Saxena is an important source for the formative phase in state formation at Baroda. It throws light on the early history of the Gaekwad dynasty and the obstacles the Gaekwads faced from the Mughals, the Peshwa and the British in establishing an independent state of their own in Gujarat. Though the British were instrumental in formulating the Baroda State throughout the nineteenth century, the spadework in laying the foundation of the Baroda State was done by illustrious men like Pilajirao Gaekwad, Damajirao Gaekwad II, and Fatesingrao Gaekwad I and the British merely built the superstructure on this strong foundation by relieving the Gaekwad from the suzerainty of the Peshwa in the nineteenth century thus making it a sovereign state. But this would not have been possible had the early Gaekwads not been successful in liberating themselves from the subordination of the

¹ Indra Saxena, "The Early Gaekwads: History of the Baroda State from Pilajirao Gaekwad to Fatehsingrao Gaekwad (1720-1789)", Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, 1975, p. 173.

Dabhade family and in throwing over their claims in Gujarat in the eighteenth century. This makes the period from 1720 to 1789 a significant phase in the process of state formation in Baroda and the thesis of Indra Saxena is an important contribution in the study of this formative phase in the history of the Baroda State.

The second major work on the history of the Baroda State is another unpublished Ph.D thesis from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda written by Tara Thyagarajan and submitted in 1988. The thesis is titled **‘Political Relations Between the Gaekwads of Baroda and the Peshwas of Poona: 1707-1818 A.D.’**

As is clear from the title the thesis is a study of the political events of the period 1707 to 1818 that is from the accession of Shahu in 1707 to the fall of the Maratha Empire in 1818. In this period tensions arose between the Gaekwads and the Peshwas for the control of the territories and the economic resources of Gujarat. Finally in the beginning of the nineteenth century during the reign of Anandrao Gaekwad the Gaekwads by signing the treaty of Subsidiary Alliance with the British East India Company in 1802 and the Definitive Treaty of Baroda in 1805 again with the British were able to gradually extricate themselves from the suzerainty of the Peshwa. Eventually the Third Anglo-Maratha War which led to the final rupture between the Peshwa and the British leading to the fall of the family of the Peshwa and the Maratha Empire made the Gaekwad a sovereign ruler.

The thesis of Tara Thyagarajan is an important contribution to understanding the history of the Marathas in general and the Baroda State in particular in the light of the Maratha-Brahmin animosity.

The Peshwas played an important role according to Tara Thyagarajan in extricating the Maratha State from the clutches of Mughal imperialism and hence Shahu made their post hereditary and handed over the sovereignty of the Maratha State to them. However, with the passage of time when they became the heads of the Maratha Confederacy they became egoistic and began a systematic campaign of suppression of other powerful chiefs of the Maratha Empire who had played an important role in expanding and consolidating Maratha power. This antagonized the Maratha *sardars* against the domination of the Brahmin party and led to the enfeeblement of the Maratha Empire.²

² Tara Thyagarajan, “Political Relations Between the Gaekwads of Baroda and the Peshwas of Poona: 1707-1818 A.D.”, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, 1988, p. 233.

Prominent among these Maratha *sardars* was the Gaekwad who held a grudge against the Peshwa from the days when he was a subordinate of the Dabhade family. He finally proved to be the nemesis of the family of the Peshwa who tried to bully him and on the ruins of the Peshwa became a sovereign ruler.

The thesis of Tara Thyagarajan highlights this relationship wonderfully.

The next important work on the history of the Baroda State is a published work which came out from the Nagpur University in 1977 written by Dr. (Miss) S.V. Kothekar titled *The Gaikwads of Baroda and the East India Company: 1770-1820*. It studies the relations of the Gaekwads of Baroda and the East India Company during the period of the three Anglo-Maratha Wars. It examines the centrifugal forces in the Maratha Empire of which the shrewd British diplomats took advantage to ruin the Maratha State and establish their paramountcy in Western India and how they used the Gaekwads as pawns in this contest. Although this work was published before thesis of Tara Thyagarajan I have examined the thesis of the latter first because the thesis of Thyagarajan examines the same question in the course of a larger time period i.e. from 1707 to 1818 and from a different perspective.

It can be said without a shadow of doubt that the argument of S.V. Kothekar that the role of the British in the Baroda State did more harm to the State than good and that it was better off under the suzerainty of the Peshwa is short-sighted and distorted. As will be proved in this thesis that the Peshwa extorted huge amounts of money as tribute from the Gaekwad rulers and subsequent to the death of Damajirao Gaekwad II each new Gaekwad ruler had to pay a hefty *nazarana* to the Peshwa to validate his succession. What Kothekar fails to take into account is that these extortionate demands of the Peshwa impoverished the Baroda State by the reign of Anandrao Gaekwad and plunged it into a financial and humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. According to Mani Kamerkar if the British aid would not have been sought by Raoji Appaji, the famous Prabhu minister of Anandrao Gaekwad, then the Peshwa, Holkar or Sindhia would have annexed the Baroda State.³

The reason behind my disagreement with S.V. Kothekar's work is not because it is poorly researched but because it is a biased account of Anglo-Gaekwad relations during the three Anglo-Maratha Wars and intends to manipulate the established narrative on Anglo-Gaekwad

³ Mani Kamerkar (1980), *British Paramountcy: British-Baroda Relations, 1818-1848*, p. 7.

relations written by scholars like James Grant Duff, R.D. Choksey, V.K. Chavda and M.S. Commissariat and her narrative is colored by ultranationalism instead.

Another reason behind my disagreement with her is that she does not explore how this relationship shaped beyond 1820 and how after the settlement was reached between the Governor of Bombay, Sir James Carnac and Sayajirao Gaekwad II in 1841 this relationship blossomed and benefitted the Baroda State in the long run. After this settlement the only unfortunate episode was that of Malharrao Gaekwad and subsequent to his deposition the Baroda State prospered under the administration of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and Sayajirao Gaekwad III and became one of the wealthiest princely states of India. All this as will be explored in this thesis would have been impossible without British intervention at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Moreover, had the British not been interested in promoting the cause of the Baroda State the Union Jack would not have been hoisted half-mast and the salute of 26 minute guns been given to Fatesingrao Gaekwad II on his death on 23 June, 1818. The firing of 26 minute guns was equal to the age of the Regent when he died. This was despite his strained relations with the British during the later years of his Regency.⁴

The next important work on the history of the Baroda State was written by the former Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mani Kamerkar, titled *British Paramountcy: British-Baroda Relations, 1818-1848* published in 1980. The work of Mani Kamerkar examines Anglo-Gaekwad relations during the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad II, a period which has been less studied by scholars. The work traces how British paramountcy affected a proud and independent ruler like Sayajirao Gaekwad II who had ultimately to concede to the demands of the paramount power.

Mani Kamerkar's work provides an insight into how the British established paramountcy over Indian princely states during the course of the nineteenth century by doing a case study of Baroda. The British aggrandized their power in Gujarat through the institution of guarantees and by constant intervention in the internal affairs of the Baroda State. This became particularly rampant during the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad II. Although the monarch fought tooth and nail against British intervention, the institution of guarantees and tried to assert control over his tributaries in Kathiawar, Mahikantha and Rewakantha by 1840

⁴ Kamerkar, *British Paramountcy*, p. 19.

he was reduced to mere cipher and shown by the British where the real power lay. As a result during the last seven years of his reign Sayajirao Gaekwad II became subservient to British power.⁵

In a similar manner the British made all the Indian princely states subservient to their interests and ultimately all of them became puppets in the hands of the British who used them to exhibit their power and glory. In other words the princely states became mere instruments of British imperialism. According to Mani Kamarkar, the fact that the princely states enjoyed sovereignty is an illusion.⁶

One of the most important works on the history of the princely states of India is written by Manu Bhagavan and published in 2003 titled *Sovereign Spheres: Princes, Education and Empire in Colonial India*. The book examines two princely states of colonial India, Mysore and Baroda who appropriated the British ideas of good governance and (Western) education and remolded them into modern but ‘native’ or non-colonial forms *ipso facto* representing a hidden transcript of resistance. The good governance made them ‘model states’ and ‘progressive reforms’ in the field of education a hidden transcript of resistance to colonial rule. They did this by demanding their own universities and discursively deploying them as modern and non-colonial. In short, Manu Bhagavan writes about the nuanced ways of princely resistance to colonial rule.

Manu Bhagavan ends his study by concluding that we must not consider Mysore and Baroda to be ‘ideal progressive’ or ‘model states’ because they were constructions of “both the condescending paternalism of the colonial approach and the simplistic sycophancy of the nationalist, and reinterpret these states as contested sites struggling with complex and competing agendas of both domination and resistance”.⁷

I tend to disagree with this postulation. Irrespective of whether it was a construct of the condescending paternalism of the colonial enterprise or the simplistic sycophancy of the nationalist discourse, the fact that the two states made progress during the period of colonialism albeit through a process of reclamation of Western notions and as an act of resistance to the fabric of colonial enterprise as Manu Bhagavan writes they nevertheless made ‘progress’. They succeeded in initiating progressive reforms, building modern

⁵ Kamarkar, *British Paramountcy*, pp. 229-230.

⁶ Ibid., p. 230.

⁷ Manu Bhagavan (2003), *Sovereign Spheres: Princes, Education and Empire in Colonial India*, p. 181.

institutions and developing modern infrastructure in the face of British opposition itself is proof of the fact that they were model states and befitting to be called ideal progressive states. Moreover, as further evidence of my antithesis to the claims made by Manu Bhagavan the reclaimed reforms of the two states also addressed caste, class and gender inequities within their societies. Notwithstanding that these reforms were initiated with the intention of challenging the notion of colonial modernity and constructing an Indian modernity they were initiatives towards modernization which were both ideal and progressive and this proves that Mysore and Baroda were not only modern but model states and fit within the realm of ideal progressive princely states of British India.

Of all the literature on the Gaekwads of Baroda examined above and also stated while delineating the theme in the beginning of the introduction no historian has studied state formation at Baroda and elucidated the role played by the British in the process during the nineteenth century and this is the vacuum in the historiography which I want to fill through this thesis.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter describes the struggle among the various Maratha *sardars* for the right of levying *chauth* in Gujarat. The chapter delineates the adventures of Pilajirao Gaekwad and his struggle to obtain the right of levying *chauth* in Gujarat; the battles he fought for obtaining this right against his fellow Maratha *sardars*, the Mughal viceroys and the Peshwa.

The chapter covers the period from 1720 to 1732 i.e. the reign of Pilajirao Gaekwad and the commencement of the twilight of the Mughals and the weakening of their hold over Gujarat. The chapter ends with Pilajirao Gaekwad's success in obtaining the *chauth* of Gujarat after a battle with Peshwa Baji Rao I in 1731 and the title of *Sena Khas Khel* or 'commander of the special band' or 'leader of the sovereign's band' and his assassination at Dakor in 1732.

The second chapter covers the period from 1732 to 1805 i.e. from the commencement of the reign of Damajirao Gaekwad II to the commencement of the reign of Anandrao Gaekwad when the Gaekwads were struggling to establish some kind of an administrative set up.

The chapter describes how Damajirao Gaekwad II after consolidating the Baroda State was subdued by Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao to cede half of his dominions in Gujarat to him in 1752 in return for his help in expelling the Mughals from Gujarat which was accomplished by the combined armies of the various *sardars* of the Maratha Confederacy and the Peshwa by

1758. Though Damajirao Gaekwad II was forced to pay tribute to the Peshwa he did not pay it regularly till his defeat at the Battle of Dhodap in 1768 at the hands of Peshwa Madhava Rao I, the successor of Balaji Baji Rao.

Damajirao Gaekwad II died shortly after the Battle of Dhodap and following his death the Baroda State became a victim of family dissensions and succession disputes among the sons of Damajirao Gaekwad II and in a true sense a tributary of the Peshwa. It was the Peshwa who now issued a *sanad* and decided who would succeed to the *gaddi* of the Baroda State after the payment of a *nazarana* to him. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how British intervention saved the Gaekwad State from dismemberment at the hands of the Peshwa during Govindrao Gaekwad's reign and how subsequently in order to preclude the Peshwa's influence the famous Prabhu minister of Anandrao Gaekwad, Raoji Appaji first signed a treaty of Subsidiary Alliance with the British East India Company on 6 June, 1802 and then the Definitive Treaty of Baroda on 21 April, 1805 again with the East India Company which helped the Gaekwads in establishing an administrative set up with British aid.

The third chapter covers the period from 1805 to 1875 i.e. from the commencement of Anandrao Gaekwad's reign to the end of Malharrao Gaekwad's reign.

During this period British intervention led to the gradual waning of the Peshwa's influence on the Baroda State and by the Treaty of Poona signed between the last Peshwa Baji Rao II and the East India Company on 13 June, 1817, the Baroda State was recognized as a sovereign state because the treaty released it from the suzerainty of the Peshwa. The chapter also describes the Supplemental Treaty of Baroda signed between Anandrao Gaekwad and the East India Company on 6 November, 1817 and the subsequent surrender by the Gaekwad of his *haveli* and the Dascroi region in Ahmedabad to the Company which led to the consolidation of the British and Gaekwad territories in Gujarat. The chapter also describes the Third Anglo-Maratha War which led to the downfall of the Peshwa and the emergence of the Gaekwad State of Baroda as a truly sovereign state and the trials and tribulations of its relationship with the British after 1818.

The fourth chapter traces the career path of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, the steps he took to place the Baroda State in a sound financial position during the minority of Sayajirao Gaekwad III.

The reforms include the measures taken by him to liberate the Baroda State from the debt trap into which it had fallen owing to the deeds of the erstwhile regime. The chapter also delineates the bad shape in which the Baroda State was and what an uphill task it was for the Diwan to rebuild it from scratch.

The other reforms of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao delineated in this chapter include those in land revenue administration and the curtailment of the power of the *sardars*, the building of a standing army, courts of law, schools and libraries, abolition of useless taxes, burning down narrow insanitary alleys and building clean rows of houses at Government cost etc.

Notable among the achievements of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao was the building of the Kamati Bagh, the construction of the Gaekwad Baroda State Railway (GBSR) and the Huzur Court.

The chapter also discusses the problems which the Baroda State faced regarding the production of salt, cultivation of opium and the manufacture of its own arms and ammunition with the British during the tenure of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and how he tackled these problems.

The chapter also mentions the draft constitution based on the principle of constitutional monarchy prepared by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and concludes with an assessment of his personality and his contributions to the building of modern Baroda.

The fifth and last chapter covers the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III and traces how the Baroda State attained maturity during his reign through the provision of public welfare and its ambivalent relationship with the British Government to finally emerge among the most progressive of the princely states of India.

The chapter is concerned with the building of modern infrastructure which the Baroda State undertook during the reign of this Maharaja. The State introduced a modern education system with the opening of the Baroda College in 1882 and Baroda became the first state in India to build its own railways which covered 707 miles by 1934-5.

The Baroda State also became a patron of trade and industry and the Bank of Baroda was set up to finance industrial projects. By the end of the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III Baroda city was second only to Ahmedabad in terms of industrial development. Industrial development also led to the growth of an urban middle class in Baroda city, and Baroda began to be counted among the more progressive princely states of British India.

Research Methodology

I am an ardent admirer of the West and Western notions of democracy and capitalism. In other words I am ideologically inclined towards Eurocentrism. Therefore the sources I have used for the writing and analysis of the theme of my Ph.D thesis and the research methodology adopted is Eurocentric. Thus the reign of every monarch of the Gaekwad dynasty is construed from an Anglo-centric and European perspective.