

: CHAPTER - I :

INTRODUCTION

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The first quarter of the second half of the nineteenth century is a significant period in India. Subsequent to the Mutiny, political stability had been secured. Law and order had been established in most of the country and for at least a quarter of a century there were no major famines.

Even more significant was the fact that a new direction was being given to the Indian economy and society. The most important factor contributing to this change was undoubtedly the construction of the railways, which commenced in 1853 : the Railway lines stretched rapidly over the greater part of the country and by about 1880, the major trunk lines had been constructed. In 1869, the Suez Canal was opened, nearly halving time and distance between India and England. And among them came the American civil war - 1861-65 with its indirect yet significant effect upon Indian economy.

These were the powerful levers which initiated a process which was to bring about profound changes.

Studies in the Indian economy and society give a broad ✓ picture of this process, but a detailed evaluation of the changes

can efficiently be made only on the basis of in-depth studies which intensively cover a limited area. In the present study, therefore, an attempt has been made to describe, understand and analyse the changes which affected the state of Baroda during the period 1860-1884.

The hypothesis is, that changes took place during the years specified - changes that made the state of 1880s and later, took different from that of 1860s. Since the period of study belongs to the pre-industrial phase of the state's development, in fact also of the country's development, there has been an attempt to examine this process primarily in the field of agrarian production, agrarian taxation and revenue and agrarian relations. As Agriculture formed the base of Indian life and economy, changes have to be studied mainly in this context.

Further, an attempt has also been made to see the policies of the state government vis-a-vis the agrarian classes - especially in the matter of revenue.

In brief, this study is an effort towards understanding and analysing the factors which led to changes and the direction taken by these changes. Since attention has been focussed on the agrarian classes, the difficulties faced by

the peasant cultivators, their economic problems, the effort made by the state administration to rectify them, and their success or failure - these problems have been given special consideration.

As such, attention in this study has been focussed on the land revenue system of the Baroda State, on its over-all taxation policy, considerations which guided these policies, the social outlook of the peasant cultivators and its economic implications, the effect on agrarian economy of the expanding impact of national and international trade facilitated by the spread of the railways and the rise of markets.

The study covers the period 1860 to 1884. While the relevant developments during this period have been dealt with in detail, the course of events in some matters has been traced up to 1900 when the century ends. The year 1900, has therefore, been fixed as the outer limit of the study.

#### Organisation of Thesis :

The thesis has been organised on the following lines. The present introduction a part of Chapter I spells out the area, scope, focus and significance of the study along with the hypothesis and justification for the theme.

Then follow the various sections from I to VIII on the geographical description, on economy of the state, crops, markets and conditions in general in 1860; a description of society and its conditions; on land revenue systems - their features and their working as in 1860, on the revenue administrative structure as well as its working, on the political structure and relations with the paramount power as they were in 1860, a note on the taxation policy of the ruler in the mid 19th century, and the major developments of the different periods of rule and the reigns of the different rulers respectively.

After that, are the chapters on each division of the state as under its different rulers and administrators. Thus for each division and for each administrative period there is a chapter on Khanderao Gaekwad, Malharrao Gaekwad, administration of Dewan T. Madhaorao, and the rule of Sayajirao III. Thus chapters II to XIII fall in this division. The two additional sections in chapters IV and VII are on the sample study made of two villages from Baroda and Kadi prants.

In each of these chapters reference has been made to the conditions that existed when the ruler started his reign; the problems of the rulers; the policy and measures

enacted; a discussion of the measures enacted and the impact on society and economy of the measures and forces operating.

In this way it has been possible to trace the developments from 1860-1884 and after, in all divisions of the state, keeping in mind the peculiarities and the distinctiveness of the different areas; and of the different administrative periods in the study.

Then follows chapter XIV with two sections - one on aspects of social and economic changes 1860-1900, and the other on the lever of changes.

Finally is the conclusion, followed by a glossary of technical terms and maps.

Mention may be made of the sections on Malharrao Gaekwad in each division. Since there is not much which is significant in the context of the social and economic aspect in his period and since political crisis is its major feature, this period has been dealt with in only one section in each division. It was the political aspect of the conflict within the state that was the major feature of his period of rule, a feature touched upon in section VIII that would follow.

## SECTION I

The Baroda State, one of the princely states of India, was among the five first class states which enjoyed a 21 gun salute, the other four being Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore and Gwalior.

The ruler of Baroda was generally known as the "Gaekwad". That was a mistake hallowed by usage, for "gaekwar" was the family name and it had become as reasonable to speak of the 'Gaekwar' of Baroda, as of Bonaparte of France'.

### Extent :

The territories of this state of an area of about 8569 sq.miles lay between 20-45' and 28-9' N latitude, and between 70-42' and 73-59' E longitude. In the mid 19th C. these territories of the Gaekwad were interwoven with the districts of British India and with those of other states, so that their economy and society were one and the same. And that was specially true of the Gaekwad State, which of all the larger Indian states, had perhaps the most scattered and dispersed territories.

In respect of the intermixture with British districts it may be mentioned that it was a result of the treaty

engagements of the British with the Peshwa in the late 18th century, by virtue of which the former inherited the Peshwa's possessions in Gujarat and Kathiawar. This intermixture was particularly noticeable in the Baroda, Amreli and the Navsari divisions of the State.

The province of Gujarat has two well marked portions - the Kathiawar peninsula and the main land. Mid 19th century Gaekwad state was spread over these two portions. The main land or Gujarat proper was divided into three parts : North, Central and Southern parts. Each of these parts had a district of Baroda State, separated from the rest by British districts and by the territories of other states. The portion of Baroda state in Kathiawar, which formed the administrative unit of Amreli and Okhamandal, was a scattered Archipelago of the Gaekwad's rule, surrounded by a sea of jurisdiction other than that of Baroda.

These widespread and interspersed territories, extended from the northern extremity of the Thana district of the Bombay Presidency, to Palanpur in the North, and from the western limit of the Nasik district in the south-east to the extreme north-east of Kathiawar.

Divisions or Prants of the State :

The state had the four district and separate divisions of Amreli, Kadi, Baroda and Navsari. Of these, Kadi, Baroda

and Navsari prants were situated in Gujarat constituting the northern, central and southern divisions respectively; and the Kathiawar division, in the Peninsula, known as the Amreli division.

Baroda Prant :

The Baroda prant was relatively more compact and lay between the Mahi and the Narbada rivers. The Mahi was the north-eastern boundary and the Baroda British district, the western and the south western boundary of the prant. Its eastern boundary was formed by Chhota Udepur, the Panchmahals and a detached portion of the Rewa Kantha country called the Pandu Mewas.

Kadi Prant :

The main block of the prant was bounded on the east by the Sabarmati river, in the north-east by territories belonging to Mahi Kantha chiefs and on the north by the Palanpur state. To the north-west it touched Radhanpur territory; and its western boundary, proceeding southwards, touched portions of the Mahi Kantha territory, the lands of the chief of Katosan and the Virangam taluka of the Ahmedabad district. To the south the front touched the Virangam and Daskrori talukas of the Ahmedabad district.

Navsari Prant :

The greater part of the Navsari division lay to the south of the river Tapi, and was divided into two blocks by the Surat British district. One block, which may be briefly described as being near the sea, comprised the talukas of Navsari and Ganadevi. The inland block on the South of the Tapti which was divided into the talukas of Palsana, Mahuva, Vyara and Songadh, was bounded on the west by the Surat district and on the east by Khandesh. The south-east portion of this block of territory went into the Dangs, whereas the southern boundary ran along a portion of the Surat district and the Bansda state.

The inland block to the north of the Tapti comprised the Kamrej and Mangrol talukas and Vajpur block of the Songadh taluka and was bounded by parts of the Broach district and by the Rajpipla state on the north, and by parts of Khandesh on the east.

Amreli Prant :

The Amreli prant, in the Kathiawar Peninsula, consisted of blocks of territory of which Amreli, Dhari and Damnagar were fairly compact and the rest, Kodinar, Ratanpur, and Bhimkatta, detached. These talukas were bounded on the north and west by Jetpur and Junagadh, and on the east and south by Gohelvad. These talukas were broken up at intervals

by the possessions of semi-independent girassias.

Okhamandal :

Okhamandal lying between 22-5' and 22-35' N. Latitude, and between 69-5' and 69-20' E longitude, formed the north-west corner of the province of Kathiawad. It was bounded on the north by the gulf of Cutch, on the west by the Arabian Sea, and on the east and south by the Ran which separated it from Navanagar.

Physical Features :

(i) Principal rivers : The four principal rivers that water the Gaekwad territories are the Sabarmati, Mahi, Narmada, and Tapti in Gujarat. The rivers of Kathiawad are of inconsiderable size and not much use for agriculture. They had their tributaries, which also watered the surrounding lands.

(ii) Soil : The soils in the whole of the state were alluvial except in the hilly parts of the Navsari and Amreli districts and in the south-east corner of the Baroda district.

These alluvial soils of the state may be roughly divided into (1) gorat or sandy loan (2) Kali or black (3) soils formed by the intermixture of the two, called besar.

The soils of the Navasari and Baroda districts were principally gorat, black and besar. The black soil of Navsari was generally superior to the black soil of the other districts. Batha lands or lands formed in the beds of rivers from alluvial deposits were most productive and were often found in Navsari. In Kadi the soil was mostly of the light sandy kind. i.e. gorat, and there was not much of black soil. The soils of the Amreli district, excepting Okhamandal were mostly black and gorat, but the gorat there, was much inferior to the gorat of Baroda and Navsari. The black soil too was inferior here. The soil in the northern half of Okhamandal was light red and black. The coastline was sandy and unproductive, but inland it was fairly fertile Okhamandal, was barren and rocky and that is why cultivation was poor and negligible.

Rainfall :

The average annual rainfall ranged from 40-70" in the Navsari division, 30-50" in Baroda; 15-35" in Kadi and 13-30" in the Amreli division. Kathiawad had generally scarcity of rainfall.

Moreover, the rains were seasonal and temperamental so that it was not infrequent that rains were poor but crops

were not damaged, or that rains were excessive and floods took their toll.

## SECTION II

### ECONOMY OF STATE, CROPS, MARKETS ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, HOLDINGS:

Agriculture being the base of economy hence the main occupation, and villages being the centres of economic and social life<sup>1</sup>, most of the people were agriculturists.<sup>2</sup> The rest were engaged in trade, commerce, arts and crafts, professions and labourers either domestic or on land<sup>3</sup>. (The main source of income, being land, there was much pressure upon it, specially, about the mid 19th century as there were surplus dependents upon the land but no alternative industries to absorb them.

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1. Total number of villages in State 3011 and of towns 33 i.e. the percentage of towns was only of 1.08%. That village gave the maximum employment is seen in that out of the 46.5% occupied in all, 37.14% were in villages and 8.9% in towns. Report on the Census of the Baroda, Territories, 1881. Bombay 1883. Printed at Education Society's Press, Byculla.

2. Note the relative strength of each class.

Professional literate	7.6%	Domestic	1.7
Feudal Commercial trading	5.6	S ervice	
Agricultural	3.0		Depressed & aboriginnes
Artisans	26.0	Minor Professions	1,6 3.7
	8.6	Labour	
		Misc.	2.0

3. Ibid. Note figures.

Crops :

The climate and soil of the state permitted the cultivation of a variety of rabi and kharif crops ranging from cereals, pulses, oil seeds, fibres to miscellaneous garden crops. Of these, cereals occupied by far, the largest agricultural land, due to the low investment of labour involved in their cultivation. Some of the important cereals were juar, bajri (*pennisetum typhoides*) rice, wheat, kodra (*poa scrobiculata*) and bavto (*Eleusine coracana*).

Among them juar (*Andropogon Sorghum*) was the most important, specially in Kadi prant. When grown on lighter soils it was a Kharif crop and when in rotation with cotton, on black soil, it was a rabi crop. In the Baroda prant it was a rabi crop and in the greater part of Navsari and Amreli a Kharif crop.

Next in importance in cereals was bajri, which was the staple food of the masses. It was grown on sandy soil entirely as a Kharif crop. In Baroda prant it was rotated with Kodra, and with juar, cotton or rapeseed in Kadi prant. In the Baroda prant it was generally grown along with pulses and maize and cotton.

Rice, termed 'dangar' in the Baroda and Kadi districts,

'Kamod' in the Amreli division district, and 'bhat' in Navsari, ranked third in importance among cereals. It was a Kharif crop, specially important in the Baroda and Navsari districts and to a smaller degree in Kadi.

Wheat which occupied the fourth place among cereals, whether grown as dry or irrigated crop i.e. 'Jarayat' or 'bagayat', was a rabi crop.

#### Oil Seeds :

Oilseeds too formed an important crop and among them it was castor that took the lead. Large tracts of the Kadi and Amreli division were under castor oil crop. Rapeseed was another important oil seed and was grown principally in Kadi where it came next in importance to castor. It was rotated with cotton, bajri or juar. The other oil seeds were ground-nut and sunflower.

Pulses : Among the chief pulses grown were tuver, or arhar, math, wal, adad, or urd. Other pulses as gram and mag too were cultivated, but to a lesser degree.

Fihres : The black soil areas of the state provided good facilities for the cultivation of cotton - the premier fibre plant in the state. In fact this cash crop played a significant role in the economy of the period, as would be seen in the main text of the thesis.

Other cash crops : The other important cash crops were tobacco, opium and sugarcane.

Miscellaneous garden crops : The miscellaneous group of garden crops included ginger, chillies, garlic, and onions.

Regarding the pattern of cultivation, it is to be said in general about the 1860s, that economic conditions being poor, the cultivators found themselves growing crops needing less investment and labour. That is why bajri, juar and the poorer qualities of rice were a more common sight on the landscape. And cash crops as tobacco, cotton and sugarcane, requiring heavier investment and labour had a lesser acreage. Cotton, it might be stated, did not have the same popularity and value in 1860, as it came to have later i.e. the mid 1860s when it entered the stream of international trade. As for sugarcane cultivation, it was almost negligible, for reasons already stated.

Nature of economy :

The nature of economy was one of subsistence and self-sufficiency, so that the villages of the state, and indeed, of the country as such, produced for their own needs<sup>4</sup>.

Besides owing to poor market facilities as poor communications, negligible industrialisation, lack of capital, absence

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4. Note below the characteristics of village life, p. 16.

(contd...)

of surplus goods and other factors, marketing processes had not been set in motion and there were few big markets which had contact with stations beyond the state, much less beyond the country.

Markets :

Most of the time the needs of the villagers were met with at the weekly markets, and it was here that the surplus, whatever, was disposed of by the cultivator.

No doubt, there were certain market towns, most of them generally being the taluka or the district headquarters. They were Petlad, Baroda, Padra, Dabhoi, Sinore, Savli and Sankheda in the Baroda prant; Kadi, Sidhpur, Patan, Visnagar, Vadnagar and Kheralu in the Kadi prant; Navsari, Gandevi, Palsana, Kamrej, Vyara and Songarh and Billimora in the Navsari prant; and Amreli, Damnagar, Dhari, Kodinar, Okhamandal and Bet in the Amreli prant.

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Extract from Montagu Chelmsford Report, Ch.2. "Country side and the towns - predominance of agriculture". Indian statutory commission Report, Vol. I. Calcutta, Government of India Central Publication Branch, 1930.

Central Secretariat Library, New Delhi.

"Almost everywhere in India it would appear that .... the rural population has lived in small villages ... The urban population being relatively small the demand for agricultural produce for final consumption in towns is slight .... Circumstances, therefore, have combined to maintain ... a self sufficiency type of agriculture..."

Conveyances and Communications :

The pre-modern, agricultural society of the state of the mid 19th century conducted its trade activities by carts, and hence most of the time the links between villages and talukas were by way of cart tracts and only a few fair weather roads. These roads were impassable during monsoon season and for most of the year the villages tended to be isolated.

And as far as communication by means of railways is concerned, the first railway having started only in the 1860s, it was not as important and as effective a means of transport as the others were. It was only over the next few decades<sup>5</sup> when railways spread all over the state, that its impact was truly felt. Thus, villages, about the 1860s, were poorly connected and isolated, so that they were almost like islands confined to themselves.

Poor communication, thus, was one of limitations to rural progress.

Ports :

Some of the port towns of the state were Rupen in Okha and Mul Dwarka in Kodinar. These ports were fair weather

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5. The Dabhoi railway 1st opened in 1873 and its different branches in April 1873 (Miagam to Dabhoi); April 1879 (Dabhoi to Chandod); Sept.1879 (Dabhoi to Bahadarpur); July 1880 (Dabhoi to Goya gate), Jan.1881 (Goyagate to  
(contd...)

ports, and most of their trade was local. Then there were two other possible ports - Beyt in Okha and Velan in Kodinar.

The only important river port was the one of Billimora in the Navsari division.

Economic Condition:

The material conditions of the people in 1860 were poor and the level of economy was a subsistence level, to which a passing reference has just been made. On account of certain factors as the taxation policy of the ruler, the inherent defects in the land revenue system, the habits and social customs of the people and the absence of certain economic institutions as banks, all of which would be referred to a little later, the cultivating classes were in debt and their living conditions poor and they were just able to maintain themselves. That was true of the entire agricultural community, varying in degree from the better and skilled cultivators to the poor and unskilled ones.

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Vishwamitri); June 1890 (Bahadarpur to Bodeli); July 1897 (Vishwamitri to Padra); July 1903 (Padra to Mahuba);

Petlad Railway in 1888; May 1890 (Anand to Petlad); June 1901 (Petlad to Tarapore);

Mehsana Railway in 1885; 1887 (Mehsana to Vadnagar); 1888 (Vadnagar to Kheralu); 1891 (Mehsana to Patan); 1891 (Mehsana to Patan);

Vajapur-Kalol Railway in the 20th century, pp.217-220. R.C.Dutt Administration report Baroda State, 1902-03. Printed at the Times Press, 1900, Bombay.

And it was precisely because of their living from hand to mouth that their assets were poor, their dwellings poor, their diet poor and their tools and implements also poor.

Agricultural tools and implements/techniques :

It is the lack of capital and ignorance combined, that explains the kind of tools and techniques employed in the vocation. The agricultural tools and implements used in the different parts of the state were simple, in fact primitive, so that much output was in any case out of the question.

Some of these tools were the 'datardu', a sickle; 'Khurpi' used in weeding; 'Kodali', spade; 'Kuhadi', axe and others. Some of the implements were the 'hal' a light plough having on an average a working capacity of one bigha a day; 'Nagar', a heavy plough; 'Karab', a harrow; 'dansal' another harrow; 'Ghamio' used in puddling in Kyaris; 'seed-drill', used in sowing; 'Rampadi' a bullock hoe and others including several kinds of carts suited to the nature of the soil.

It has been acknowledged by many scholars on agrarian history and problems of India, that the lack of knowledge and the lack of incentive affected the cultivating pattern and the cultivating techniques and were in the limitation to rural progress.<sup>6</sup> Both these factors partly explain the self-sufficient nature of village economy in India as such.

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6. Cf. footnote 4 of chap. I.

With the kind of implements seen and the nature of holdings i.e. small and fragmented the methods and practices in cultivation were simple - not demanding much of the resources. Thus, though mixed cultivation was carried on, cultivation as such was neither intensive nor extensive. There was, moreover, little use of manure and irrigation - both these being expensive and not within easy reach of the cultivators. That is why crops as bajri, juar, needing less of both were preferred, and tobacco and sugarcane avoided.

Holdings and Value of Land :

Since reference has been made to the holdings, it would be worthwhile to say a little more on it. About 1860, the value of land being not as great as it was two decades later, the holdings were large but not fully utilised. The holdings above seventy bighas were few, whereas those holdings between ten to fifty bighas of land greatest. But these holdings were far from compact and were fragmented, being distributed over all parts of the village and even outside the village. Now it is clear, that with the poor technical know-how of the period and the almost primitive instruments at hand for agricultural operations, good, intensive and remunerative cultivation was not possible. So the practice was to cultivate only as much as could be done comfortably and for bare existence. In these circumstances one could feel

a kind of lethargy and disinterest in the profession, and understand the deficit utilization of land.

Sub-letting of Land :

Since it was not possible for a family to manage such distributed holdings, it is logical that land was let and sub-let and rents were taken. That was a convenient way of making the assets pay. However, in the mid 19th century, it is assumed, that rents were not high and the problems of tenancy also less, as land did not have the same value and the pressure on land was not as great as it became later.

In conclusion, therefore, the economic life of the people about 1860 centred around the village, as agriculture was the main occupation, in fact a way of life with the people. And in this way of life the cultivator struggled for his existence living <sup>on</sup> a subsistence level economy. This struggle was, further intensified by the struggle against nature viz. irregular or excessive rainfall that caused much damage and indeed affected agricultural operations. In fact the whole of the country was dependent on the Monsoon, and all major agricultural operations were fixed and lined by this phenomenon.<sup>7</sup>

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7. Cf. foot note 4 of Chap.I.

Agricultural operations were in the main carried on for bare maintenance and the payment of government dues. That is why living conditions were poor, and economy looked far from prosperous. Trade too followed its own mild and leisurly pace, being restricted mainly to an inter-village level.

Things about 1860, thus, secured to be just moving and there was little evidence or prospect of improvement.

### SECTION III

#### SOCIETY - CLASSES - CASTES

The different classes in the society of the State, could be seen from the convenient and relevant angle of occupational groups. These were the agriculturists, the landed nobility as have been classified as 'feudal', the professional class of servants/officers of the State and the literary class; the commercial and industrial class of weavers, artisans, craftsman and traders, and the miscellaneous groups of fishermen, navigators, domestic servants, mendicant class, and last but not the least, the preponderant depressed classes and the aborigines.

To each of these categories belonged both Hindu and Muslim communities and each had their own sub-divisions and sub-groups.

Among these classes, the agriculturists figured prominently since agriculture was the main occupation engaging well high three-fourths of the entire population<sup>8</sup>. However, when, well above one-fourth of that agricultural population were a class constituting the depressed and adivasis, most of whom would be landless, the economic condition of the agriculturists, in general, can well be imagined. For on one hand would be a large section of the agricultural population living in ~~subject~~ poverty and servitude, and the other owning or hiring land, but whose economic conditions were decidedly better as they shared amongst themselves the fruits of the labour of the former class. Though, however, the condition of the owners and servants was better in comparison with those of the labourers, it was not really a happy one, for, due to the taxation policy and the distribution of shares of produce, they were left with just enough for subsistence. Thus the agriculturists as such were not a prosperous class<sup>9</sup>.

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8. Cf. Foot note 2 of Chap. I. The categories of feudal class; agriculturists and the depressed and aboriginal class - all depended upon the income and produce from land.

9. "A very large proportion of the agricultural population born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt", p. 38: Ch. IV Agricultural Indebtedness. Report of the Bombay Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, 1921-30. Vol. I. p. 35. Bombay, Printed at the Govt. Central Press, 1930, Central Secretariat Library New Delhi.

Since the present study concerns itself with agrarian history and agrarian classes, it is the agricultural class that would engage our attention primarily.

Broadly speaking, the agriculturists were comprised of three categories, categories whereby we could classify them as economic groups as well.

Firstly, there were those having a direct interest in land being owners, viz. the landholders.

Then there was the other category of those whose interest in land was subordinate since they were tenants, sub-tenants and lease holders.

Finally there were the tillers of the soil, having no interest in land, they being farm labourers in permanent or long employ, and field, day labourers i.e. 'Majurs'.

Although clear cut categories of agriculturists have been drawn thus, the links and relationships with land were peculiar and complex so that performance on land was affected and agricultural development and progress in economy, hindered. How that was so is as follows :

In the first category were those landholders who belonged to the actual cultivating classes, and those who did not. That is, there were owners whose occupation it was to cultivate and owners who by reasons of political

expendiency and other allied factors, came to own land, though they had no connection whatsoever with cultivation or agricultural operations. It was with this latter group that the real problems of agriculture rested. For these owners, not knowing of the arts of cultivation themselves, let out land to actual cultivators. Their interest in land, therefore, remained only in the rent they got. In these circumstances, these landholders would not know much about the problems of the cultivator, but would make it a point to get their rent, whatever may be the odds of the cultivators. The non-cultivating owners, therefore, created tension and became a factor regarding the growth and development of agricultural enterprise.

The problems in the second category of agriculturists viz., tenants and leaseholders rested essentially in the nature of their claim on land. They worked on land, being invariably cultivators, for the maintenance of their family and in the absence of an alternative occupation. Since they had no ownership right, and since the land was not theirs, there was no abiding interest in land, save that of a living. Moreover, in the absence of fixity of tenure and instability of the times about 1860, there was an uncertainty that stood in the way of a tenant cultivator. Planning his agricultural operation and his crops, investment in agriculture and whole

hearted enthusiasm in the occupation, could thus hardly be expected in these circumstances.

As far as the third category of agriculturists is concerned, their interest in land was nil. They had only a mechanical relationship in that they were paid for their daily or fixed labour, and investment and love for the land, as such, had little meaning. However, with them, when tried beyond endurance, they would transfer themselves to another place and another owner.

Thus, with the landholders trying to secure their rents, unmindful of the difficulties of the cultivators; the tenants having to make both ends meet after paying the rent and the tax; and the labourers being exploited to the fullest in getting the maximum work out of them, the tensions amongst these classes were considerable and explain the fact of little or no progress in the economy of the times.

Related to the aspect discussed, is one factor that contributed to the tensions, or rather, enabled the tensions to occur. That was the institution of the money-lender. How the institution is related, is seen in that many a time the money lender belonged to the first category of agriculturists - the non-cultivating land-owners, to be specific. It was his operations, which in due course, enabled him to take over the land of the indebted party in repayment of

debt that made the moneylender a landowner as well. On account of the high rate of interest,<sup>10</sup> the indebted, unable to pay the compound sum, found themselves more indebted over the years, so that they had no choice but to sell their land and other assets, in payment of the cumulative debt. No doubt, this phenomenon and process increased in the years after 1860, as would be discussed in the chapters that follow..

As earlier stated, the moneylender's institution 'enabled' the debt to be contrived. For on one hand, was the 'need' of the cultivator that drove him to borrow and on the other, the sole source of borrowing viz., the money lender, who advanced the sum in these times when there was no organised credit and no state owned agencies to help out the financial difficulties of the cultivator. Thus well high ninety-five per cent of the capital was being advanced to the cultivators by these sahu-kars. By them, therefore, were the social and economic necessities of the agriculturists met with.

These moneylenders could be divided into two categories with reasonably distinct characteristics. The members of the

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10. The rate of interest in South Gujarat for instance was 12%, Report of Bombay Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, op.cit., p.53.

first group consisted of bankers and ~~sahukars~~ operating in the large towns. The dealings of this group were by and large honest, and the interest rate they charged was from 6 to 12 per cent.

The second group was composed of the village shopkeepers, traders and successful cultivators. They really drove hard bargains charging high rates of interest that ranged from 12 to 15 per cent. These people counted on receiving agricultural produce in lieu of 'principal' and 'interest'. That gave them the advantage of getting their dues back in kind and cash.

Identity of the agriculturists in terms of caste and other terminology :

Having seen the different groups in society and among the agriculturists themselves, we will now look at caste, and other demoninations they belonged to.

Agriculturists :

The communities engaged in cultivation in the state were the 'Kānbis', 'Patidars', Sheikh Muslims, Kolis, Rajputs and Bhils. Of these the Kānbis, Patidars and Sheikh Muslims were considered to be the best cultivators, whilst the Kolis, Rajputs and Bhils, the poorest.

The Kanbis :

The Kanbis have been classified into three classes - the Lewa Kanbis, Kadwa Kanbis, Anjana Kanbis and Uda Kanbis.

Of these the Lewa Kanbis or Lewa Patidars were the most numerous constituting about 38% of the total Kanbi population<sup>11</sup>. They were called patidars from their owning or holding the 'pati' or a piece of land. These patidars were concentrated most in Baroda prant, then in Kadi, then in Amreli and finally in Navsari.

The Kadwa Kanbis were found in all the districts of the State but were most numerous in the Kadi district.

The Anjana Kanbis also were to be found in the Kadi district whereas Uda Kanbis were spread all over.

The Sathwaras came next to the Kanbis in the social hierarchy and they constituted 36% of the total agricultural population. They were found particularly in the Kadi and the Amreli districts of the State.

The Sagars, another class among the agriculturists were found mostly in Kathiawad.

The other castes among the agriculturists were the 'Kachhias' who concentrated mostly on garden crops, Karadias

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11. Report on the Census of Baroda territories 1881, op.cit., p. 161.

who were originally Rajputs and who were found mostly in Kodinar taluka.

Most of these Kanbis were owners of land and tenants so much so that 81% of the total agriculturists was comprised of Kanbis<sup>12</sup>.

The other agriculturists, apart from the Rajputs, were the Kolis, Dheds, Bhils, Dhankas who came from the lower levels of the social hierarchy and who belonged to certain tribes. They were quite often the lesser landholders, labourers and bond slaves of their Kanbi and Vania masters.

The agricultural labourers came from the lowest levels of the Hindu society and from among the aborigines of which there was the very high percentage of 40, in the State.

Castewise distribution of agriculturists over the State :

These agricultural classes were well distributed over the wide Gaekwad territories. The Baroda prant had a concentration of Kanbis, Patidars, along with the others. In Kadi prant the principal cultivating classes were the Kadwa Kanbis, Anjana brahmans, Rajputs, Muslims, Kolis, Bhills, and Dheds. In Navsari, the agricultural population consisted

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12. Report on the Census of Baroda territories, 1881, op.cit., p. 12.

of Anaval Brahmins 'also called 'Batheles'; Kanbis, Kachhias, Kolis, Malis, Rajputs, Voharas, Parsis and Dublas. The chief cultivating classes in the Amreli district in order of merit, were the Sathvaras, Rajputs, Ahirs, Meers, Kolis, Waghers among the Hindus, and Memons, Ganchis, Voharas among the Muslims.

Condition of the agriculturists :

Since reference has already been made to the condition of the agriculturists, more need not be said except that their condition was unenviable and their occupation unremunerative. Thus even among the Kanbis who were the best cultivators there were 11% working as field and farm labourers; 0.73% as general labourers; 1.05% as cultivating sub-occupants; and 29.4% as land owners and occupants and as such only 44.9% occupied<sup>13</sup>. That is why, in those times, agriculture was delegated to the third estate in the Hindu society.

Other Castes :

The professional and commercial classes had within their fold all castes of the Hindu society viz. Brahmins, Kshtriyas (Rajputs), and Varnias, and that was because there

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13. Report on the Census of Baroda Territories, 1881, op.cit., p.169.

was no absolute rigidity in the following of profession according to caste. No doubt one did find a greater concentration of a particular caste in a particular occupation. Thus in the literary field, the Brahmins predominated, in the armed forces, the Rajputs, in the industrial and commercial class, the Varnias.

#### SECTION IV

##### REVENUE ADMINISTRATION - ITS STRUCTURE AND WORKING

Having seen the geography, the economy and society of 1860 Baroda State, we turn to the system on the agency that managed administration and secured revenues for the running of State activities.

Of a regular administrative structure, with well defined services and powers, there was nothing in the state about the time discussed. All administrative work was conducted through the loose system that existed where orders emanated from the Hujoor, went down to the dewan to the Taluka Offices and below in all prants of the State.

##### Prant and district agencies :

The four prants were in the charge of the four subas who had under them the Wahiwatdars of the various Mahals or talukas. These Wahiwatdars supervised the collection of revenue and had it deposited in the district treasuries.

Actual collection of revenue was in the following way: The districts were farmed out, or auctioned to the Izardars, the revenue farmers, who had secured the right to collect revenues of a certain area at the auction. These izardars, were in their turn, assisted in the work of revenue collection by the hereditary village officers as Desais, Mehtas, Mazumdars and Patels. And it was the Thanedars who performed Police functions for security and the peaceful recovery of revenues. These Thanedars, in-charge of a group of villages, performed both Faujdari (Police) and Mulki (revenue) functions in 1860. Thus there was no clear cut division of powers, and that caused many irregularities and inefficiency in administration.

Village level administration :

Below the talukas were villages under a headman, the Patel. He too had in his charge both revenue and police functions. In the work of revenue collection he was assisted by Talatis who kept accounts, Karkoon or revenue clerks, Majumdars, who also were connected with accounts, and the 'Desai' who assisted in the settlement of revenue and reported on the state of crops. Such was the hierarchy of officials and the sub division of the administrative units.

The head in all revenue matters was the 'Karbhari' or Dewan where office itself was undergoing a process of evolution.

A note on the administrative arrangements  
made for the Kathiawad division:

The Gaekwad's method of getting revenues from Kathiawad in the 18th century had been by sending military expeditions. These military expeditions were known as Mulukgiri and the tribute collected by them was called 'Ghasdana'.

As the Mulukgiri interfered with the peace and prosperity of the country, the British government had so arranged that they would collect Ghasdana free of cost and pay the same to His Highness' government. The latter on its part agreed not to interfere in any way with the management of Ghasdana and of the ghasdana paying estates. Such was the arrangement arrived at mutually by the British and Baroda governments in 1820; and such was the arrangement that endured, with all its defects. Later on, owing to a clash of authority, both the jamabandi paying estates and the Ghasdana paying estates were put under the British government got the entire management of the estates which used to pay only Ghasdana, as well as the others. The Zamindars of these Ghasdana paying states were called Mawasis.

The political arrangement in Kathiawar, owing to the

intermixture of Gaekwad territory with British, was that an Assistant resident was appointed in Amreli.

The arrangement of Okhamandal :

Owing to the inability of the Gaekwad to control the distant region of Okhamandal with its turbulent people, the Waghers, the management of that place had been also given to the British. According to the arrangement made, the civil administration along with criminal and revenue work of the Mahals were given to the Gaekwad officers, and the Rajputs, Waghers and Wadhels were put under the management of the Assistant Resident of Okhamandal.

Such were the administrative arrangements in the State for the securing of revenues and the controlling of certain turbulent districts.

SECTION V

LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS, THEIR FEATURES AND THEIR WORKING

With the variety of tenures, of assessment and the systems of revenue collection that had emerged during the 18th and the early 19th centuries, the land revenue system of the state was both complex and peculiar.

Tenures :

Among the tenures, i.e. categories or terms on which

land was held and owned, were khalsa, Khangri, Narwa, Bhagdari, ankadabandi, ekanbandi, adamia, mewasi, and barkhali.

(i) Khalsa: One category of holding was 'khalsa' in which land was the private property of the ruler, was managed by his private agency and which could not be disposed of by sale or mortgage without the knowledge or sanction of the ruler.

(2) Khangri : Another category of holding in which land was held on personal account was 'Khangri'. These were lands given as 'nemnooks' or jagirs by the ruler to members of the royal family.

(3) Narwa : In the Narwa tenure, prevalent in Petlad mostly, the Narwadars or landholders of a village were collectively responsible for the payment of assessment - the different shares being apportioned to them as per the size of their Narwa holdings.

In the Narwa village, a portion of the village area was actually split up into distinct proportions by bhagdars, while a portion of the village was not so split up but was managed in common. The lands actually split up, held or occupied by the bhags separately are termed as narwa lands and the undivided area of the village is termed majmum. This majmum went to pay the calls of government, but if the proceeds of it were insufficient to do so, the deficiency was made up by the narwadars out of their narwa lands ratably to their bhags.

These Narwadars were descendents of people who had originally inhabited or populated the villages. They originally divided the lands among themselves according to the circumstances and considerations then existing. They also divided the village sites in the same manner, and those lands and portions of the village in the hands of one individual or group were held to be private property. They then gradually invited cultivators to cultivate their respective lands and live in their respective lots of the village site.

The cultivators called upon to cultivate the fields were tenants at will of the Narwadars. And since, as a matter of usage the government did not interfere between a narwadar and his tenant, there was no check upon what the narwadar realised from the cultivator - which had no reference, whatever, to what the Narwadar paid to the government.

(4) Bhagdari : The bhagdari was another tenure similar to that of the Narwadari tenure<sup>14</sup>. The bhagdars of a village, were, like the narwadars, the superior holders or shareholders. The revenue of these villages too was collectively paid by the bhagdars. In this case too there was no system

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14. The difference between a bhagdari and a narwadari villages has been indicated in Ch. II.

of government intervention between the bhagdars and the cultivators regarding the dues extracted - The government was concerned only with the dues that it got from a bhagdari village.

(5) Ankadabandi and Ekankadi : These two tenures were to be found in the Baroda and Kadi divisions. The 'ankadadars' were the Rajputs or Thakadardas who owned villages i.e. had proprietary rights in it. But as they had been conquered by the Gaekwads they were obliged to pay jamabandi or land revenue to the Sarkar.

In 'ankadabandi' villages a lump sum was assessed on the whole village and recovered from the headman of the village or from the whole lands of proprietors. Government did not interfere with the internal fiscal management of the village, it merely fixed the lump sum to be paid either once a year or at short intervals.

In 'ekankadi' villages the jamabandi was fixed permanently i.e. it was not subject to change.

(6) Mewasi : There were some villages in the Kadi, Kalol, Vijapur, Mehsana and Patan talukas of the Kadi district where Mewasi tenure existed. The Thakadars or mewasi chief of these villages paid for the one or more villages they held, a lump sum that was settled annually or from time to time.

The government as a rule did not interfere in the internal fiscal affairs of such villages. Their payment was styled on 'adhad jama', and it was because it varied from year to year or time to time that it differed from the ekankadi tenure. Only the cultivated lands were liable to contribute towards the assessment and nothing was charged for the padtar lands.

All Mewasi villages were either ankadabandi or ekankadi.

(7) Adania : It was during the izara system that there developed throughout the Kadi, and Baroda district, the 'adania or mortgage tenure, which in time, became a serious obstacle to the equitable resettlement of the districts.

It originated in the following way : Say that the government raised the rent, or a bad season came, and the Patels, in consequence, found difficulty in meeting their liabilities, they obtained the requisite funds by mortgaging a piece of government land for a trifling sum, guaranteeing at the same time total exemption from assessment until the money was recovered.

(8) Barkhali tenure : Whilst certain lands belonged to the State, there was a category of land that did not belong to the state i.e. the state had little or no claim on their

revenues. These lands were called 'barkhali' or alienated lands i.e. lands whose land revenue had been alienated or given up due to certain reasons. And as per the circumstance of such a land grant the sarkar claimed little or no land tax.

The various circumstances on which these lands had been given were as follows :

(a) Charitable Religious endowments : Certain lands were given as charity and for religious purposes and from these no rent was taken and no condition of service attached. They were given to both Hindu and Muslim saints and were known as 'devasthan', 'dharmadaya', and 'pirasthan'.

Those charitable and religious grants to which condition of service was attached, were known as 'Chakariat' and 'pasaita'.

(b) Non-charitable, service grants : Then there were alienated lands which belonged to the non-religious group. They had been given as a reward for meritorious service or royalty and were known as 'inam' land. From them only a nominal rent or 'salami' was taken. Then there were lands given for civil and military service which also paid a partial land tax. These were called 'Saranjam'. 'Vajifa' lands

were another type that had been granted to the Muslims during Mughal rule or earlier and were continued by the Marathas. Another category was 'ranvatia' which were lands given by Patels to the descendants of those who had lost their lives fighting in the defence of the village. Then there were the 'bathanmnia lands which had originally been taken by force and had thus become in later times the property of the holders by prescriptive right.

Yet another category in alienated lands was one where the alienation had been made unauthoritatively by Patels. There were two types in this category : (a) 'Gheraniá' or mortgaged land and 'vechania' or land whose proprietorship had been sold out-right.

Large proportions of these lands : About 1860 barkhali lands paying little or no revenue to the state were so much that they posed a serious economic problem for the state in that they caused a deficit<sup>y</sup> budget. And this situation called for drastic measures regarding such category of lands and also influenced state policy of the day.

Finally, one more term<sup>is</sup> requiring explanation in this context is 'Kothalisanth'. It meant a money payment from the government treasury for alienated land that had been resumed by the state for any particular reason.

Other Peculiarities of the land revenue system  
viz., the various forms of Assessment :

About 1860, there were a variety of ways in which assessment or land tax was fixed. And almost all these systems had certain defects that affected the development of economy both at the individual and the state level. No doubt, these systems were the outcome of certain circumstances, and perhaps the only convenient arrangement possible, hence adopted by the government and society of those times.

(a) Bhagbatai system of assessment : The bhagbatai system, or assessment in kind, was one such system. In it tax was taken by the state according to a fixed share of produce. This widely prevalent system was the earliest form in which the ruling authority shared the produce of the soil with the cultivators.

Merits and demerits of the system :

In a premodern, agricultural society where money economy was negligible, where accurate measures were absent, where the forms of government were ill-defined and government procedures rough and ready, assessment in kind seemed to be the best arrangement. Moreover, the system gave to the cultivator the advantage of being taxed only in proportion to his total produce. Thus if in a bad year the yield

had been poor, the share too was proportionately less and vice-versa. In these circumstances the cultivators did not suffer much loss or have arrears to be saddled with, and hence less dependence upon the moneylender as well. Besides, once the government had taken its share, there was no conflict between it and the cultivator, their transaction having ended. The other advantage, both to the state and the agriculturists could be that as the past assessment in kind was to be collected in the sarkar's granaries, the sarkar would have stocks of grain in reserve to give to the cultivators when and if needed. This again would prevent the raiyat from going to the moneylender and borrowing at his high rates of interest. So freed from the dependence on the moneylender, the raiyat would be able to pay his dues regularly without getting enhanced in debts to the sahkars. Finally, for the simple and uneducated people of the times, the procedure of making the division of shares in kind, was an easy and uncomplicated one, - not requiring calculation or conversion into cash.

These advantages were, however, more than counter-balanced by practical drawbacks. For one thing, there was not good enough incentive for the cultivator to improve and extend his cultivation, for however large the outturn of his field, a large proportionate share would go to the

sirkar. Then the delay in disposing of the crop till such time the government had ascertained and taken its share, was also damaging. For while the crop lay for a couple of days in the government store houses or Khalla, its quality deteriorated and the market value also was affected. Perishable crops would certainly have been affected under such a system.

The continuance of assessment in kind made difficult and delayed modern marketing processes. For once the shares of produce had been taken by various claimants including the sarkar, little was left available for the market. The various elements in society got their food from the grain heaps in the process of distribution, hence no dire need for ready markets !

The bhagbatai system also created another serious disadvantage. Since the profits of labour were kept in kind and not in cash, they could not be saved, as cash could be. And that ingrained in the cultivators the habit of not saving, for little fault of theirs, and because the system did not enable them to save, for produce in kind cannot be preserved in the way cash can. The people, therefore, owing to the particular circumstance, lost the chance of learning to save. And that loss did affect investment, in that with no profit at hand in terms of ready cash, investment for the improvement or extension of cultivation

was just not possible and explains why it did not take place.

Finally this assessment in kind also provided scope for fraud and corruption. For when the squeezed cultivator on one hand was restricted from selling his crop until inspection and government share was taken, and on the other he saw his crop getting spoilt in storage, he had no choice but to smuggle part of his produce for disposal. And in those times of irregular service there was no lack of officers who accepted bribes and helped the cultivators out of their predicament.

Thus with more odds against the system, there is no doubt that it was disadvantageous both to state and society.

(b) Holbandi: The 'holbandi' or plough assessment prevalent in the eastern districts of the Kadi prant and in the Sankheda taluka of the Baroda prant and in certain Part of the Navsari prant, was another kind of assessment existing.

In this system, a rate was fixed for one plough worked by two oxen. That rate increased if the number of oxen employed in the tillage increased. The number of bighas cultivated were not considered in the assessment, and with one plough any amount of land could be cultivated. The general practice was to reckon three oxen as one and a half plough.

This mode of assessing land was restricted to tracts inhabited particularly by the poorer and tribal classes as Bhils, Dhankas, Naikadas, Dublas, Kokanas and other such primitive communities.

(c) Kaltar System : In the Kaltar method of assessment the government official with the assistance of a patel or Panchayat estimated the outturn of the field. The share of the government from that outturn was then estimated as per the total practice and the wahiwat. That share was then computed in money at the prevailing market rate.

This method existed in the Songadh and Vyara talukas of the Navsari prant.

(d) Komwari : Another feature of the land revenue system was the 'Komwari' system which was on the principle of different rates for different castes. According to it the intelligent and hardworking Kanbis were charged double and treble as much as the indolent and backward Koli and allied classes. This assessment was known as 'Komwar' assessment. Such a system was hardly expected to draw out much from the skilled cultivators who for no fault of their own other than their skill and better position, were made to pay more. That naturally dampened their enthusiasm for work and affected output.

(e) Bighoti Assessment : Though the survey system and bighoti or cash assessment had been introduced in Gujarat during the Mughal period in 1576, it did not seem to work owing to instability of the times and other historical reasons, and it was the bhaghatai system that continued. The absence, almost, of assessment in cash, about 1860, is significant in that it explains the nature of economy. In other words, since money economy was not that common a feature of the economy of the times, it could be asserted that monetization was at a low level and the economic environment, feudal. These two were potent factors affecting the process of economic growth.

Bighoti or cash assessment, it may be noted, spread very gradually all over the state after 1860.

The system did have certain advantages over other kinds of assessment. They were :

(i) The demand being a fixed sum in cash, and unchangeable during the currency of the settlement, the cultivator would know and this certainty would enable him to plan and organise his investment and operations.

(ii) That since the system entailed that land would be held only as long as the government dues were paid, all excess, carelessly or under cultivated land would be given and so (a) made available to others for cultivation (b) the cultivator for better and more intense cultivation - the long

term effects of there in the interest of agriculture being good.

(iii) The assessment in cash was to take care of the various other cesses paid in the bhaghatai assessment so that there would be the consolidated fixed amount and then a reduced sum of the cesses commuted into cash. Note this was specially so in the revised bighoti scheme that came in the last quarter of the century.

(iv) Finally the cumulative effect of all these advantages would be in favour of the peasant and against the moneylender - in the light of reducing his dependence on the latter.

The farming or izare system : The most conspicuous as also the most faulty feature of the land revenue system was the farming or 'izara' system. The system, to which a passing reference has already been made was the 'Modus Operandi' applied by the Marathas for the collection of land revenue from the conquered districts. It replaced the raiyatwari system that earlier existed.

In the system, a person, the 'izardar' secured the right to collect the revenues of a certain area. That right he secured by his having made the highest bid to the sarkar, for a particular district. Thus the sarkar auctioned out the various districts to the bidders with the obligation

upon the latter to pay to the sarkar at a particular given time the sum settled for, at the auction. The izardars were thus the intermediaries or the middle men between the ruler and the ruled, appointed for the purpose of revenue collection. They collected the revenues with the help of the local hereditary village officers referred to earlier.

How the system was faulty and detrimental to the cultivator's interest is to be seen in the following way : If the deal for a certain district was a high and over-estimated one as per the potentialities of that district, then how was the sum to be secured for payment of the same to the sarkar ? The only way out was a squeezing of the cultivators beyond their capacity to pay and by forcing them to indebtedness, in payment of the demand. In these circumstances the cultivator was driven to poverty, he had no incentive to work; but to live and maintain his family he had to work, for running away was not possible by everyone. In this manner was the system harmful to the cultivator's interest.

What happened when the deal made at the auction was an underestimated deal ? Possibilities for that too existed. In these circumstances, the izardar of a potential district pocketed the difference between the sum fixed by sarkar and the actual amount secured. Here again squeezing or exploi-

tation of the cultivator was possible. The beneficiary in this case being the izardar and the losers, the sarkar as well as the cultivators.

There was a situation wherein the izardar too suffered. As in those times there was no fixity of tenure, and as it was the royal prerogative of giving over and acutioned district to another, prior to the termination of the particular deal, quite often certain izardars were made to give over their districts to another who offered a greater sum for the area. In these circumstances, neither was it possible for the original izardar to collect the sum as fixed, nor to immediately get a new assignment. Once again the amount would be squeezed from the cultivator. How could even izardars, therefore, work in such uncertainty. Their way out of the sudden change in their tenures was to make the best from a district as soon as possible - how the cultivator was to manage not being their concern.

Although such cases were not frequent they were not uncommon either. This kind of situation also affected the course of agricultural development.

The evils of this widely prevalent system were duly recognised by the ruler so that attacks were directed

against it. But it was only after 1880 that the system was completely done away with.

Thus, in the absence of an organised administration, the farming system did appear to be the most convenient arrangement, so much so that even other items of revenue as abkari and customs too were farmed, for purpose of collection. But once the arrangement outgrew its utility with the changing times, the system too started to disappear.

## SECTION VI

### A REVIEW OF THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND RELATIONS OF THE BRITISH WITH THE STATE ABOUT 1860

A brief study of the political structure of the state and the position of the state vis-a-vis the paramount power is necessary.

#### Political Structure :

The main constituents of the political structure of the Gaekwad State about 1860 were the ruler, the Sardars i.e. the landed nobility and the military class, and the dewans who headed the darbaris of the state.

#### Ruler :

The ruler was the highest authority in the state. Formally, all policies emanated from him and the final word

in matters of justice and other crucial aspects of administration rested with him. In respect of external affairs, however, the Gaekwad was subordinate to the paramount power. In this sense, therefore, the Gaekwad was not a sovereign ruler, for his rights to make treaties or war with any other state were curtailed by the British.

Dewan :

Next to the ruler in the political and social hierarchy came the dewan. Since administration, in these times was not formalised, the scope of the dewan's activities, the term of office, nor his powers were clearly defined. He, however, was the financial head and the highest official in revenue administration.

The position of the Dewan in the State was a delicate one, for while in theory he was responsible to the ruler, in actual fact, he also had to work to the satisfaction of the paramount power. In fact, it was this situation that created the controversy on the issue of paramountcy between the two powers in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

Sardars :

The sardars or the military class were the other element of the political structure of the State. They were the military leaders and officers who had helped the Gaekwad in the expansion and consolidation of territories in

Gujarat and in Kathiawar. Since they were rewarded and remunerated for their services by way of land grants, they had large rent free holdings and so they also may be considered the landed aristocracy of the state.

About the mid 19th century, therefore, the Sardars were almost the right hand men of the ruler, and hence an important organ, as it were, of the state. At this time the ruler depended much upon them, as it was they, the army, that kept the state intact and the ruler's position secure. From the 19th century onwards, the position changed - the change being unfavourable for the sardars. For it was gradually i.e. through the second half of the nineteenth century, that they lost certain powers and privileges to the bureaucracy that was in the making in the reorganisation of the administration.

On one hand, was the Gaekwad's attempt to reduce the numbers in the army by retrenchment, and on the other, the recovery of rent free holdings in as much as they were in excess of the original grant and as far as the titles were dubious. Both these measures hit the assets, the pride and the prestige of the Sardars so that their adjustment to the changes was rather wily. The second half of the 19th century was thus a period of conflict between them and the ruler.

The factors that contributed to these changes were as

follows. First of all was the British guarantee to the Gaekwad of protection and maintenance of the territorial integrity of the state, - a guarantee that reduced the rulers dependence upon the army and so its importance. Then there was the second factor of the military class having outlived its utility, the period of expansion and consolidation of the State being over. Also, there was the economic difficulty faced by the state on account of the distribution of large stretches of rent free holdings among the. From these, holdings the state got only nominal rent and so felt the lack of reasources. Finally, the new bureaucracy created, and the new emphasis on education and training in the administrative officers, provided no room for the absorption or accommodation of the military leaders. They could not, be adjusted in this area, and were hence pensioned of.

Relations with the paramount power :

Relations of the State with the British about 1860 were good and Khanderao enjoyed a better position than had the other rulers before him. The favourable attitude of the British was due to the loyal support rendered by the prince during their time of trial in 1857. And as a reward for the same, the British had conceded to the ruler of Baroda, the right of adoption, a cherished right of the Indian princes which the British had taken away from them. Further-

more, was the 21 guns salute accorded, which did much to enhance the prestige and honour of the prince. In other respects too viz., in the choice of a dewan, was the Gaekwad given a longer leash than had had the rulers of the State before him.

Despite all these favours and concessions, the ruler of the Baroda State did not have sovereignty in external affairs. And to understand how this position of supremacy came about, some reference to the past will have to be made.

British policy and relations with the Baroda state had oscillated between a policy of intervention and non-intervention in the 18th and the 19th centuries. In the 18th century both the British and the Baroda State had been engaged in their struggle for an independent and prominent position.

By the 19th century the English had established their supremacy and paramountcy in the country. It was by virtue of this paramountcy or authority in the country as a whole, that their authority transcended the treaty relations with Baroda. It was by the treaties of 1802, 1817 and 1820 that the sovereign status and the independent position of the state had been reduced to one of subordination to the paramount power.

The factors that had led to Baroda's subordination to

the British were the imperial interests of the British and the dependence of the Gaekwad on the British for their help in relieving him from the controls of the Peshwa, from without, and the Arab mercenaries and Sardars from within the State. Thus the process of emergence of the Gaekwad to a sovereign position in the 19th century involved correspondingly a growing dependence of the Gaekwad on the British, which in turn increased the degree of British paramountcy over the Baroda State. That explains the enthusiasm of the Gaekwad to modernize the State on Western lines; and more specifically, to conform with the British pattern in certain aspects of administration. ✓

The position of subordination of the State to the British as defined by the treaties was specifically in matters of foreign policy, and in certain internal matters as the control enforced over the appointment of a dewan and the submission of account of finances of the State to the British.

## SECTION VII

### A NOTE ON THE POLICY OF STATE IN GENERAL AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE RULER TOWARDS THE STATE

Truly speaking the attitude of the rulers of the state towards its people and its functions in those

premodern and medieval times was a detached and self centred one. For they were primarily concerned in the revenues which they used for their personal necessities and for pomp, show and splendour, rather than public welfare. And as in those times there was little or no distinction between public and private expenditure, it was found that a lot was spent towards the personal pleasure of the ruler, the people having little material benefit from it.

No doubt, the ruler about 1860 was somewhat concerned about administrative problems, economic difficulties and wanted to modernize his state on western lines. That is why he launched programmes of administrative reconstruction, railway construction and the application of the Bombay land revenue system to the State. But the actual welfare of the people, and the problems of the agriculturists seemed to be beyond his imagination and beyond his interest. Whether and how the outlook and attitude of a ruler affected the prosperity and happiness of the state would be seen as the thesis progresses.

### SECTION VIII

#### A REVIEW OF THE RULE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE DIFFERENT RULERS AND ADMINISTRATORS : 1860-1884

The attempt, here, is to highlight the personal chara-

cter of administration in the princely states in general and the Baroda State in particular, and as such focus attention in the political and administrative affairs. The dividing line is the 1875 from whence onwards one finds a / change in the direction of developments.

Khanderao Gaekwad : 1860-70 :

In the Gaekwad state, in the mid 19th century the rationalisation of its administration was progressively attempted. In this task the after effects of the farming system which had come into being in the earlier period were felt. The loss of revenue which the large stretches of rent free lands entailed was particularly felt at a time when the state was in continuous financial difficulties. As such, one of the major attempts of the state's administration was to enact measures which would progressively do away with izaras and unauthorised alienations. Further, the British power too ~~favoured~~ this kind of rationalisation<sup>15</sup>.

Secondly, there was an effort to rationalise the administrative system as far as it was possible. In this direction we find the beginning of the separation of revenue functions from the police and judicial ones<sup>16</sup>.

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15. Bombay Samachar of 16 June for week ending 17 June 1871. p.10, Native Newspaper Report (NNR) Bombay, NAI.

16. P.13, Resident to secretary of state. Report of 1869, dated 7 June 1870, Administration report, 1869-70.

The separate police arrangements under a police Patel were made in the villages<sup>17</sup>, and an improved judicial administration for the districts was provided for, by giving to the wahiwatdar, the additional service of a mounsiff<sup>18</sup>.

The effort to improve the financial status of the state led the state administration to concentrate on the eradication of the izara system and the resumption of unauthorised alienated holdings. Further to that was the appointment of the Inam commission to examine the claims of the contestants of the disputed alienated lands. Survey and settlement to be followed by enhanced rates was also a part and parcel of the state's programme to improve the financial condition of the state.

The encouragement given to the construction and extension of railways was yet another activity of the Gaekwad's administration that deserves mentioning. Thus the schemes of the construction of the Bombay-Baroda and the Central Indian railway were undertaken by the British with the Gaekwad's cooperation<sup>19</sup>. In these activities, the ruler was particular in protecting the financial interests of the state. And the two sources of revenue affected by railways

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17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. P.53, File No.995, Bombay-Baroda (BB) and Central Indian (CI) railway. Political Dept. Vol.2, Bombay Archives.

were the customs revenue and the transit duties. The loss to the state from those accounts as per the understanding was to be made up by the British.

A Discussion of the measures - pertaining to the  
Period 1860-1870 :

Though in theory and in earlier planning the schemes discussed were visualised as benefitting the state resources, in practice they proved otherwise. It has even been observed that they hurt the interest of the agricultural classes.

One of the major factors that led to this contrary - development appear to be the system of administration as a whole, its antiquated and traditional way of operation<sup>20</sup>

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20. Note : Below the instances that give an idea of the administration.

(a) When the dewan Bhaw Scindia himself was reported to be illiterate and quite ignorant of the art of government, and his successors Limbaji Dada equally so, the other officials down in the line can well be imagined. p.7, The Bombay Chabuk, 4 December 1869, week ending 11 Dec. 1869, NNR, NAI.

(b) Press comment on absence of laws to guide officers. Thus the Bombay Samachar "Censures the government of the Gaikwar for having no written code of laws to guide its officers." p.8, The Bombay Samachar of 7 July Week ending 10 July 1869, NNR, NAI.

(c) Note :The atmosphere of the court also spells of mis government and corruption. ". . . . the court of Baroda is full of factions and intrigues. Khanderao is a credulous and timid prince."

p.9, The Jame Jamshed of 11th March week ending 12 March 1870, NNR, NAI.

and lack of familiarity with the modern trends required for coping with newer responsibilities, such as direct government management of the districts, an enlarged administrative machinery and new systems in revenue administration.

It was not possible for such a system to frame adequate measures for the resumption of the izara and to carry out an efficient and accurate survey or to introduce equitable rates. Consequently several of the evils of the earlier system continued to operate.<sup>21</sup>

But much more damaging had been the high rates of land revenue fixed after the survey. These high and disproportionate<sup>22</sup> were offset during the period of the American civil

21. The evils of the izara system continued so that the waghers of Vijapur, Visnagar, Kadi and Patan talukas in Kadi prant rebelled and emigrated to the neighbouring British districts, p.17, Report of Native Newspaper for week ending 27th May 1871. File No.858, Regarding alleged form of land revenue in Baroda, Pol.Vol.II, Bombay Archives.

22. (a) Ununiformity of rates is seen in that the rate paid in kind and cash was in some places  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the produce and at other  $\frac{1}{3}$ . pp.3-4, Administration report 1871, File No.1765, Political, Dept. Vol.I, Bombay Archives.

(b) That the taxation system was irrational and unfair as well is seen in that certain castes engaged exemption from taxation so they thrived whilst the tiller of the soil and other agriculturists suffered. Note : reference has been made to this in the Tikakar of 25th December for week ending 9 Jan.1869, NNR, NAI.

war by the high prices current during these times. But when that was over in 1869, the burden fell heavily on the cultivator. In these circumstances the cultivators found their work rendered increasingly difficult and there is clear evidence of large scale migration from to British territories<sup>23</sup>. There is evidence also of complaints against the Gaekwad regime<sup>24</sup> of growing impoverishment of the peasants. That, in

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23. There was emigration from Kadi prant, p.17, Report of Native Newspaper for week ending 27th May 1871. File No.85, Pol. Vol. II, 187, Bombay Archives.

(b) There was emigration reported from the Variav district of Navsari prant, p. 27. The Gujarat Mitra of 12 November, File No.1655, regarding the alleged amigration. Report on Native Newspaper for week ending 18 November 1871, Pol. Dept., 1871, Vol. 14, Bombay, Archives.

(c) Another reference to emigration from Navsari Prant, p. 9, the Danyan Prakash of 26 July Week ending 31st July, 1869, NNK N.A.I.

24. (a) Petitions to the Viceroy from cultivators regarding oppression. Petition dated 23rd July 1870. Pol. Dept., Vol.I, 1870, Bombay Archives.

(b) Complaints against the oppression and tyrannies of the dewan p. 151, Petition to the government of Bombay dated 29th, Sept. 1869, File No.22, Complaint of ryots. Political Dept., Vol. IV, Bombay Archives.

(c) Complaints by ryots against the oppression in 1870 in Gaekwad regime. File No.631, Administration Report, 1869-70 Pol.Vol. I, Bombay Archives.

(d) An anonymous petition ran thus, "... All the subjects both rich as well as poor are much suffering from unexampled and unprecauted oppression and tyranny of rule of the present dewan ...", p. 21, Anonymous Petition, File 679, 1868. Pol. Dept. Bombay Archives.

view of the general insecurity of the times<sup>25</sup>, and of the inconsistent and inefficient government procedures<sup>26</sup>, trade and industry were adversely affected is not surprising.

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25. Insecurity of times is indicated in the following "...The Meena Decoits of Upper Rajputana have an easy access to Gujarat and Central regions of India, via, Bombay by the unsupervised condition of the Gaekwar's territory, ... that the Khurjur and Mooltanee Decoits, notorious for committing opium robberies in central India, find a safe shelter in Baroda territory ...", p.59. Extract from Report of the Operation of the Thugee Dacoite Department in Native States, 1868, No.1588. File Political Dept, Vol.13, Regarding the proposed extentionof the operation for the supression of crimes of Thugee and Dacoity. Bombay Archives.
26. (a) When the self willed and uncontrolled officers of the state levied new taxes under various pretexts and ill-treated the ryots, as was reported, agriculture was bound to be affected. Note : The above was reported in the Gujarat Mitra of 30th July 1876, pp.10-11, NNR, NAI.
- (b) The transit and customs duties too were farmed. And since in the contracts made regarding than, details of account keeping, tell keeping were not recorded, the scope for defraud and exploitation existed. These faults of the system affected trade. Note : The reference made to the above in the following p.97, Translation of a yad from Baroda President to the Durbar on 11 July 1871. No.1481 regarding system of realizing transit duties in Gaekwad territories. Pol. Dept. Vol. VI, Bombay Archives.
- (c) A defect of the old system that affected entrepreneurship and initiative in business was the system whereby traders of Gaekwad State owining ships could not get than registered by their own government and so were obliged to admit as partners. subjects of British and other Indian States Reference made to the above in Gujarat Mitra of 13 Feb., p.8, NNF week ending 19 Feb. NAI.

There was, therefore, little perceptible improvement in the condition of the people during the years 1860-70. At the same time, the Gaekwad's own establishment functioned in its usual extravagant fashion an instance of which may be said to be his purchase of the fabulously expensive diamond, "Star of the South"<sup>27</sup>. Such and other expenditure on pomp, show and splendour<sup>28</sup> added to the already heavy burden of the State<sup>29</sup>.

Khanderao's period thus, is not one which can be said to mark a break with the past despite an effort to reform and that too primarily owing to financial stringencies. It continued the earlier tradition and earlier practices.

27. Rousselet, India and its Native Princes, pp. 106.

28. Regarding a royal procession Rouselet, the French traveller, Sajourning at Baroda, wrote "... I have never witnessed in the whole of India, nor even in Europe, a scene of greater Pomp, splendour and solemnity ...." pp.94, *ibid*.

(b) The same writer writing regarding his few months stay at Baroda wrote, "... Thus I parsed at the court an existence similar to that of European society in the middle ages ...." *Ibid*.

29. Commenting on the financial condition of the state in 1870, ooo The Danyar Prakash wrote, "... the treasury of the prince is already in a deplorable, condition ...." The same also utilized the ruler's wasteful expenditure. p.9, Danyan Prakash of 21st March for week ending 26 March 1870, NNR, Bombay, NAI.

To a certain degree the Gaekwad was successful in his operations. Thus while the farming system was not altogether done away with, certain areas were freed from the system. Equally significant were the administrative changes that started the process of decentralisation which saw its fulfilment two decades later; then there was an attempt at economy,<sup>30</sup> and last but not the least was the construction of railways and other works of public utility.<sup>31</sup> So, self-willed and apathetic to the problems of the cultivators though the ruler may appear to have been, it was not that he was completely unactuated by generous impulses.

In the final analysis, therefore, despite the attempt of the ruler to make a break through in the traditional set-up, no break through was really made. And the observation of the French traveller Rousselet aptly sums up the environment and atmosphere of the times of Khanderao Gaekwad. He said, "The court of the Gaikwar is the only one in India that has preserved down to the present time, the customs of the middle ages in their primitive splendour .... here .... everything bears the impress of the Hindu character and displays the originality of past times...."<sup>32</sup>

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30. pp.10-11, Maharashtra Mitra of 15 July for week ending 24th July 1869, NNR, Bombay, NAI.

31. (a) The Gaekwad had resolved to spend Rs.2,50,000 in work of public utility for famine stricken people and had contributed as 15,000 in the general fund for relief to similarly circumstanced people, p.9, The Bombay Samachar of 4th Dec for week ending 4th Dec.1869, NNR, Bombay, NAI.

(b) p.23, No.995, BB and CI Railways, op.cit.

Malharrao's regime : 1870-75 :

In most respects the reign of the succeeding Gaekwad was a continuation of the conditions existing during the latter part of Khanderao's rule, and in certain respects it was worse. For "Malharrao, on assuming the administration of government, at once plunged into a career of misrule, extravagance and folly ...."<sup>33</sup>.

The above, statement is no exaggeration and it was clear even to contemporaries that the new ruler's rule augured the worst of times<sup>34</sup>.

The various sections of society viz., the agriculturists, the Sardars, bankers, trading firms and others<sup>35</sup> who had

32. Rousselet; op.cit., p.106.

33. L.N. Ghose, The Native States, J.N. Ghose and Company, Calcutta, 1879, p.143.

34. Note: The comment on Malharrao, "He feels himself bound to reward all who in any degree sympathised with him, or even expressed sympathy for him during the life of his late brother ...that is how his favourites got in administration, the durbar..."

p.7, Resident to Secretary to Government of India dated 25th April, 1871, Administration Report 1871, File No. 1765, Pol. Dept., Vol. I, 1871, Bombay Archives.

35. (1) Regarding Sardars : File Pol.. A No.215/251, Opinion of Baroda commission in Letter of Col. Phayre to Secretary to government of India dated 2nd November, 1874, Jan. 1775, NAI.

(2) Regarding Grievances of agriculturists, File Pol. A. Jan. 1875, File 215/251, Col. Phayre to secretary to govt. of India dated 2nd Nov. 1874, NAI.

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suffered during the preceeding rule naturally had hopes from the new ruler. But they were soon to be disappointed, for the period of Malharrao not only faced a set back from natural calamities, poor seasons, the illeffects of the fall of food prices at the termination of the civil war in the U.S.A. but it even saw the reversal of the few beneficial measures that had been enacted by the preceeding ruler.

With government offices, both high and low being given to relatives and favourites, with almost no consideration of merit and character in the choice of dewans, started the worst kind of nepotism corruption and intrigue<sup>36</sup>.

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(3) Grievances of inamdars, Watandars, pp.20-21, File, Pol. A. Jan. 1875, Nos. 215/251, NAI.

(4) Grievances of bankers and trading firms. File, Ibid.

36. Note: Below certain instances of nepotism, corruption and intrigue in the state.

(a) Among the many irregularities in administration were those in the Imarat Khana or the PWD. In it, one case was that of Goolam Ali, the Superintendent of the Department, who had made money by illegal means and who had given a bribe of Rs.40,000 to prevent the investigations being made against him. Despite that Malharrao Gaekwad supported him and reinstated him in office. File 72/6, JPO, CRO, case of Goolam Ali, Settlement Dept. Petition of Vinayakrao Gopal dated 26 April, 1875.

(b) Some of the officers of the State were Khanvelkar, the dewan prior to Dadabhai Naroji, the Senapati Bapujirao, the Revenue commissioner Bariba Gaekwad, the member of the Ist or High Court - Govindrao Mama, Balwantrao Deo, Bapubhai Devishankar and Markandeo Anna, and the Sir Faujder Balwantrao Eshwant.

None of these enjoyed a good reputation. The dewan was ignorant, inexperienced, and corrupt and irresponsible; Govindrao mama had a poor reputation; Balvantrao had been

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The agriculturists suffered worst as the evil minded Karbharis had no hesitation in plundering the ryots<sup>37</sup>; the izardar's exactions continued unchecked<sup>38</sup>, revenue demands were further increased in certain areas as indicated earlier, and accession nazarans were extracted.

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earlier dismissed from the post of Karbhari of Lunawada for having accepted bribes, the revenue commissioner was accused of oppression and bribery; the for Fanjdar was connected with several oppressive and irregular proceedings and had been sentenced to imprisonment by the late chief for having taken bribes; the deputy revenue commissioner too had been formerly dismissed from the service of the British government in connection with charges of misconduct and acceptance of bribes; the controller of the state banks and the privy purse was said to be regarded as an unscrupulous agent of the Maharaja and his name had been unfavourably mentioned in connection with some of the cases that had come up before the commission.

Confidential file : Foreign Dept. Secretary August 1874, Nos. 136-193, NAI, pp.66-67, from members of the Baroda Enquiry Commission to Secretary to Govt. of India.

(c) Malharrao Gaekwad is associated with the many intrigues of all kind in the state. First of all he had plotted against his brother, the proceeding prince, Khanderao. Then, while a ruler, he intrigued first for Dadabhai Naoroji, and then against him. The biggest and most scandalous intrigue no doubt was the one that unseated him from the throne viz., the case of the poisoning of the resident Col. Phayre.

37. p.26, The Gujrat Mitra of 12 Nov. on Malharrao. NNR, Week ending 18 Nov.1871, No.1655, Pol.Dept. Vol.14, Bombay Archives.
38. The izardars of Variav in Navsari Prant raised the rates, threatened the sequestration of the cultivators lands on non-payment of those rates - all despite the poor return of crops in the particular year. Thus whereas the British government was making remissions the Gaekwad Sarkar who enforcing the payment of demand, p.27, Ibid.

(b) They were the seventies of the farming system that had forced the cultivators of Visnagar, Vijapur, Kadi and Patan to rebel and also to emigrate to British districts. Report from Native News paper, p.17, Week ending 27th May, 1871.

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There was in the state, a considerable sense of insecurity, and dissatisfaction among all classes<sup>39</sup>. The former is to be gauged by, one, the emigrations from Gaekwad districts leaving them desolate and deserted<sup>40</sup> and two, by the arbitrary dismissal of officers<sup>41</sup>. And it was not that the Gaekwad was unaware of all that went on, for there had been ample warning, suggestions, and criticism for reform<sup>42</sup>. Besides the ruler was himself a party to the affairs of the state.

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File Nos.858-Alleged form of land revenue in Baroda, File Pol.Vol.II, 1871, Bombay Archives.

39. p.10, The Danyan Chakshu of 20th August, Week ending 23rd August 1873, NNR, NAI.
40. pp.63-64, Note: reference to the some made in an anonymous polition regarding the met-administration and the evil proceedings of the State, File Political, Vol. VII, dated 21st July 1873, No. 1214, Bombay Archives.
41. p.65, Petition dated 4 July, 1873. File, Ibid.
42. (a) The press urged reforms and tried to, awaken His Highness Malharrao to the urgent necessity he is under to inaugurate at once some radical reforms in his administration...", p.8, The Gujarat Mitra of 16 Aug., Week ending 22nd Aug. 1874, NNR. NAI.
- (b) The British too urged reforms and made suggestions viz., "...The Resident has asked the Baroda chief to remove certain known bad characters from his public service. But Malharrao ...has sent a reply to the Resident that he has no right to interfere in the internal management..." Extract from the Gujarat Mitra of 22nd June 1875. p.9. Week ending 28 June 1873. NNR of Bombay, Jan.-Dec. 1873, NAI.
- (c) The Resident also urged that the revenue assessment in Petlad, Attarsumbha, Bijapur and Kadi be reduced. Phayre's Administration report, 1872-73, dated 29th April, 1873, Political Vol. II, No.35, Bombay Archives.

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It was when the Gaekwad failed to respond to these, that representations were made to the British<sup>43</sup> and Dadabhai Naoroji installed as dewan.

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(d) Note some press comments, on Malharrao's administration  
 (i) "The administration of Baroda under Malharrao has become even worse than it was under his brother Khanderao ... pp.11-12, The Rast Goftar of 11 May week ending 17 May 1873. NNR of Bombay Jan.-Dec. 1873, NAI.

(ii) "The prince took from the people whatever he liked and looked upon every farthing thus got as his own private property ... the distinction between private and state was neither understood nor recognised as a principle and never practically enforced..." Extract from letter of Suba, Southern Division, Raoji Vithal to Dewan T. Madhavrao dated May 1875, File No.213/3, HPO, CRO, Miscellaneous correspondence with the Suba Baroda division.

43. (a) Note: The public faith in the British and the lack of confidence in the Gaekwad. It explains and justifies the approaches of the people to the British for redress. "... The only power which can resume the wretched ryots of Baroda from evils of tyranny and misrule, is the paramount British government..." p.10, The Danyan Prakash of 8 Jan. Week ending 13 Jan. 1872, NNR, Bombay NAI.

(b) In like manner did the agriculturists address their grievances to the resident Col. Phayre to Secretary of Govt. of India dated 2nd Nov. 1874, Pol. A Jan 1875. Nos. 215/251, NAI.

(c) The Patels of Petlad and Navsari complained that the Gaekwad government was pressing for arrears of revenue of the past eight years. Letter from Col. Petty Agent to governor General and Special commissioner, Baroda to C.U. Aitchinson dated 19 Dec, 1874. File Pl. A. Jan. 1875, Nos.215/251, NAD.

(d) The Sardars also addressed their grievances to the British since they got no hearing from Malharrao. Letter from Govt. of Bombay dated 26 July 1873. File Foreign Secret. Aug. 1874, Nos. 95, 126B, NAI.

(e) The inamdars and watandars whose lands had been confiscated indiscriminately also approached the British, pp. 20-21, File Pol. A. Jan 1875, Nos.215/251, NAI.

Dadabhai Naoroji and the State :

The task was not an easy one as apprehended<sup>44</sup> and was fraught with political conflict engineered by the Gaekwad. For, some prominent Englishmen, whom Dadabhai had consulted regarding the proposed appointment as dewan had warned him about, "the terrible task". The opposition that the dewan faced from the resident who made no secret of his antipathy towards Dadabhai<sup>45</sup>; from the scheming darbaris who could not see eye to eye with new dewan<sup>46</sup> and finally Malharrao Gaekwad

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44. (a) R.P. Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji, George Allen and Universal Museum Street, London, 1939, p.141.  
 (b) Even the press expressed its "fears about the success of the new Dewan". p.11, The Gujarat Mitra of 4th Oct., week ending 10th Oct. 1874, NNR, Bombay, NAI.
45. (a) Cal. Phyre, the Resident urged that the British should not recognise him as dewan..." Resident to secretary to Bombay govt. dated 15th Aug. 1874, p.35, File Foreign Political A. Jan.1875. Proceedings No.126A/152, Baroda affairs, NAI.  
 (b) In fact the biographer of Dadabhai, R.P. Masani stated that Col. Phayre had even expressed to His Highness that he would not allow Mr. Dadabhai to enter Baroda.  
 (c) Note : The comment of Dadabhai himself regarding the Resident: "...Col. Phayre has been my prosecutor with a determined and strong will and purpose.. I owe it to myself and to those whom I have engaged for work to submit how hopeless any effort on my part would be if Col. Phayre were to continue here as representative of the paramount power with his uncompromising bias against me and my officials." R.P. Masani, op.cit., p.167.
46. With Malharrao Gaekwad in their hold, the Darbaris left no stone unturned to unseat Dadabhai. The two darbaris who were the mischief mongers in the same were Babubhai and Govindrao Mama, the former aspiring for the dewanship himself.

himself made it virtually impossible for the dewant to continue in the new assignment<sup>47</sup> and he resigned in December 1874 after a tenure of dewanship of about a year.

The work of Dadabhai :

The 'grand old man of India', however, has to his credit certain notable achievements, during his term of office.

First of all a new team of officers, efficient, experienced and incorruptable was formed. Some of its notable members were Bal Mangesh, the chief justice, Kazi Shahabuddin, the revenue commissioner; and Hormosji Wadya the chief magi-<sup>a</sup>strate in charge of criminal and Police Department.

The problem of peasants was attended to first by reduction in revenue demand and granting of remissions. Then came the other matters of state such as grievances of the Sardars, bankers and others, and judicial procedures. The good work thus begun could not, however, be continued on account of the conspiracies and so Dadabhai resigned.

The circumstances of his resignation are well illustrated in the comment in a contemporary paper which reported, "... Bearing in mind the nature of the task, Mr. Dadabhai had undertaken, the intrigues of the old Darbaris, the deadly opposition of Col. Phayre and the worse than in difference

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47. R. P. Masani, op.cit., p. 148.

of Sir Philip Wodehouse's government, no one can wonder why his administration failed .... The old dewan and the old corrupt machinery hampered his progress. To add to the complications, the Bombay govt. not only declined to lend Mr. Dadabhai the Services of such Public servants he applied for, but they did not even recognise his appointment as Dewan of Baroda. The worst instance of the administration was Col. Phayre's opposition ... The subjects from Sirdars down to ryots knew the Resident was opposed to the Parsi dewan ... The new minister gave Malharrao every choice, but when they saw he could not be reclaimed they had no alternative but to resign. Then followed the ... panic and trial and deposition of the unhappy imbecile ....<sup>48</sup> .

Matters came to a crisis at the revelation of the plot to poison Col. Phayre in which the Gaekwad was implicated. And at the instance of the inquiry commission's report, on charge of mal-administration<sup>49</sup> Malharrao was declared dethroned in June 1875<sup>50</sup>. Thus ended the chapter of one Gaekwad's rule in the state.

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48. Extract from the Indian Spectator of 6 June p.3, Week ending 12 June, NNR, Bombay, Jan.-June, 1880, NAI.
49. Regarding the deposition of Malharrao - "... that Malharrao having by mis-government, disloyalty and other evil practices forfeited your confidence and broken his obligation, he and his issue are deposed..." Secretary of State, London to Viceroy, Simla, Telegram dated 15th April, 1875. Proceedings No.219, File Foreign Dept.Political A. 1875. Nos. 219-226, NAI.
50. Deposition of Malharrao approved by the govt. of India.

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While the measure was denounced at that time because of the bias against the paramount power, it was also approved of and considered to be a good and wise step<sup>51</sup>.

It is evident, therefore, that no effective change other than political took place in these times. Below the canvas of politics, no doubt, was a fast deteriorating economic condition with growing impoverishment.

Administration of Dewan T. Madhavrao :

(The Minority rule of Sayajirao III Under the Regency of the Dewan, 1875-1881)

The circumstances in which the dewan T. Madhavrao assumed charge of affairs of the state are well illustrated in the extract that follows, and explain the nature of the dewan's task.

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Letter from secretary of state for India to govt. of India dated 3rd June 1875, India Office, London p.1, Proceedings No.168, File Foreign Dept. Pol. A. August 1875, Nos.168-170, NAI.

51. (a) The Danyan Chaksu of 10 Dec., the Indu Prakash of 26 Jan; the Bombay Samachar of 13 Feb.; all were against the decision of deposition, NNR, NAI.
- (b) The Indu Prakash of 24 Aug. 1875, no doubt approved of the measure. It said, "... it is, it must be acknowledged on the whole good and wise..."  
p.10, The Indu Prakash of 24 Aug., week ending 29 Aug.1875, NNR, Bombay, Jan. to December, NAI.

"... The excessive rates of assessment, illegal exactions by officials, and general mal-administration of years, have impoverished a large portion of the agricultural population, while patels have the substantial grievance of having been deprived six, years ago, of their large emoluments so that both these classes have made it a common cause to resist the government demand ... It is notorious that village accountants, Patels and other servants who for the most part are miserably paid help themselves largely in various ways. There are village accountants who have not recovered their regular salaries for one, two or three years, but also have apportioned monies from government collection..."<sup>52</sup>.

It, therefore, fell upon dewan T. Madhavrao to clearse the 'Auguean stables, as it were, to clear the atmosphere festooned with corruption, to reorganise the different branches of administration and to conciliate the peasants.

Reorganisation of administration :

The most concrete changes<sup>e</sup> affected by the Dewan, were in respect to administration - its machinery and working.

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52. Extract from a letter of Kazi Shahabuddin to Lewis Pelly, Agent to Governor general, Baroda, dated 30th March 1875, DN 107, File 36, Sarsubas Political Office Administration Report for year ending 31st March, 1875, CRO.

First of all there was the organisation of talukas into more compact and effective administrative units. And that was done on the principle of attaining administrative harmony between them as well as those with which they were intermingled<sup>53</sup>.

Then came the organisation of the different branches of administration with well defined jurisdiction and scope of activities<sup>54</sup>. The process of decentralisation, necessitated by the growing pressure of work and the adoption of modern ideas of administration also began<sup>55</sup>. And it was from 1875, that the offices of the dewan, of the Sarsuba, and of other areas, came into existence with an identity of their own.

With the definition of functions; of areas of work and powers<sup>56</sup>, came a formalisation akin to that in the British administrative system. The hierarchy of officers of state in the revenue department was, therefore, as follows. The Huzur being the fountain head of all, was followed by the Dewan, the Sarsuba or revenue commissioner, the suba who headed the divisions or prants and also had the powers of a

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53. File 35/7, HPO, CRO, Regarding rules and regulations - and construction of Administrative machinery.

54. Madhavrao's Memo dated 18 July, 1875, File 35/7, op.cit.

55. Decentralisation of work in revenue department, DN 100, File 384, Library, CRO.

56. File 34/6, Regarding increase of powers of Heads of Depts., HPO, CRO.

district magistrate along with the powers of a sessions judge; the Naib subas, introduced for the first time as assistants to the suba and being the 2nd class magistrates; the Aval Karkuns being the 3rd class magistrates, and the Mahal Karkuns also being the 3rd Class magistrates in their Peta Mahals.

Alongside the definition of new functions and powers, came the fixation of better and decent salaries - both being for the first time considered as essentials of a good service. There was at the same time a scheme for the organisation of public services<sup>57</sup> as in British India.

The remuneration of village servants was made as far as possible in cash allowance, rather than by assignments of land and the produce of the fields they earlier took. That helped both the state in maintaining its account and the individual in a particular case where his land assignment was inadequate for the maintenance of the family. Economic justice, was thus a significant feature of the new arrangement.

To avoid abuse and misuse of power and authority, as well as to provide for a better exercise of the same, there was in certain respects, a curtailment of power, and in other

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57. T. Madhavrao's Memo dated 18 July 1875, File 35/7, op.cit.

an enhancement of the same for the bureaucracy. Simultaneous was the withdrawal of penal powers from the hands of the nobility, viz., jamindars, and izardars<sup>58</sup>. In short, the powers of patronage and punishment were being both curtailed and defined.

Reorganisation of the treasury, both central and of the districts was a part and parcel of the reconstruction programme being undertaken.

With both these reorganised, provision was made for a regular depository of revenue in the place of the several 'dukans' or banking firms into which collections were made earlier<sup>59</sup>. The changes wrought in the revenue establishment affected the social economic system in that the utility and importance of the Potedars (bankers) was somewhat reduced.

Accompanied with these were the new set of reforms of village accounts and records based on the Bombay pattern<sup>60</sup>.

58. Dewan T. Madhavrao to Melvill dated 27th March, 1876, File 35/6, Question of Penal Powers for Jamindars, inamdars and others.

59. ...There is a regular treasury attached to each mahal with a paid treasurer and with accountants. It is properly guarded monies are regularly recorded, disbursed and accounted for ... Remittances are made to the central treasury by Hoondees which incidentally benefit trade..."  
Extract from letter of T. Madhavrao to R. Meade dated 9 June 1875, File 35/7, op.cit.

60. Kazi's note on preparation of revenue receipts, DN 107, File 36 (op.cit.)

That too was a necessity, for with increasing expenditure owing to the growth of the administrative establishment as well as the variety of public work of utility undertaken, there had to be a system of expenditure to each department, i.e. a discretionary allowance toward the expenses of that department<sup>61</sup>.

That too was a notable change from the past when for the slightest expenditure, Hujur sanction was necessary - something which was burdensome for the ruler and at times, must have been embarrassing for the officer.

Yet another point of difference from the past procedures, was the account given to the recruitment policy of officers and servants of the state. Merit, Calibre and character were now given due weightage and mere association with the royal family or the nobility did not count. In past times, it were private interests and na<sup>3</sup>jaranas that were considered at the time of recruitment and appointment. In that way, was one evil of the administrative system removed.

To make the change over smooth, however, the policy was to retain and promote the deserving men already in service, but to fill vacancies with men who were subjects of the Gaekwad government and were qualified for service<sup>62</sup>. So it

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61. DN 100, File 584, Decentralisation file, op.cit.

62. Kazi's Memo dated 12 Oct. 1875, File 35/7 (op.cit.)

was not that there was a widespread or an outright overhauling of the system.

Another notable change which is to be taken along with the change in administration was that of the bend towards collective working and collective judgement in matters pertaining to the state and the public<sup>63</sup>. That signified a new spirit in the attitude of those who governed and indicates a semblance to modern democratic ideas of government.

Thus a committee was formed of six people<sup>64</sup> to deliberate on matters such as what the different departments would be in the dewan's catchery, what powers the heads of departments were to have, and what the strength of the establishments were to be.

Measures regarding land revenue systems :

Whilst the measures pertaining to the administrative machinery were radical in most respects, being novel, those pertaining to the land revenue system claim no such credit. For in most part they were a continuation of the schemes and programmes contemplated by Khanderao Gaekwad. No doubt, the greatest merit of the dewan lay in the more successful implementation of the schemes and programmes afore mentioned.

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63. Madhavrao's Memo dated 29th Nov. 1875, File 35/7, op.cit.

64. The members of the Committee were Kazi Shahabuddin, the Sar Suba, Vinayak Kirtane, the Fadnis, and others as Mr. Pestonji, Mr. Cursefji, Mr. Cowasjee, and the dewan T. Madhavrao himself, *ibid*.

Thus the izara system was removed from a wider area, the bighoti was applied to more places and the separation of functions of the revenue department was affected more successfully.

The most notable achievement of the dewan was, however, in the conciliation of the peasants and thus the reducing of the greatest tension in society by a rough and ready reduction in land revenue demand. Moreover, not only did the dewan give the immediate relief needed, but by boosting up the morale of the people, set the direction that was a change from the earlier serious direction towards rapid deterioration and stagnation of economic conditions.

In one respect, was the change wrought by the dewan, radical, in the context being discussed. That was in the annual settlement of jamabandi or land revenue demand; something which was unknown to the state before.<sup>65</sup> For prior to 1875, the jamabandi was fixed for ten years, hence was called the 'deccennial' leases. No officer had the power to alter the amount fixed in the decennial lease during its currency. In such a system, with little or no flexibility

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65. "In this state annual jamabandi or settlement of the state demand has hitherto been unknown. The practice has been for the district officers to send in estimates of probable income for the year ...". Note : the scope for fraud and irregularity in the old system.

Kazi Shahabuddin to Pelly, Agent to governor general and special commissioner Baroda, dated 30th March 1875, Administration, Report 31st, March 1875, DN 107, File 632, (op.cit.)

in government demand as per season, the individual suffered in years of poor yield, whilst the sarkar lost the advantage of years of good yield.

The new system of annual settlement since 1875 nullified the above two merits and demerits, and in addition gave to the cultivator the freedom of taking up or relinquishing land every year according to convenience and circumstance of the particular individual. Moreover, in the new settlement the various illegal exactions peculiar to the bhagbatai assessment were abolished and the cultivator was much relieved.

The guiding principles of the dewan's settlement had been one, to give the people relief by reducing demand and, two, while so doing to avoid causing financial loss to government - hence the mild reductions.

As appraisal of the Dewan's policies :

Dissatisfied though the people appear to have been<sup>66</sup>

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66. Note: The press opinions indicating public opinion and expectations.

(a) "...complaints against the management of this state are as loud as ever .... the enquiry into the rights and emoluments of the Sirdars and Inamdars ...has not been contemplated as yet ...work is not discharged with the necessary speed .... too much economy is exercised in the matter of charity ..." Extract from the subodh Patrika of 20th Aug. pp.11-12, per week ending 26 Aug. NNR B. July - Dec. 1876, NAI.

(b) "The people, however, who have been aggrieved by the mal administration of the late ruler complain of the slowness of the new dewan in redressing their grievances. Extract from the Gujarat Mitra of 5th Sept., p.9, Week ending 11 Sept.1875, NNR B. July to Dec. 1875, NAI.

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on account of their expectations from the new government, there is no doubt that immediate tensions were relieved by the reductions, hence the uprising of peasants that seemed imminent, was prevented.

Regarding the dissatisfaction of the people as reflected in the press comments it is to be said that in view of the magnitude as well as the variety of problems<sup>67</sup> of the time and the short period of office, what the dewan did was commendable, and much more, was difficult to achieve. Moreover, one cannot overlook the damaging effects of the famine of 1877 that retarded the process and pace of progress. But for that the benefits following from his measures would have been greater and more obvious.

Besides, owing to the growing administrative establishments, the increased public works, and the remissions as well as the writing off of arrears, the financial position of the dewan was a tight one. With no new sources of revenue and with the liabilities the state had, one can appreciate the efforts made by the dewan in stabilization of the state, and so condone

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"...His mind is cast in an English mould..." extract from the Maharashtra Mitra of 21st April, NNR, B. 1881, NAI.

There were many more complaints of the govt. in the press.

67. The problems were those concerning agriculturists, Sardars, bankers and traders, boundary disputes, the administrative machinery, salt, opium and Abkari issues with the paramount power.

the un-substantial relief given. The people were too anxious and the expectations much too high, to be fulfilled in so short a time.

However, if there were complaints against the dewan, there was also appreciation for him<sup>68</sup>. For deficient though the measures were, they do not overshadow and nullify the good work and their pursing effect.

The Rule of Sayajirao III - 1881-1884-1900:

With Sayajirao III we have a ruler with a new philosophy and a new attitude towards the people. It was the philosophy of the ruler having a certain duty towards the state and aspiring for the well being and happiness of all subjects. Thus, Sayajirao III worked for the progress of the State with a spirit of service and a dedication to certain ideals.

Though the new direction had been given in 1875 and the forces of development had been set in motion, it was during his period of rule that the process saw its fulfilment. Thus

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68. (a) "...is glad to find that the Dewan has framed a code of Laws ..." Extract from The Samsher Bahadur of 5th May for week ending 13 May 1876, p.12, NNR B NAI.

(b) The Hitchechhu observed that T. Madhavrao had fulfilled the expectations of the people. The same referred to the high political genuines of this able enlightened and experienced native minister of Baroda.

The Hitchechhu of 27th Sept. for week ending 6 Oct. p.9, NNRB July-Dec. 1877, NAI.

the Gaekwad continued the good work begun during his minority rule and so furthered the process of recoupment, particularly that of the agriculturists.

Completion of the Scientific Survey and Settlement :

The major undertaking of the government and the one most necessary for development of the agrarian community was the survey, and settlement of land revenue demand.

This first scientific survey operation went through different stages during the years, 1884-1903. The 1st period (1885-89) was a period in which the settlement officer was trying to feel his ground and was uncertain as to how the prospects would work out. The talukas of the Amreli division and certain talukas of the Baroda division as Dubhoi, Padra and Sinor were dealt with in this period. In this settlement the villages were treated individually and no group or standard rates were fixed.

During the Second period (1888-1895) most of the Baroda division and Navsari and Kadi Prants too were surveyed and settled. The satisfactory working of the settlement in the Amreli division gave greater confidence to the settlement officer who now assumed a greater latitude of treatment in the subject.

The 3rd and last stage fell during the years 1895-1903 and included the most contested settlement viz., that of Petlad. And it was here alone that the officers were at a loss as to how to proceed. And it was here again that the settlement saw the first opposition against it.

The objective behind the settlement was to secure a contented and prosperous peasantry by enabling them a better income for a better subsistence; by the low demands. That would give them the needful incentive to work and the circumstances in which to recoup. ✓

Other incentives for agricultural development :

While the reduction of demand by these settlements was the major achievement of the ruler and the most potent incentive for development and enhancement of agricultural, enterprise, others of no mean importance were given as well. And among them were the new water rates to encourage bagayat cultivation; the creation of cooperative credit societies and state banks for advancing credit to cultivators at low rates of interest of giving of waste land for cultivation at attractively low rates and other incentives as would help the industry to develop.

Other developments :

The year after 1881 also saw the development of other institutions that are the basis of a modern society viz.,

schools, colleges, non-agricultural industries and self-governing institutions as local self-government<sup>69</sup>. It saw the elimination of those vestiges of the past i.e. the izara system, assessment in kind and others as had hindered the progress of economy. Many works begun in the preceding administration as the reorganisation of administration, the settlement of barkhali and other disputes saw their completion in the years after 1881.

Sayajirao III, therefore, deserves much credit for laying the foundations of a modern and prosperous state - a state having a constitution for the first time, with a reasonable body of laws and institutions at a time when most of the princely states were still in their medieval environment. To him goes the credit of making Baroda a premier state in the 20th century, much ahead of others in the India under British paramountcy.

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69. The 'Shivaji' of 26 Jan, p.24, Week ending 3rd Feb. NNR, B. Jan. to May, 1883 - NAI.