

CHAPTER XIVASPECTS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGESDURING 1860-1900

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SECTION I

Below the level of political and administrative changes, were the changes that were taking place in society and in economy. These changes that were largely the result of the policy and measures of the rulers from time to time, had a two fold direction and a varying pace.

Broadly speaking, the direction during the years 1860-1875 was one of decline and the pace of this decline fairly rapid. Economic conditions deteriorated and with it, the condition of the agriculturists.

From 1875, the direction, or more so the pace changed. The movement towards deterioration was checked to quite an extent and positive trends of improvement were to be seen. A change in a positive direction is not expected to be so marked in so short a time. What is more marked and noticeable is the slackening in the pace towards deterioration since 1875.

It would be useful now to draw a sketch of the direction and the pace from time to time under the different rulers.

1860-70 : Khanderao Gaekwad :

During the period of Khanderao Gaekwad there appeared to be a possibility of improvement in the material condition of the people. That was owing to the high prices of agricultural goods as an impact of the American civil war, during the years 1861-1865. In fact this was the period when industry entered with force into the market and demanded commercial instead of food crops.

But the improvement in material condition did not ensue owing to the taxation policy of the ruler whereby the cultivator was left with only a bare margin for a subsistence economy. And whatever little prosperity there was during the years referred to, waned rapidly after 1869 when prices fell at the end of the civil war. The prices fell but the agriculturists were still required to pay the same high demands that they had paid earlier.

It was in these circumstances that conditions deteriorated and the direction towards impoverishment set at a fairly rapid pace. For the demands could no longer be paid from the poor returns from the sale of goods, and the cultivator was driven into the hands of the moneylenders for payment of that demand. The moneylender's rate of interest coupled with poor prospects in agriculture,

increased indebtedness and led to the alienation of land from the hands of the cultivating classes to the hands of the non-cultivating ones, by mortgage and sale. Moreover there was also a desertion of land because of the migration into the neighbouring British districts where the demand was lower. That resulted in large tracts of culturable waste in the Gaekwad districts.

The evils of the transfer of land by forced sales, as is generally the result of high demands¹, must also have begun now. What happened in the process, therefore, was that the control of land actually passed to less efficient management with a long lasting damaging effect on economy - not to speak of the accompanying social tension caused by the subjugation of land owners and cultivators to merchants and money lenders. Thus, there was social mobility taking place, but it was unhappily, a vertical one with a downward trend for the cultivating classes. Further the gap between the agrarian sections of society was not wide, for all were indebted

The direction of change in these years, was, therefore, a negative one.

1. W.C. Neale : 'Economic change in Rural India; Land reform in Uttar Pradesh, 1800-1955, New Haven and London Yale University Press, 1962.

To this period also belongs the beginning of the sub-division of holdings as the cultivators under the bighoti system found it difficult to pay for the large tracts they held.

Another aspect of economic change, but one which appeared to be healthy, was the change in crop pattern. With the encouragement that cotton cultivation had got during the years of the civil war, and with the markets that Indian cotton continued to have in Europe even after 1869, led to the extension in cotton cultivation in the country. Slowly cotton started encroaching upon land that had hitherto been under food crops, grass and pastures. The impact of the civil war, therefore, coupled with the change from kind to cash payment, led to the commercialisation of agriculture. And such commercialisation was a step forward from the earlier limited production, for it brought about a slightly better distribution of the crop and increased the profits of cultivation.

The increasing influence of cash crop economy was healthy for it led to the monetization of the state economy and the many healthy all-round influences with exposure to the outside world through trade.

The evil side of this commercialisation, according to one scholar, must have been the disruption of the old unity of agriculture and industry in the traditional Indian village.²

Such were the changes in society and economy during the years 1860-70.

Malharrao Gaekwad - 1870-75 :

The direction of growth, in the negative direction set in motion in the preceeding period since about 1869, gained momentum during the years 1870-75.

As indebtedness increased, as cultivators were forced to give up and desert their lands and as they were squeezed by official pressure into the payment of demand, social tensions increased and the symptoms of poor economy as seen earlier, grew more intense. The intensity grew in these times owing to the high degree of personal and irresponsible rule of Malharrao Gaekwad. Moreover, as this period was engaged essentially in political entanglements, such as have been discussed in the preceeding section, much less attention was paid to economic and social problems of the time.

The developments, therefore, during these years were negative as well as rapid until the time of the dewanship of Dadabhai Naoroji when there was temporary relief.

2. A.R. Desai, "Transformation of Indian Agriculture under British", op.cit.

Dewan T. Madhavrao - 1875 - 1881 :

From 1875, the direction of developments changed or more correctly, the pace of deterioration was somewhat punctuated. Hence the period of dewan T. Madhavrao may be considered to be the gestation period in the history of the state's economic development. The improved organisation of the state giving better stability and security and improved facilities as seen in the reductions made in the arrears of revenue written off, and the remissions granted, did relieve the cultivators and restore confidence, so that interest in cultivation was restored. As a result, a bid was made to take up waste lands for cultivation invest in agriculture and so extend agriculture.³

No doubt, the movement towards recoupment in the social-economic conditions was slow. And that was on account of two important factors viz., the inadequate reductions and the famine that intervened in 1877. But for these two factors, the recovery would have been faster and more apparent.

3. The increase by 15.7% of persons engaged in agriculture, during the years 1872-1881 is attributed to the measures, of the dewan, and to be fixed during the years of the dewan's administration. Navsari shows the highest percentage increase in population i.e. of 17%. In Baroda the increase was small i.e. Rs. 50.5%.

It may be noted that the increase in population by 9% in these years specified, corresponds with the increase in agriculture, hence the low figure for the Baroda division. Report on the Census of the Baroda territories, 1881, p. 228.

Whilst the measure of the dewan of giving immediate relief to the cultivating classes, revived them somewhat, the gradual extention of bighoti or assessment in cash, in place of the assessment in kind, affected economy in another way. The process of monetization in economy, started during the rule of Khanderao Gaekwad, was furthered.

This change from grain to money rent was facilitated by three factors. One, the increase in the number of cultivators and of holdings, which made it increasingly difficult to collect the revenue in kind. Two, the increase of coined money, as mints were organised, and produced more; and three, the increase of commercial crops grown for export which made cumbersome and impractical the quick disposal of crops to market.

Conditions more conducive to the free play of the cultivator's enterprise, were created with the replacement of the izara system by direct government management in certain places, and the regulation of the izara system in those areas where it did continue. These factors, along with the reductions and the change from grain to money-rent, left more capital at hand and made increased ventures in cultivation possible. In fact it was the money payment that led to the gradual affacement of the old times on which the rural society had been constructed. There would have been little or no competition for land where the produce was divided by shares, but

with cash rent the value of land paying the same amount could diverge, since 'rent by nature of product very imperfectly understood - outsiders could be tempted to bid for a more valuable farm'.⁴

The period of dewan T. Madhavrao, therefore, created the possibilities for development in agriculture industry, marketing and trade, and hence the possibilities of a more rapid change towards a modern capitalist economy. All these are evidenced in the increased urbanisation of certain areas as reflected by the increased town population of these areas, since 1872.⁵

Certain areas of course, show a decrease in town population,⁶ but that goes to show the increased prospects in agriculture in the hinterland of these towns.

They are also evidenced in the overall increase in persons occupied⁷ indicating improved employment opportunities and prospects in these times.

4. W.C. Neale, op.cit.

5. In 21 out of the 33 towns in the entire state, the increase in town population ranged from 28.4% in Balsina to 0.18% in Dubhoi, 24% in Bardoli, Unjha and Dwarka; 17.7% in Walam; 12% in Mehsana; 10% in Umita; 6% in Chanasma; 5% in Vasso, Savli and Kalol; 4% in Patan and Kheralu; 3% in Visnagar; 1.5% in Navsari; and 2% in Nar. P. 287, Cf. footnote 64 Chap. II.

6. The decrease ranged from 15.5% in Sankheda to 0.2% in Kadi and Sidhpur; 15% in Amreli; 10.42% in Sojitra; 9.13% in Baroda city; 5.8% in Pihej; 4.7% in Petlad; 3.9% in Padra; 3.08% in Vadnagar and 1.3% in Gandevi.

7. Ibid.

In 1872 40.35% were occupied whereas in 1881, 46.05% were occupied, pp.206, Cf. footnote 64 Chap. II.

The change in society is to be seen in the growth of a merchant class of traders, and of the bureaucracy, with the new orientation in recruitment of officers for administration.

1881-1884 - the End of the Century : Sayajirao III :

A perceptible change in the social economic condition of the people of the state is to be seen after the first scientific settlement of land revenue that brought in a very moderate and equitable rate, in the last two decades of the century.

Changes in economic conditions and economy :

A chain reaction in the direction of progress was set in motion primarily by the reduction in demand and the accompanying beneficial measures with it. For they enabled a better margin of capital at hand for one thing, and the application of that capital in the extension of the agricultural and other enterprise on the other. Thus there was an apparent change in the landscape with the recovery of culturable waste and the extension of commercial crops as cotton, tobacco and sugarcane. These do evidence the progress in economic condition.

As prosperity increased the capital at hand was directed to industry and trade so that cotton ginning mills particularly, sprouted and the traffic in goods gained momentum. And

villages that had hitherto produced for a self sufficient economy now produced a surplus for export. There was, therefore, the accompanying growth in markets and development in the village hinterlands.

The reduced demand upon land and the facilities provided, strengthened the resource base for increased and better investment, so that one finds, about the end of the century and the opening of the new one, that while agriculture was the main industry, other industries providing the outlet for capital as well as excess labour force, also grew. And that, in fact, was the general trend from 1875 onwards, wherein a successive increase in revenue from sources other than land is to be seen.⁸

8. Note: The percentage increase/decrease of revenue from land and other sources. The percentages have been calculated from the figures available in the files given below.

	1874- 1875	1875- 1876	1876- 1885	1885- 1886	1887- 1888	1888- 1889	1889- 1890
Land Revenue	92.0%	77.5%	86.4%	87.2%	88.1%	88.2	88.0
Other sources of revenue	7.9%	22.4%	13.9%	12.7%	11.8%	11.7	11.9

	1890- 1891	1893- 1894	1894- 1895	1897- 1898	1898- 1899
Land Revenue	87.7	86.3	87.7	87.2	86.9
Other sources of revenue	12.2	13.6	12.2	12.7	13.0

Administration reports of revenue departments :

<u>Years</u>	<u>Dafter No.</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Dafter No.</u>	<u>File No.</u>
1875	107	632	1888-89	109	634
1876	107	631	1889-90	109	634
1884-85	109	634	1890-91	107	631
1885-86	109	634	1893-94	109	634
1886-1887	109	634	1894-95	109	634
1887-88	109	634	1897-98	109	634
			1898-99	109	634

It was in these years of stabilized government that the value of land increased, the subtenants increased and the rents rose high. Agriculture now being more profitable, land fetched a better price specially in the circumstances of more capital in the hands of the people. Moreover, the rents of lands on rent too, were high and the large landholders only too willing to rent out their holdings, hence the subdivision of land and the increase of tenants. These explain the phenomenon of the increase in subtenants and the increased value of land and the high rents.

For the aspect regarding the value of land, one more point remains to be said. If the value increased from the point of view of an individual's economy, it also increased from the point of view of the state's economy. For land, which had earlier been a means of consolidating political power for the state, now became an instrument of strengthening the economic and social base of the state. That was done by the new economic value attached to land, the basis of the agricultural industry instead of land being considered and used primarily as an instrument of rewarding the officers and nobility of the state. This itself was a notable change from the past.

Another feature of the period under discussion, though not anything new but certainly more intense, was the sub-

division and fragmentation of the operational holding. And ✓
 an important factor responsible for that was the notable
 increase in population that affected a division in the
 family property.

It would be incorrect, however, to assert that all
 the economic change was for the good. There was still a
 parallel trend towards decline, an unhappy trend no doubt.

The new proprietary right in land given to the culti-
 vators, was an important land reform development of the
 1880s, but it had to some extent a retrogressive effect
 upon agrarian economy. Overnight, it made land a commodity
 for purchase and sale, and a security, reliable as well as
 attractive for the moneylender. The latter, only eager to
 acquire land in these times could thus enforce sales in
 return of debt. For, "it is in the existence of security,
 and power over that security which induces the moneylender
 to expand his operation. It is the possibility of raising
 large sums by pledging his land that induces the land lord
 to borrow and spend on a previously unknown scale."⁹ Thus,
 the people, unfamiliar with the new forces, incurred more ✓
 debt and slowly lost land to a class having little interest
 in cultivation and little knowledge of the problems of
 cultivation.

The misuse of the opportunity presented by the market,
 increased indebtedness resulting in land transfers by sale

9. W.C. Neale (op.cit.) p. 87.

and mortgage. For instead of using the power to pledge land as security in order to mobilise resources for increasing productivity, the borrower used the money he could raise for paying inflated prices of land in order to acquire the prestige associated with land ownership, and for consumption expenditure frequently for marriage or other ceremonial occasions. And as the expenditure of the money raised did not provide means for its own repayment, repayment could come only from new savings for which the borrower had made no provision. The result was a large volume of burdensome debt leading to foreclosure, forced sales and the reduction of the borrower, the owner who borrowed, to the status of a tenant. The purchaser of the right on land was invariably the moneylender or merchant i.e. a non-cultivator. This process explains the large figures of lands sold and mortgaged, and the high degree of indebtedness in the next century, as discussed in the main text of the thesis.

It must be mentioned that the process discussed went ahead unhindered by any legislation during the period, regarding the prevention of transfer of land.

Changes in society and social conditions :

Allied to the economic changes were the changes in society, whose trends corresponded with those of the improving and deteriorating trends seen for the economic aspects.

Thus the extension of agricultural enterprise saw on one hand, the increase of large or big land holders, specially among the Kanbis who used the opportunities to buy land; and on the other, the corresponding increase of small ones, i.e. of those who sold their lands in consequence of two factors - the inability to maintain their large erstwhile holdings, and the new attractive prices offered.

An unhappy feature of the increased value and competition of land and the new right to ownership of land was thus, - the reduction of many a big landholder to a small one, and the ejection of many a ryot, the other. The latter happened on two accounts viz. the absence of a definition of title of the holding in some cases, and the inability to pay for the holding.

The increase of tenants in the period has already been referred to. The difference being that now the managers had not to seek for tenants, for the people themselves came forward asking for lands on lease for purpose of cultivation.

The other class which had emerged earlier, but which grew more rapidly in the last two decades, was of the trader, viz., merchants (grain dealers) and the intermediaries (brokers) dealing between the traditional cultivator and the market, and entrepreneurs investing in industries connected with textiles as ginning, weaving and dyeing.

The growth in number of these middle men was a circumstance created by the growth of markets for the cultivator. The latter, confined as he was to his limited set up had little or no understanding of markets which demanded almost a new kind of behaviour from him i.e. cultivation tuned to the demands of an all India and international market.

Mention may be made of the increase and extension of the means of communication by roads and railways which facilitated the transit of goods and in consequence the growth of markets.

Among the middle classes are to be included the growing educated classes with opening of schools and other educational institutions in the state; and the public servants engaged in administration with the growth of bureaucracy.

If there was the phenomenon of classes having improved their assets and social status, there was also the phenomenon of certain classes having deteriorated and got increasingly impoverished. And by and large the groups falling in the latter category were the poorer class of cultivators and the lesser landholders whose small uneconomic holdings and unthought of expenditure got them entrapped in the moneylender's web with the new bait of occupancy right in their own hands. In these circumstances, it was the moneylender who flourished.

This process of growing impoverishment was hastened by, - one, the absence of adequate state credit agencies that could have taken care of the entire lot of these classes, and two, the absence of any land legislation restricting the passing out of land from the hand of the cultivating classes.

Social mobility is therefore, one of the features of the period under discussion. ✓

A Note on the nature of changes :

Summing up the social economic changes it would be said that in some respects the changes were radical, and in others, not so. They were radical in certain aspects of administration, and in certain aspects of land revenue system viz., the complete elimination by the end of the century, of izara and bhagbatai, and in the new land ownership right conceded to the cultivators respectively. How all these affected economy and society has already been discussed at some length.

The changes in society were substantial for the gap among the agricultural community increased, owing to one class getting richer and the other poorer. That too has been dealt with.

Finally the pace and direction of these changes too differed with the times - being very clearly, a negative one till about 1875, and a positive one from then onwards.

SECTION II

A SUMMING UP OF THE LEVERS OF CHANGE AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE.

The present study brings to light certain significant levers of change that affected the socio-economic condition of the state during the years 1860-1884 and after.

And one, among them, which may be considered to be a potent one, was the government policy of taxation and the ruler's attitude towards the state. Thus, when prior to 1875 the ruler's outlook was one of keeping his own treasury full at the cost of the economic strain upon the people, conditions worsened. Because of high demands, the cultivator was left with a margin bare enough for subsistence - a situation that restricted and dampened his enthusiasm to work, much less to invest in agriculture. For agriculture being unremunerative, the cultivators became indifferent to it. And the social-economic condition of the individual cultivator deteriorated as he was driven to increasing indebtedness on account of the payment of government demand. Thus the two needs of having to maintain themselves as well as the fulfilling of government demand, prove the cultivator into the money-lenders hands, which in its turn led to a growing impoverishment.

And it was only after 1875, when the ruler by his reduced demand allowed the cultivator a better share of his labour, that things improved, and the cultivating classes were properly motivated.

The lack of capital, contributed both by the factor discussed above and also the social customs and habits of the people, was another factor that affected economic progress, This lack of capital which made any investment impossible was the factor leading to the next one of indebtedness, which was a cause as well as a symptom of the poverty that existed.

Indebtedness, in fact, was 'a serious evil' and malady ✓ of the times.¹⁰ The poverty of people led them to incur debts for bare economic and social necessities. In these times with no state credit agencies for advancing loans, they had to depend on the moneylenders who levied high interest rates of over 10% in most areas. If for agriculture to prosper, it was observed, the rate of interest be below 7%, one could imagine the degree of indebtedness and understand the process of sales and transfers of land¹¹ when the rate was over 10% as

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10. Report of Famine Commission 1880, Part II, Chap.III, Section IV, Paras 1-16. File No.630, 954, AG & I 1895 pp.22-27. Selection from Papers on indebtedness and land transfers. 1895, NAI.
 11. In 1920s, studies on indebtedness and problems of rural finance revealed the same. Banking Enquiry Committee 1929-30, Vol.4, Evidence Printed at government Central Press, Bombay, 1930, Central Secretariat Library, New Delhi.

mentioned. It was during the repayment of the accumulated interest along with the principal, that land passed out of the hands of the cultivating classes. Hence the assertion "... A very large proportion of the agricultural population is born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt,"¹² and the phenomenon of serfdom and the rise of the agricultural proletariat.¹³

Lack of rural finance and the concentration of rural finance in the hands of merchants and money lenders, and the unequitable allotment of burden, in the agricultural sector, were thus the powerful factors standing in the way of economic progress. The economic helplessness of the peasant was consistently exploited, and did much damage to the agricultural community.

All these were also factors that affected adversely, the techniques of production, and the modes of cultivation, and they brought about the household subsistence economy orientation of the peasant. If in these circumstances the production of Indian agriculture i.e. the yield per acre, was low, it is not surprising.

12. Chap. IV, Agricultural indebtedness Report of Banking Enquiry Committee 1929-30. Vol. I, Bombay, p.38 printed at the Government Central Press, 1930. Central Secretariat Library, Delhi.

13. A.R. Desai, : "Social Consequences of the Transformation of Indian Agriculture" op.cit.

Stability in government was another factor affecting the socio-economic environment. It was the instability of government and the general insecurity of the times prior to 1875 that had made the people lose confidence in the government. That in its turn made future planning in respect of their business, well nigh impossible. With the frequent fluctuation in demand and the slow progress in administrative changes and land revenue systems, a kind of uncertainty must have prevailed - an uncertainty that inhibited the initiative and the desire to put in their efforts and enhance their enterprise. That is why, for the lower cadre of cultivators it was easier to leave the Gaekwad districts and go into the more stable and secure British territories which had the added attraction of a moderate land tax.

With the improved stability and a better deal being given to the agriculturists after 1875, the morale of the cultivators was once again boosted and the direction of forces subsequently changed.

While, among the factors responsible for the changes in economic and social conditions were the acts of commission, and omission of the ruler, there were also certain others, as inherent defects in the system and incidental factors that played a significant role in affecting these changes.

Among the latter group fall the peculiarities of the land revenue systems as the bhagbatai assessment and the izara system. Owing to the existence of the former till such time it did, the benefits and value of cash payment and monetization in economy could not be felt. And till such time as the latter viz., the izara system continued, the cultivators were exploited and harassed.

The increase in population¹⁴ also was a significant

14. Population increase in Newsari Division talukas :

(1) Increase in population in Navsari taluka from 46624 in 1881 to 51945 in 1891, to 58233 in 1901.

Revision settlement Report, Navsari taluka, 1907.

(2) In Gandevi taluka it increased from 29683 in 1881 to 32813 in 1891, Appendix V, Revision settlement Report 1907-08, op.cit. p. 17.

(3) In Vyrara taluka, it increased from 47092 in 1881 to 52568 in 1891, No, 5423, op.cit. p.4.

Population increase in Amreli Division.

(1) The growth in population of the grant from 1874-75 to 1877-78 was 12.9% despite the famine year of 1877; and in the Amreli Panchmahals it was of 14.4% and in Okhamandal of 2.6%.

Annual adm. Report of Prant 1874-75, DN 107; File 632, and statement of population 1877-78, DN 7; File 2, Sarsuba Office, Jamabandi branch.

(2) The increase in population in the Amreli taluka during 1881-1901 was from 40,000 in 1881 to 49123 in 1891 to 53031 in 1901. Revision settlement report of the Amreli taluka, 1909, op.cit.

The increase in population from 1881-91 in the taluka according to another document was 22.8% DN 135, File 756, Sarsuba office, Political Branch.

Population increase in Baroda division.

(1) The annual population increase in the Baroda division was of 0.9% from 1875-76 to 1876-77, and 19.4% from 1879-80 to 1880-81.

Annual reports of Sarsuba Political Office of Baroda division, DN 106, FN 628, of the respective year.

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factor affecting social and economic changes. As the dependants in the family groups increased, the demands on the limited family income increased and with it the tensions in that unit. And this remained as such for a long time i.e. till alternative industries grew and absorbed the surplus from the agricultural industry thus relieving the pressure upon land. Thus population increase affected the state of affairs in as much as it facilitated the subdivision and fragmentation of land. In other words the holdings progressively became more uneconomic and social tensions increased further.

The habits and social customs of the people, slight as they might appear, were on the contrary a very effective factor in playing their role in the conditions that existed. Thus the absence of sound fiscal habits of saving and investment were a significant defect in society. For quite often, in fact most of the time, debts were incurred for defraying the cost of social engagements as marriages, deaths and

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(2) Increase in population in Sankheda taluka was of 9.4% from 1881-1892; in its peta mahal of Tilakwada it was of 23.5%. File 263/40, op.cit.

Population increase in Kadi prant.

(1) The density of population per sq.mile in the Kadi prant increased by 17.8% from 1879-80 to 1880-81; and by 0.7% from 1880-81 to 1881-82.

Annual report of the respective years. Files, DN 108; File 633, 634.

others. These debts, incurred for such unremunerative and unproductive purposes could seldom be paid for, so that indebtedness, for almost irrational purposes, increased, so that finally, land as well as other assets of the individual were mortgaged, sold and ultimately lost to the owner.

Yet another inherent defect in the economic set-up was the small uneconomic holdings due to the subdivision and fragmentation of land into small plots distributed all over the village. With difficulty only could these scattered holdings be managed by their owners, with scarce assets at their disposal. The problems, of moving with plough from field to field, of providing water from one agency to the various plots scattered all over and of managing with a limited staff and help were substantial in such conditions.

The uneconomic holdings i.e. holdings below the size that fully utilized labour, and equipment are, therefore, to be considered, when analysing these various factors in its relevant context. For it was a principle of agricultural economics that, "... large and compact holdings make profitable agriculture possible, whereas small and fragmented holdings render it uneconomic..."¹⁵

15. A.R. Desai : op,cit. p.13.

The sample study in the four villages of the Baroda and Kadi divisions show the large proportions of uneconomic holdings as well as the numerous plots or fragmented fields in each Khatedar's possession. That, in fact, was the case for the entire Indian agricultural scene.¹⁶

The other patent factor that affected a change in the social economic environment in the last two decades of the 19th century was the new land legislation or the property right granted to the cultivators. That made land a commodity for sale and purchase and so the best security to offer, therein making the cultivator the most eligible customer of the money-lender. While that was true for the whole of India, it was specially true for Gujarat and hence for the Gaekwad state.¹⁷

The absence of legislation preventing the transfer of land by sale was the one great deficiency, that, coupled with the new right, hastened unchecked the passing of land out of the hands of the agriculturists.¹⁸

Vissicitudes of season were certainly, in Indian

16. W.C. Neale, op.cit. p.152.

17. Report of Famine Committee 1880, Part II, Chap. III, Section IV, NAI, op.cit. p.23.

18. It may be noted that the 1st of the debt protection acts was in British India viz., in Oudh, in the post-mutiny period. W.C. Neale, op.cit. p.89.

economy, a factor affecting the fate of the agriculturists. Most regions of the Gaekwad state had suffered several times from either lack of rain or excessive rain, so that agricultural prospects had been seriously affected. Then came the severest of set backs from the faines of 1877, and that of 1899-1900. And as, in these times, there was a lack of adequate safegurds against drought and excessive rain, the situation could not be controlled.

All these were, therefore, the deterrents to progress in agriculture and economic conditions. With the gradual effacement of these deterrants, a corresponding change came about in the social economic scene.

One factor, last but not the least, was the railway. Railways in fact were a powerful factor of change in economy as well as society in modern India.

In respect of the social economic change in the Gaekwad state during the years 1860-1884, their importance while considerable, is not to be overestimated. The reason being that though the first railway came into the state in the 1850s, its extention over the state took a slow but consistent course. The benefits that thus accrued to the villages, towns

their hinterlands were gradual in coming¹⁹. Thus, to be more precise, the changes brought by railways were more effective in the last quarter of the century, when the extension of railways over the state was more rapid²⁰ and the coverage wider.

19. Note: The construction and extension of the 4 state railways of the Gaekwad state, R.C. Dutt Administration Report, Baroda State for 1902-03, op.cit. pp. 217-220.

(a) Dubhoi Railway - 1st opened by His Highness in 1873, on the narrow guage of the 2' - 6" system. The different branches of this line were opened as given below.

Dates	Section	Mileage
April, 1873	Miagam-Dubhoi	20.00
April, 1879	Dubhoi-Chandod	10.62
Sept., 1879	Dubhoi-Bahadurpur	9.64
July, 1880	Dubhoi-Goyagate	17.00
Jan. 1881	Goyagate-Vishvamitri	1.63
June 1890	Bahadarpur-Bodeli	12.77
July 1897	Vishwamitri-Padra	7.14
July 1903	Padra-Mahbha	9.20
Total		80.00

(b) Petlad Railway sanctioned in 1888 on the broad guage, 5' - 6" system.

May 1890	Anand-Petlad	13.17
June 1901	Petlad-Tarapur	8.33
Total		21.50

(c) Mehsana railway sanctioned in 1885 on metre guage.

1887	Mehsana-Vadnagar	20.73
1888	Vadnagar-Kheralu	7.00
1891	Mehsana-Patan	24.69
1891	Mehsana-Viramgam	40.21
Total		92.63

(d) Vijapur-Kalol (Kadi) Railway system came in the 20th.

20. Ibid.