

CHAPTER 5: REVENUE FUNCTIONARIES AND LANDED RELATIONSHIPS IN BARODA STATE (1800-1875)

The Baroda State continued with traditional practices of revenue collection which led to the establishment of relationships between the state and the village communities. Due to a developing administration, the state had to rely on external agencies to meet out its financial and other requirements. Therefore, the state administrative structure was rested on the twin mechanisms of the *izaradari* (revenue farming system) and the *potedari* (banking system). The chapter first focuses upon the *izaradari* system, followed by the description of *potedari* system. Excepting the *izaradari* and *potedari* systems, there subsisted networks of intermediary classes (*bhagadar, narwadar, ankdedar, mulgirasia, matadar, mehwasi, talukdar, watandar* etc.,) within the boundaries of the Baroda State. Therefore, the chapter contains a description of intermediary revenue functionaries and their relationships with land and peasantry. During the initial period, the state intended only to enjoy the share of produce instead of directly interfering in land administration of intermediary classes. But in the later period, the state attempted to establish a direct relationship with the peasants. The chapter lastly deals with the changes made by the state between 1857-1875 and their impacts on agrarian society.

Introduction

It is difficult to ascertain the nature of land administration of Gaekwads before the partition of Gujarat (1752-53) because the Gaekwad's dominions could not reasonably be called as a state. However, even in those regions occupied by the Gaekwad the main source of income was land revenue. Land revenue was collected through implementation of traditional practices of revenue collection. The implementation of land tenures and collection of regular revenue led to the establishment of landed relationships between the state and the peasants.

Before the consolidation of Baroda State under the Gaekwads, number of land tenures had prevailed in different divisions such as Baroda, Kadi, Navsari and Amreli. These have already been discussed in Chapter 2. So far as the villages in Baroda State were concerned, they were divided into two major categories viz., *khalsa* (government) and *barkhali* (alienated) villages in which several types of land tenures had prevailed. Of these, one of the common tenures was *bhagbatai* tenure.¹ The *bhagbatai* tenure had prevailed primarily in the initial period of establishment of Gaekwad's rule and was practice almost all over Gujarat.² In this type of tenure, the state took a portion of 'produce' of the land as revenue, instead the taking of revenue in 'cash'.³ In *bhagbatai* system, the government share called *raja bhag* or *vaje* was ascertained by examining either the standing crops in the field or all crops brought to the *khalwad* (threshing ground). The crops were brought after they would reap to the *khalwad*, where they remained till the state demand was satisfied. After deducting the government share, the remainder was distributed among the primary peasants and the village servants.⁴ The share given to the village servants were termed such as *havaladari*, *mandvi*, *sukhadi*, *kharjat*, *jampo*,

¹ Patel, C. B. (1920). *Mulaki Khatano Itihas. Vadodara Rajyano*. Baroda: Arya Sudharak Press. 28

² Patel, C. B. (1920). 48

³ Rao, T. M. (n. a.). *Minor Hint: Lectures Delivered to H. H. The Maharaja Gaekwar, Sayaji Rao III, G. C. S. I.* Bombay: The British India Press. 1998a

⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). *Gazetteer of the Baroda State. Vol. II*. Bombay: The Time Press. 2 and Patel, G. D. (1972). *Gujarat State Gazetteers, Amreli District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 410

kunvar etc.⁵ Thus, the *bhagbatai* was a system of revenue management under which state enjoyed the fixed share of produce in kind. It was the earliest form in which state shared the produce of soil with the peasants.⁶

The Gaekwads as mentioned earlier did not devise the *bhagbatai* system but adopted it. Through this system the state and the peasantry forged a mutual relationship which was reciprocal and exploitative at the same time. Since the system had evolved as a result of uncertainties due to the political chaos of eighteenth century, hence there were no definitive laws in the system which could fix the rates of assessment. The assessment was often based on standing crops at the end of the season. Most of the benefits of the tenure were enjoyed by the new social groups that had emerged in the absence of a centralized power in Gujarat. These were intermediaries who often did not come from traditional landed aristocracy but had emerged out of the need of the hour to provide assistance to the state in the matters of land revenue collection. The system continued to exist till 1875 with various levels of intensity. The state on its part in this pre-modern phase did not really pay attention to the vagaries of the system. Instead, there was a continuous attempt made by the state to wrest away control from the landed magnates who had grown powerful in the early nineteenth century. The early nineteenth century also saw within in its wake evolution of number of systems some unique to its place such as the *potedari* system and some that they borrowed from the Marathas.

Since its formation the Baroda State administrative structure rested on the twin systems of the *izaradari* (revenue farming) and the *potedari* (banking system) to meet out its financial requirements. Due to a developing administration and the fact that the most of the state's finances were in the hands of intermediaries the state could not collect revenue. Hence the

⁵ Patel, G. D. (1972). 410

⁶ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). *History of Land Revenue Administration in Gujarat (1407 AD to 2017 AD)*. Gujarat: Revenue Department, Government of Gujarat. 57

revenues were farmed out to the highest bidders. The state also could not maintain a central treasury in its nascent stage. It had to rely upon accredited *sahukars* to meet out the expenses both the state administration and the personal expenses of the royal family. The state paid a heavy rate of interest and a commission on these transactions. In due course of time, instead of institutionalizing the state controlled financial mechanism, the Maharajas themselves became the *sahukars*. Thus, both *izaradari* and *potedari* systems have played significant role in the process of the socio-economic development of the Baroda State. Therefore, a detailed account of both these systems is given below. The *izaradari* system primarily displays the functioning of land tenures and *potedari* system explains the culmination of relationships forged between the state and the landed aristocracy.

Izaradari System

It is difficult to say absolutely when the *izaradari* system was introduced in the Baroda state but the data suggests that it was introduced in the late eighteenth century when the process of formation of Baroda state was still fluid. During the initial period, the Gaekwad supremacy over the certain territories of Gujarat was not established properly. Therefore, it was not easy for them to collect regular revenue, to settle the boundary disputes, to focus on public welfare or to provide *peasants* the required facilities. Hence, the nascent state sought the assistance of the external agencies who could provide the military service and financial aids. In this process, the right to collect the revenue of village, *mahal* or *prant* was granted to the person who promised to provide the Baroda State the maximum revenue. This often took the shape of *izaradari* or revenue farming system and the person to whom *izara/kamavis*⁷ was granted came to be known as *izaradar* or *kamavisdar*⁸ etc.⁹

⁷ Revenue assignment or contract. Beside a farm or lease of revenue of a village or district, it was also of customs or collection of any descriptions, as of customary fees or allowance.

⁸ The terms *izaradar* and *kamavisdar* are same which means revenue farmer.

⁹ Patel, C. B. (1920). 41

1. Functioning of the *Izaradari* System: By the mid of the 18th century, the revenue collection became an important feature of control. After the Maratha rule was established in Gujarat, the revenue was divided between Peshwa and Gaekwad in 1751-52. They both adopted the *izaradari* system. The *izaradar* of the district managed individual villages through the *patels* who distributed the demand among the peasants in the manner convenient to them. This system created an extra-ordinary complexity of tenures and system of revenue management.¹⁰ It was the time when the right of collecting land revenue was sold by public auction to the highest bidders or *izaradar*. Therefore, in these circumstances, the *izaradari* system became a common form of revenue assessment and collection, particularly during the second half of 18th and first half of 19th centuries. The revenue collection system was entrusted to the agents and their agencies through the mechanisms of contract and bidding. The land revenue farms were contracted out to the highest bidders. Once the contract was granted the agents then collected land revenue on behalf of the state.¹¹ It is important to note that under this system the state did not fix the amount of revenue to be paid by peasants to *izaradar*. Hence, the assessment was erratic and placed the peasantry at the mercy of *izaradar*. To them the *izaradar* became the *mai-baap* (caretakers) rather than the state.

The *izaradari* system in turn created a nexus that led to greater involvement of *sahukars* in the financial and political affairs of the state. As per the *izaradari* system, the *izaradar* had to pay half of the agreed sum as '*rasad*' to the state at the time of acquiring of their *izara*. The introduction of the practice of *rasad* made the *izaradar* highly dependent on the *sahukars*. This was because in the eighteenth century the state had not fully developed financial administrative structure and it depended upon the agency of *sahukars* to act like their treasurer. Hence, a unique feature evolved, wherein, instead of dealing with the numerous *izaradars* directly, the

¹⁰ Patel G. D. (1969). *The Land Revenue Settlements and The British Rule in India*, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University Press. 23

¹¹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 3

Gaekwads positioned the *sahukars* between themselves and the *izaradars*. At times the *sahukars* would also bid for the *izara* of village or *mahal*. Thus, duplication of role gave more power to some of the *izaradar/sahukar*. By the end of the eighteenth century there had emerged large numbers of *izaradars* who not only collected revenue on behalf of the state but also dealt with with civil, police and judicial administration.

The *izardari* system was not only confined to the management of land and collection of land revenue. It was pervasive in most of the fields of administrations of the Baroda State. For instance, the *izara* of custom duty, *abkari*, toll tax, etc., were also granted to *izaradars*. Being in many respects akin to the monopoly, it perhaps gave rise to a good deal of corruption and oppression. But, at the same time, it also assured a steady and fixed revenue to the Gaekwad government without inflating the cost of administration since the late eighteenth century. The local records indicate that the Gaekwad government exercised a constant personal watch on all administrative and financial matters. The matters of dispute often would reach the rulers, who would then take corrective measures.¹² The threats that the state faced was mostly from the turbulent tribes like *kolis* and *khosas* who had been displaced because of the vagaries of the eighteenth-century politics. However, the establishment of Baroda State had brought about a sense of security in the region. The trade had begun to grow with rapid activities in the region as has been highlighted in the local records. This did not imply an increase in per capita income or improvement in the life style of people, especially of the peasantry. The uncertainty of the rates and modes of assessments had brought about a sense of insecurity amongst the agricultural classes. This had led to evictions and the state was noted to have constantly faced evictions or migrations. The *izaradars* were known to have faced the problems of small-scale migrations and they made attempts to repopulate and resettle the villages.¹³ Thus they played

¹² Joshi, P. M. (1955). *HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 1826-1835*. Baroda: Government Press. iv

¹³ Joshi, P. M. (1955). *HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. iv*

the role of a patron. As agents of the states, the *izaradars* got substantial hold over the peasantry.

The *izaradari* was basically a system of administration in which the state granted *izaradars* the rights to manage *village* or *mahal*. In this system, neither the state nor the *izaradars* defined the methods of how or how much land revenue should be collected. As a result, the *bhagbatai* system was used to define the methods and amount of land revenue to be collected from the peasants under the *izaradari* administration. It is also important to note that, during the early period, it was found to be difficult to collect *vaje* under the *bhagbatai* system. Hence, the *bhagbatai* system was replaced by the payment of land revenue in cash.¹⁴ The system of payment of land revenue in cash is called as *bighoti* which was used since the old times but was not common. During the initial period, even the land revenue in cash was not fixed. Hence, it is not clear as to through which method was the revenue collected or how was the assessment fixed. Whether higher revenues were collected from rich land and lesser amount collected from poor quality land? Whether the good monsoons brought higher assessments and lack of rains restricted the demands? Lack of records from the peasantry has left these questions unanswered. However, one thing is clear that the peasantry was dependent upon the moneylenders to meet their daily requirements, including payment of land revenue in cash. The implementation of cash assessment was not so much efficient and in this circumstance the peasants became the subject of exploitation by the moneylenders. The payment of land revenue in cash led to the emergence of new class of moneylenders between the state, *izaradars* and peasants.

By late eighteenth century, the *bighoti* system had emerged as the most important method for land revenue collection. In this system, the land was assessed according to its area, position

¹⁴ Patel, G. D. (1972). 410

and quality.¹⁵ The Maratha extracted *peshkash* from the villages in order to facilitate realization of land revenue. At one time, the land revenue was assessed on the basis of the number of ploughs used and area cultivated. The plough tax from Rs. 5 to Rs. 35 was charged on an area varying from 60 to 100 *bighas* according to the classification of soil. Those who did not cultivate lands personally were liable to *udhad vero*, a tax levied generally from non-agriculturalists. By imposing *udhad vero*, the state had made it clear that its control was not only confined to the agriculturalists but also the non-agriculturalists. In 1812, Vithalrao Diwanji introduced *kacha vahivat* under which *vaje* was recovered by levying *santi vero*¹⁶. This system was continued till 1830.¹⁷ The system of plough assessment is called as the *holbandi* system. It was prevalent in the eastern parts of Kadi District and Sankheda Taluka of Baroda District and in certain part of Navsari District.¹⁸ This mode of assessment of land was restricted to tracts inhabited principally by *bhils*, *dhankas*, *naikdas*, *dublas*, *konkanis* or such other tribes.¹⁹ Gaekwads after consolidating their position often got involved in the matters of revenue contracts. They kept themselves aware of the conditions of the peasantry and their villages and made attempts to bring about reforms. For instance, Bhukan Bhagwan, an *izaradar* of the state, had contracted revenue farm during the reign of Maharaja Sayajirao-II. According to an agreement, the state had granted the farm of village of Vareli (near Siswa in Baroda) to Bhukan Bhagwan where he was given the *patilki* (jurisdictional) rights as well. Additional encouragement was given by the state when he promised to repopulate the village which was for a long time deserted. The rate for assessment were to be Rs. 6 per plough for the year 1825, Rs. 10 per plough for the year 1826 and Rs. 15 per plough for the year 1827. After 1827, the

¹⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). *The Rulers of Baroda*. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 223

¹⁶ Plough tax.

¹⁷ Patel, G. D. (1972). 410

¹⁸ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 28 and Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). *Gujarat State Gazetteers, Mahsana District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 500

¹⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 58

usual rates were taken.²⁰ The state was actively involved and made attempts to motivate the peasants to populate the villages. The state's objectives to populating the villages can be entrusted to the utilization of lands. The maximum utilization of the lands could increase state revenue on regular basis. It resulted in the consolidation of landed relationships between the state and the peasants.

2. Status of *Izaradars*: It is clear from the above account that the *izaradar* was the farmer of revenues of the Baroda State. The state government had allotted right of collecting revenue either to creditors or to persons who purchased that right at a public auction i.e., the *izaradars*. According to Elliot, the Gaekwads took a particular care in selecting right person for the right job. Over the period of time, the *izaradars* became very powerful but not consistent. The powers of the *izaradar* were different in different circumstances. The tenure of farm was contractual and did not contain any legal clause for improvement of the administration of lands. The charge of the farm was purely considered as a mercantile transaction and thus their main concentration was towards making was in making the highest possible profit.²¹

The *izaradars*, as it turned out, were not government officials but a corporate agency to whom the land revenue collection was outsourced.²² The state did not interfere much in the initial stages. This might have led to a greater exploitation of the peasantry. In this stage, the focus of the *izaradars* was mostly on collecting as much as revenue as possible. Little attention as paid to carrying out administrative reforms within their farms, since the cost of the *izara* had to be made out from the peasantry.²³ The *izaradar* were free to decide the share of revenue as per their desire. They gradually authorized the collection of revenue to the *matdar* (village

²⁰ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 30

²¹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 221

²² Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 3

²³ Thakar, H. G. (1935). *Bandharan Ane Itihas*, Baroda: Government Printing Press. 58

headman).²⁴ On certain occasions whole of *mahals* or even districts were also leased out to the *izaradar*. The *izaradars* often assumed different names and offices such as *kamavisdaars*, *vahivatdars*, *mamlatdars*, *desais*, *mazmudars*, *amins*, *patels*, *potedars* etc.²⁵ They also had judiciary right i.e., they could be a *diwani* and *fauzdari* judge.²⁶ In order to maintain law and order they were authorized to maintain an armed force. This meant that they had access to forts, palaces and *thanas* within their jurisdiction.²⁷

In a general assessment many *izaradars* converted themselves into landed aristocrats and although the position that they enjoyed was not hereditary yet they were known to control the regions for years together. The main task of the *izaradar*, however, had remained land revenue collection and to finance the affairs of the state. So far as the matter of supervision by the state was concerned, it is difficult to describe the nature of supervision exercised over the *izaradars* before the time of Babaji Appaji. However, *izaradars* often acted independently of the state despite appeals made by the peasantry. The state sometimes intervened and responded by sending out warnings but most of the times the state government turned a deaf ear to such petitions.²⁸

3. Assistance of *Izaradar*: It is already mentioned that although the *izaradars* acquired supreme authority over the territories under their jurisdiction, the management and administration of fiscal units were still into the hands of local revenue functionaries i.e., *desai*, *amin*, *mazmudar*, *manotidar*, *patel* etc. Thus, a growing network developed consisting of the revenue functionaries who became powerful over the period of time.²⁹ But they lost some of their rights and powers on occasions. For instance, in the *Kalambandi* of 1827 issued by

²⁴ Desai, G. H. (1920). *Vadodara Rajya Prantic Sarve Sangrah. Kadi Prant*. Baroda: Steam Press. 212

²⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 362, 413-414

²⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 414

²⁷ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 54

²⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 222

²⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 43

Maharaja Sayajirao-II, the *kamavisdar* was urged to select his assistants from the families who had been given right of inheritance by the state. This could be because these families would be loyal to the state than to their immediate paymaster. *Izaradars* in return also had devised mechanism to counter the influence of these men. They did not directly assist the *izaradar* in the execution of duties or in the collection of the revenue. But it was their business to provide aid indirectly in persuading the people to work, to take up land, to pay their taxes, and to behave themselves. However, there was one exception to that rule in the office of the *mazmudar* whose duty was to maintain financial accounts, i.e., to write out the *jamabandi* of the *mahals*.³⁰ The *desais* and the *mazumdars* supervised the revenue farms placed under their charge. Some of them took on the responsibilities to improve their farms with an eye on profit; kept the constant flow of revenues into the villages; settled the *jamabandi* and other levies and rates of assessments.³¹ Most of the times the *izaradars* had to make good deal with the *patel* as he was often the man of the state. However, it was common to buy favours and the best way to do so was offer lower fixation rates on a rich *patel's* land. Sometime the *izaradari* of villages was completely authorized to the *patels* who by taking this advantage extracted the money from peasantry as much as possible.³² The *patel* often termed as *zamindar* stood next to *izaradar*. The *patel's* authority was confined to the village level and his office was hereditary.³³ *Izaradars* were further assisted by the *karkuns* or clerks.³⁴ The assigned territories under the *izaradar* were called as *mahal* which was divided into several *thanas* or groups of villages averaging from ten to fifteen. For instance, the Baroda Mahal consisted of 18 *thanas*.³⁵ These *thanas* were managed by a state official called *thanedar* while village by a *mehta*.³⁶ Both *thanedar* and

³⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 227

³¹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 43

³² Desai, G. H. (1920). 212

³³ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). *Gujarat State Gazetteers. Vadodara District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 522

³⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 363

³⁵ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 4

³⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 363

mehta were helping *izaradar* in collection of land revenue.³⁷ The *thanedar*'s task was to supervise the collection of revenue while the *mehta* actually collected it. There were offices instituted which provided checks and balances. For instance, the office of the *mehta*, was checked by a *watandar*³⁸ or hereditary officer, *talati* or weigher who represented the interest of villagers. The *thanedar* continued to do their works till 1859-60 when Maharaja Khanderao introduced new revenue policy and police system.³⁹

The local officers such as *desai*, *mazmudar*, *patel*, *talati* etc., were called *watandars*.⁴⁰ The *watandar* mean possessor of the offices and were appointed to act as middle-men between the state and peasantry.⁴¹ Their task was to suggest and make principles regarding the cultivation of land, collection of land revenue etc.⁴² The *desai* had to assist in the settlement of revenue and send regular receipts to state.⁴³ The *mazmudar* had to keep the account about the *jamabandi* of *mahal* – fiscal unit.⁴⁴ It was the duty of these officials to superintend the improvement of the *paragana*, to make the *lavni abadi* or the preparation for sowing and to settle the *jamabandi* or other rates of assessment.⁴⁵ These local officers had been appointed by state as a medium of communication with the local people.⁴⁶ In fact, in Baroda State, as elsewhere, the government did not interfere much with the old village system. The only one-point agenda was to maximize their revenue collection.⁴⁷ In order to collect the revenue, *kamavsidar* sometime used to assist the *kamavisdar* of other estates. For instance, Letter dated 1-12-1826 to the *kamavisdar* of Visnagar and Vadnagar and to Ganpatrao Pagedar asking them to lend the service of their

³⁷ Patel, C. B. (1920). 43

³⁸ The word *watandar* is derived from *watan*, one's own native country or place of residence, and eventually came to mean any hereditary estates, offices, or privilege.

³⁹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 4

⁴⁰ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 523

⁴¹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 4

⁴² Patel, C. B. (1920). 43

⁴³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 363

⁴⁴ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 56

⁴⁵ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 522

⁴⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 362

⁴⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 363

cavalry and *sibandi* troops to the *kamavisdar* of Vijapur at the time of the collection of revenue from *mehvasi* villages.⁴⁸

The *izaradar* had to follow the governments orders regarding the civil, police and judicial administration of the *mahals*. The *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26 incorporating 21 articles provide the guidance to *kamavisdars* in the revenue and criminal administration of the *mahals* which were given to them in septennial lease.⁴⁹ Some of the articles given in *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26 hence is discussed below for a better understanding of landed relationships.

According to the 1st article of *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26, each *kamavisdar* was supplied with a tabulator for containing the estimates of expected revenue returns from the *mahals* concerned for each year from 1826. If he failed to pay the stipulated amount, he was liable to pay a high interest at 9%.⁵⁰ The 2nd article instructed *kamavisdar* to not spend more than the amount mentioned in his lease. According to the 3rd article, the government expected the *kamavisdar* not to oppress the peasantry and to behave in a way which would ensure peace. The *kamavisdar* was to take the help of a respectable *zamindar* of the *mahal* for the work of revenue administration. This *zamindar* and the *mazumdar* of the *mahal* were to hand over all the account papers of the *mahal* to the government within one month after the close of the official year (*mriga sal*). The 4th article mentions that the statement of income and expenditure of *mahal* were to be submitted within two months after the end of the official year. All the *nemnooks*, annuities and *sibandi* dues were to be paid against receipts before the end of the year. The privileges of the *girasias*, *brahmins*, *bards*, village servants etc., were to be respected.⁵¹ This could be based on complaints by the said parties. For instance, the Letter dated 21-8-1826 addressed to the *kamavisdar* of Gandevi and the *sar suba* of Surat Atthavisi refers to a

⁴⁸ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 18

⁴⁹ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 26

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 27

complaint made to government by the *brahmins* of Gandevi town that the *kamavisdar* had unwarrantedly taken side and was harassing them because they declined to abide by his instruction regarding a caste disputes, wherein Rajaram Mehta of Jadeshwar was excommunicated. The letter direct the two officers concerned to stop harassment and respect the rules of the community.⁵² The Letter dated 19-10-1826 to the *kamavisdar* of Kheralu in reply to his letter informing the government that Dala Jaga Bhat had fabricated copper-plate and document and claimed that the village Paladi (in Visnagar Taluka) belonged to him from the Mughal times. The government order that the Bhat should sent to the royal presence with all the evidences for verifying his claims.⁵³ According to 5th article in *Kalambandi*, the government did not claim to any share of the income increased beyond the stipulated figure through the personal endeavor and encouragement of the *kamavisdar*. The 6th and 7th articles of the *Kalambandi* gave a warning to the *zamindars* to not to lodge false complaints or to instigate the *peasants* to do so. The *zamindars*' emoluments were to be continued as before, and they were to be continue to be loyal and faithful to the government. The *kalambandi* also focused on the judicial duties and responsibilities of the revenue contractors and officials. According to 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th articles of *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26, the *kamavisdar* was to investigate the complaints against respectable person in the *mahal*. No dishonor was to be done to respectful persons and all cases of proved offences were to be tried with the help of jury (*panch*) with the previous sanction of the government.⁵⁴ The *kamavisdar* was to try civil suits with the help of a jury at the cost of the party against whom the decision would go. The government dues for conduction such trials were to be charged at different rates from 6 ¼ to 2 per cent according to the amount under dispute. The *kamavisdar* was to be guided by the specified schedule of penalties while dealing with various categories of crimes and was to be

⁵² Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBK (New Series). Volume. I. 12

⁵³ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBK (New Series). Volume. I. 17

⁵⁴ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBK (New Series). Volume. I. 27

moderate in exacting fines.⁵⁵ Murderers and rioters were not to be released without the sanction of the government. Besides, these securities and compensation were to be exacted from those who robbed the mahal. The state government was to be kept informed of repetitions of crimes.⁵⁶

Another *kalambandi* was issued in the year 1827 which was an expansion of previous. The *izaradars* were ordered not to disturb the rights of *girasias*, *bhats* and *brahmins*, and to make proper payment of *devasthan*, *asami nemnuk*, the *daitias* of *darakhdars*, and of the salary due to the *sibandi*. The *Kalambandi* also described the way the police work was to be carried out in the district by the revenue contractors. The police work of the district was done with the assistant of a semi-military force, the *mahali* or *thevanuki sibandi*, who were sent on *mohsuli* duty. This *Kalambandi* urged the *vahivatdar* to suppress disturbances by *bhils*, *mehwas* and *girasias*. To seize such offenders, he could send them for trial, but if he failed to affect their capture with the ordinary police force, the government promised him assistance. The *izaradar* had not, according to the *Kalambandi* of 1827, the power of punishing the military placed at his disposal.⁵⁷

Generally, the *izaradar* had to pay the amount of *izara* after every four weeks. If the amount was not paid by the given time, a total of 9 % interest was taken in form of penalty as it was mentioned in the *Kalambandi* of 1825-26. Besides it, any unsanctioned expenditure was to come out of the *izaradar's* own pocket. This would cover expenses such as construction or repair of public works, gifts extended on royal occasions or private ceremonies etc. They were to maintain the record of all the expenses and collection which more than often was not shared with the government.⁵⁸ At the end of the year, the *vahivatdar* sent his account of the sums he had received and those he had disbursed during this tenure of farm. Most of the times the

⁵⁵ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 27-28

⁵⁶ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 28

⁵⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 228

⁵⁸ Patel, C. B. (1920). 43

accounts were forged, as it was in the interest of the *izaradar* to make the government believe that his profits had been small. The revenue functionaries were also known to exaggerate the expenditures carried out which always ran higher than the receipts. Since the above *kalambandis* amply explain the concern of the state with regards to condition of peasantry, the revenue functionaries had realized that any undue exaction of taxes from the *peasants* might lead to complain to the state and might reveal the true state of things.⁵⁹ Maintaining the account of *jamabandi* in a *taluka* was assigned to *mazmudars* but however most of the times the records were prepared with the instruction of the *izaradars*.⁶⁰

4. State, *Izaradar* and Peasants: The landed relationships between the state, peasantry and the revenue functionaries were based on requirements of the state to exercise some amount of control over its revenue resources. As is noted, in the first two decades of the nineteenth century the peripheral social groups along with British officials had appropriated control over states resources. An attempt was made by the state to bring about changes in the third decade. There can be seen a consciousness in the state administration under Maharaja Sayajirao-II to regain some of the control. There was also a concern that too much of power in the hands of the revenue functionaries and their supporters was leading to loss of revenues. The Maharaja gave instructions in form of *kalambandis* issued from time to time.⁶¹ According to 14th article of *Kalambandi* of 1825-26, there were two classes of land, the government and the private. The cultivators were to till two parts of the *sarkari* lands (cultivated and uncultivated lands) before being allowed to till one part of the private lands.⁶² The *Kalambandi* of 1827 was the instructions of Maharaja Sayajirao-II to the *vahivatdars* of that year. According to this

⁵⁹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 225

⁶⁰ Patel, C. B. (1920). 43

⁶¹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 224

⁶² Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 28

kalambandi, the *kamavisdar* had the right to settle with the *peasants* the sums they should pay him.⁶³

By the *Kalambandi* of 1827, again the peasants were instructed to cultivate the government lands first. This would ensure more money falling into the hands of the state than usual. It also was to give a blow to the private interests.⁶⁴ The instructions were fairly explicit in nature, and went to the extent of instructing the peasants to till the government lands in a neighbouring village, in case of none being there in their own village.⁶⁵ A fine was instituted if the peasantry did not follow the instructions. For instance, the *savadiya* tax was to be levied from those who tilled more private land in spite of uncultivated government land being available. However, if private land was tilled by the owner himself, he was exempted from the said tax. Lands misappropriated by *patels* were to be taken over by government. The *patel* was not to be allowed to sell or mortgage *sarkari* lands. Lease holders from whom recoveries were in arrears were to be deprived of their lands which were to be leased out to others. The *kamavisdar* was prevented from exacting more than the fixed revenue even if there was an increase in the yield due to the cultivators own honest labour. The *kamavisdars* were forbidden to charge any extracts.⁶⁶

The state also encouraged resettling of those peasants who either were evicted or had left tilling due to the over exactions of the revenue functionaries.⁶⁷ According to 13th article of *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26, the *kamavisdar* was to allow *peasants* to settle down in his *mahal* only after making sure that the settlers had not incurred debt outside.⁶⁸ Thus, the peasants could migrate from one *izaradar's* territory to other *izaradar's* territory. But if the peasants did not

⁶³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 224

⁶⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 363

⁶⁵ Patel, C. B. (1920). 44

⁶⁶ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBK (New Series). Volume. I. 28

⁶⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 364

⁶⁸ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBK (New Series). Volume. I. 28

pay the amount payable to first *izaradar* then the other *izaradar* could not allow them to cultivate or habitat their territory.⁶⁹ According to 19th, 20th and 21st articles of *Kalambandi* dated 1825-26, a list of arrears due from the peasants was to be prepared and efforts made to collect the arrears, first preference had to be given to the recovery of government dues. The compensation was to be given to the *peasants* troubled or plundered by *bhils*, *mehwas*, *girasias* etc. All such cases were to be reported to the government for taking necessary action against the culprits. The *kamavisdar* was authorized to grant concessions in payment in case of calamities beyond human control. The lease was to continue for seven years during the observance of these terms.⁷⁰

The state also took care that the peasantry was not exploited, and the revenue functionaries responded to this in various fashion. Although, the client-patron relationship was forged, yet on multiple occasions the state had to threaten to ensure the well-being of the peasantry and most importantly to safeguard their revenue interests. This is contrary to general belief that before the beginning of the modernising process the state did not bother with the condition of the peasantry. The state had instructed the *izaradar* not to exploit the peasants when they were collecting revenue from them. The *izaradar* were also instructed to encourage the peasants to repopulate the villages as much as possible.⁷¹ For instance, Baroda Government's order dated 29-4-1791 had instructed the *kamavisdar* of Tilkawada not to press the *peasants* of Vasna about payment of taxes, but to encourage them to repopulate the village. It gave guarantee to the *peasants* of Vasna for repopulating the village. It instructed Bhujangrao Narhari to not allow his search party to harass the villagers of Vasna, especially as it was the ploughing seasons.⁷² The *Yadi* dated 7-3-1829 to the *kamavisdar* of Vijapur required him to secure a full revenue

⁶⁹ Patel, C. B. (1920). 44

⁷⁰ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 29

⁷¹ BSA. (1936). HSBR. Volume. III. 1790-1798. Sayajirao I Manajirao. and Govindrao. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 292

⁷² BSA. (1936). HSBR. Volume. III. 292

collection, however, they were to avoid creating any discontentment amongst the peasantry.⁷³ The Order dated 24-2-1829 to Sharan Rao Desai Jamidar, Nana Majumdar, Patils, Manotdars etc. who were the *kamavasidars* were warned by the state that the if they failed to promote the well-being of their peasants, there would be consequences.⁷⁴

Although Baroda State's administration has on number of occasions been accused of careless attitude towards their agricultural communities, there have been instances wherein the peasantry was provided relief in case of natural exigencies. The letter dated 30-5-1792 (Songad), throws a sufficient light on these issues. The state (Khandoji Baburao) had instructed the *Izaradar* Manajirao, that the famine had created havoc and he was to support people in every possible manner, especially by supplying them with food such as corn. Additionally, the corn should not be sold to them but to be given freely and not conditional lending. There was an appeal on the basis of the famine that had taken place in 1780.⁷⁵ The state government was consciousness of natural depredations that caused havoc in people's lives. Issues such as lack of rains or scanty rainfall also became a state issue. An Order dated 26-9-1824 clearly indicates that the state had written off revenue, providing relief to the peasants of Bahiyel at the request of the *izaradar*. Further the state government had ordered that the officials should extend the relief to the *peasants* by digging wells, and improving irrigational facilities. The state government dues were to be collected but at no point of time should the peasantry be disturbed or exploited.⁷⁶ The Baroda state was struck with drought next in 1827 and the state government had granted a request of the *mukadams* of the villages and given concession in the revenue assessments.⁷⁷

⁷³ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSB (New Series). Volume. I. 109

⁷⁴ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSB (New Series). Volume. I. 106

⁷⁵ BSA. (1936). HSB. Volume. III. 472-413

⁷⁶ Joshi, C. V. (1943). *HSBSR. Volume. VII. 1819-1825. Sayajirao II*. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 1067

⁷⁷ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSB (New Series). Volume. I. 47

A careful relationship was forged between the revenue functionaries and the peasantry in Baroda state. Although the revenue functionaries have often been described by the British administrators as exploitative, yet the local records of the state suggest that revenue collection was not sporadic or a random process but lot of consideration went into it. The *izaradars* had freedom to collect revenue in cash or in kind. That is to say that the state government did not have much control over, whether, the revenue was collected in cash or in kind. However, the *izaradars* before fixing the assessment would take extreme care and knowledge of the field and the soil before fixing the mode of collection. This was irrespective of government lands or non-government lands. For instance, the village in which the *jamabandi* was not fixed, half of produce was taken as government share. Nevertheless, on the commercial crops such as sugarcane, tobacco, cotton etc., the cash payment was taken and its amount was fixed every year. From time to time, the *izaradar* was given the money for which the *manotidars* (means *zamindar*) was authorized to collect the revenue from the villages. The *manotidars* collected revenue and made weekly payments to the *izaradars*. Despite the care taken there are instances of exploitation of the peasantry at the hands of the revenue functionaries. For instance, the property of the peasants would be confiscated if they did not pay revenue on time or did not pay at all. There were also other forms of punishments meted out to them, such as fines. For example, a *vadi mohosal* (everyday fine) was levied which kept on building. Armed men would be sent to collect the dues. The amount of *mohosal* was fixed at from Rs. 1 to Rs. 100. The rest of amount was collected either by the men of *mahal sibandi* (*mahal* forces) or *fauz sibandi* (army forces).⁷⁸ Despite such necessary exactions the *izaradar* did carry out public welfare activities. For instance, the Order dated 14-1-1826 instructed to the *kamavisdar* of Sinor to repair with the help of the local inhabitants the fissure in the local tank caused by the floods to the Narmada (Rewa) which had also demolished some homesteads and to submit a statement

⁷⁸ Patel, C. B. (1920). 44

of the expenses to government.⁷⁹ Another such instance can be seen in form of the Order dated 24-2-1820 to twenty *kamavisdars* mentions that the *kamavsidar* had to report grain market rates to government every eight days; not to allow grain to be exported from the *mahal*; not to allow merchants to store grains and thus to act in such a way that the peasants were saved.⁸⁰

5. Limitations of *Izaradari* System: Despite the fact that *izaradari* system was most important administrative mechanism of Baroda State there were certain limitations in this system. According to F. A. H. Elliot, in *izaradari* system, a private individual entered into a contract with government whereby he bound himself to pay a lumpsum for the privilege of collecting all he could from the cultivator who was entirely at his mercy. Besides, there was no fixity of tenure for the tenant.⁸¹

There was instability and uncertainty embedded in the system. The state could transfer the *izara* from one contractor to the another before the expiry of the lease. It was one of the most pernicious tricks the state could play with the *izaradari* system. In fact, in the time of financial crises of state, the *izara* was granted to the one who gave the highest amount to state.⁸² For instance, the Circulation Memo dated 21-6-1826 deals about the revenue administration of *mahal* for the years 1826 to 1833. According to this Circulation, the farms⁸³ of nine *mahals* had expired and it was transferred to new *kamavisdar* for seven years from 1826. The new *kamavisdar* was instructed to serve the government loyally according to a *kalambandi* whose copy was attached to the order. Similarly, fourteen *kamavisdars* whose farms⁸⁴ were continued were advised to follow the *kalambandi*.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 3

⁸⁰ Joshi, C. V. (1943). HSBR. Volume. VII. 917

⁸¹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 365

⁸² Thakar, H. G. (1935). 58

⁸³ These were Patan, Kadi, Vadnagar, Visnagar, Bahiyel, Padre, Dabhoi-Bahadurpur, Savkhede and Koral.

⁸⁴ These were Baroda, Sinor, Surat Atthavisi, Vijapur, Amreli, Galhe, Navsari, Gandhevi, Petlad - Jilhej, Savli, Tilakwada, Kheralu, Chandod and Atarsuba.

⁸⁵ Joshi, P. M. (1955). HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 8-9

The *izara* was granted for a limited number of years so every *izaradar* had a fear of expiration of his lease.⁸⁶ The practice of transferring *izara* at the time of its expiration alarmed all *izaradar* to extract all revenue forcefully from peasantry.⁸⁷ When the *izara* was transferred from old to new *izaradar*, the old one presented false account if the new one objected to the accounts. This led conflicts between the old and the new *izaradar* which led to confusions and delays. The new *izaradar* often ended up complaining to the state. The state found it difficult to resolve the disputes between old and new *izaradar*.⁸⁸ This led to land laying waste. For instance, about one-third of the land in the Navsari District was utterly laid waste around 1872-73 due to the conflicts between contending *izaradars*.⁸⁹

The agreements between the government and the *izaradar* were sometimes only nominal. This led to corruption in the system.⁹⁰ The problem of *izaradars* not maintaining proper accounts remained chronic. There was also no fixed terms of revenue collection. There was lot of ambiguity within the system.⁹¹ The collection of revenue was both in cash and kind. This led to confusion in the peasantry that in which term they have to pay revenue.⁹² The peasant could plead government against the exploitations led by *izaradar* but it was an expensive and difficult procedure for them. As an *izaradar* was the part of the government it was very difficult for peasant to get the justice against those exploitations.⁹³ The *izaradar* generally let the *patel* off on easy terms and very frequently they gave them the power of assessing taxes on the villagers.⁹⁴

⁸⁶ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 58

⁸⁷ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume II. 213

⁸⁸ Patel, C. B. (1920). 45

⁸⁹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 365

⁹⁰ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 58

⁹¹ Patel, G. D. (1972). 410

⁹² Desai, G. H. (1920). 212

⁹³ Patel, C. B. (1920). 42

⁹⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 365

The *izaradar* could demand extra amount from the peasant. So, if new peasants pay more than the old peasant, the land would be taken away from the old peasant and given to the new peasant. Hence no permanence of the property was maintained.⁹⁵ There was also a tendency amongst the tenants to migrate from one revenue farmer to another. The migrations were mostly because of the some of the conflicts between the landlords and the peasantry.⁹⁶

The government had a right to exact one-half of the produce of the *khalsa* land. To secure timely payment, a class of agents was established under the name of *manotidars*, usurers who gave surety that village would pay revenue by a particular time. Sometime they offered to pay the revenue themselves which would be earlier than the regular instalments and for this advance they charged at the rate of 25 percent. Fines were taken and a practice of '*roz talbanna*', daily pay or demand, were also employed. The *talbanna* consisted of fine varying according to the discretion of the *kamavisdar* from Rs. 1 to Rs. 100. If horsemen were sent on this service, they received provisions for their horses, as eight *annas* for each man employed. If footmen were sent, they received their food and eight *anna* a day as *pan supari*.⁹⁷

6. Abolition of *Izardari* System: An attempt was made by Maharaja Khanderao to abolish the *izaradari* system. *Izardari* system was to replace with the land revenue on the basis of carrying out survey and settlement of the British Gujarat. It was not an easy task. It was difficult to remove a century old system in a single stroke of pen and therefore the system continued to prevail in various shapes and forms and it was only under the rule of illustrious Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad-III that the system came to be completely abolished.

⁹⁵ Patel, C. B. (1920). 44-45

⁹⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 364

⁹⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 365

Potedari System

The *potedari* system had played a significant role in the revenue administration of Baroda State. The system of the *potedari* emerged as an important factor in the management of the financial and political affairs of Baroda State in the early nineteenth century. It was institutionalized during the rule of Maharaja Anandrao Gaekwad. Since, the Maharaja was dysfunctional and was unable to take strong decisions, the peripheral forces such the Dewan and the British Resident had become strong. In absence of a central treasury or a treasury of any kind, the state's and Maharaja's financial requirements were met by a body of *sahukars*. The official *sahukars* who advanced loan to the state were called *potedars* and this system came to be known as *potedari system*. It was a system in which the state yearly raised a loan to pay off the debts of the previous year to meet the expenditure of the current year. These loans were advanced mostly by Haribhakti and some of the large *sahukari pedhis*/family firms in state. It was arrangement that favoured the *potedar* more than any other party. For the loan that they gave out a 12% rate of interest was charged which according to the British records covered the cost of the risks that were undertaken by the *potedar*.⁹⁸ Hence, to meet out expenditure, the state did not have to pay any money directly as it was carried out through the agency of the *potedar*.

1. Nature and Evolution of *Potedari* System: When one traces the emergence of the *potedari* system it can be seen to be in practice at least since the last quarter of the 18th century. There were many reasons for its evolution but primarily it was born out of the need of the Gaekwad to maintain armed forces (i. e. *sibandis*) for safeguarding the spheres of influence. This made the rulers borrow large sums from the *sahukars*. It in turn gave more power to the *sahukars* than the Gaekwads could have liked. It also provided a great opportunity for *sahukars* to

⁹⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 128

interfere in the financial ventures and subsequently politics of the state.⁹⁹ Most of the expenditure incurred on behalf of the state and royal household were met by the financial functionaries or mercantile family firms. Apart from paying for the other expenses the *potedars* also acted as *bakshis* or military paymasters. In order to pay the *bakshis*, the Gaekwads usually farmed out the villages or *mahals* to the *potedars*. In that capacity, the *potedars* began to take part in the revenue administration as *kamavisdars*. They had to pay about half of the assessed revenue in advance. In addition, they had to provide *rasad* to the state, for which the *manoti* were provided. *Potedars* were requested to maintain accounts of income and expenditure. Therefore, their functions were intermixed with other revenue functionaries where they acted as *manotidars*, *sahukars* and *izaradars*.¹⁰⁰

From the first decade of the nineteenth century, the financial transactions of the Baroda State were carried out by *potedars*. There were many leading *sahukars* who advanced loans to the Gaekwad. Of these, five *sahukars* named Haribhakti, Samal Bechar, Mairal Narain, Mangal Sakhidas and Ratanji Kahanji were recognized by the state and also by the British Resident. They were denoted as the '*parekh mandal*' in official documents. In this capacity, the *potedars* became the indispensable allies of the Gaekwads. They enjoyed great power and influence not only in the financial matters but also political affairs.¹⁰¹ By the end of the 18th century, *potedars* had emerged as state officials. They had taken over state's financial administration i.e., the bankers had become a de-facto treasury of the Gaekwads.¹⁰²

2. British and Potedari System: The presence of the English had further strengthened this institution. As has been mentioned earlier that there were five powerful *sahukars* in the early

⁹⁹ Vaidya, M. (2003). *Indigenous Banking in the Baroda State in Nineteenth Century*. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis). Department of History, Faculty of Arts, The M. S. University of Baroda. 59

¹⁰⁰ Vaidya, M. (2003). 59, 335-336

¹⁰¹ Sharma, G., & Saxena, R. (1989). State Finance and Potedari System in Gujarat Under the Maratha Rule: C.1750-1820. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 50. 328-329

¹⁰² Vaidya, M. (2003). 332-333

nineteenth century. Each of these *sahukars* would lend money to the state government. Taking one rupee as the respective figure, Haribhakti had the right to advance 5 ½ *annas* of the total, Gopalrao Mairal 5 ½ *annas*, Ratanji Kandas (of Kathiawar), Lala Mangal and Samal Bechar the remainder. The regular interest on the loan varied from 12 *annas* at the beginning of the 19th century to 6 *annas* later on. The payments made by the government were of two kinds: in one set of payments full sum was made over to the person whom the government desired to pay, but in the other set of payments full sum was not paid.¹⁰³

It was British Resident Major Walker who can be credited to be one responsible for officially instituting the *potedari* system in order to reform the financial affairs of the state. The need to officialize this system was because most of the *mahals* were mortgaged to either the *sahukars* or revenue farmers. The British found that the state of Baroda could reduce its expenditure and get away from the grip of *sahukars*. This was mainly possible if they would dispense with the largest expense: *sibandi*. Since they were their paymasters, the mercenary troops had their loyalty towards the *sahukars*. The British felt that if the army was reduced and disbanded, the *sahukars* would lose power. The Resident was able to successfully persuade the *sahukars* to clear all the dues of *sibandi* by providing the financial aids. Accordingly, Haribhakti, Samal Bechar, Mangal Sakhidas and Arjun Nathji Trivedi paid the sum of Rs. 22,48,000. Walker then issued a *sanad* hailing the memorable assistance of the *sahukars* and thereby extended their guarantee or protection to them. The guarantee system added a new dimension in the *potedari* system.¹⁰⁴

3. Status of *Potedars*: Before the British intervention in financial and political affairs of Baroda State, the prominent *sahukars* acted without having showcasing any documentation. The services of *sahukars* were not recognized till 1807. A *Kalambandi* of 1807 issued to Haribhakti

¹⁰³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 219

¹⁰⁴ Sharma, G., & Saxena, R. (1989). 332-333 and Vaidya, M. (2003). 81-82

at the time of his appointment as *potedar*, clearly laid down the terms and conditions of *potedari*. According to *Kalambandi* of 1807, the *potedar* was given the right to collect the revenue of certain *mahals*. He had to honour all the orders of payments not exceeding seven lakhs of rupees during the contract period. All his settlement of accounts was guaranteed by the company's government. The relationship between Baroda State and *potedar* was of great importance. With the introduction of the *bahendar*¹⁰⁵, an effective check on the power and position of *potedar* came into existence. As the *bahendar* or guarantee of the state the English became the '*mai baap*'. As guarantors, the British came into the position of control. They issued guarantee to the *potedars*, that if at any point of time, the state refused to pay back the loans extended, then the British would undertake measures to ensure that loans were repaid. Such a situation did arise during the reign of Sayajirao II's rule. The British forced the Maharaja to repay the loans upon his refusal, sequestrations were carried which changed the relationship between the three parties.¹⁰⁶ So far as the peasantry was concerned it remained by and large aloof as a care was taken both by the state and its agencies not to disturb the peasantry.

The *potedars* were to maintain account for the use of the state's resources and the British in turn derived a legitimate right to control expenditure. The official appointment of the *potedars* with imposition of terms and conditions made them subservient to the state. Thus, the powerful and independent *sahukars* were generally reduced to the status of the employees of the state.¹⁰⁷ The *potedari* function emerged as a system which acted as an interface between the state, British Resident, family firms and the peasantry. The agency of the *potedar* assumed a subsidiary position by the second decade of the nineteenth century. They had to honour all the government orders of payment of revenue which indicate that the state had acquired a slight

¹⁰⁵ *Bhandari* or *bahendar* is a Sanskrit word, derived from *bahen* a hand and *dhari* to place to 'confiscate'. The term, however, is applied to an engagement of a different nature and is apparently peculiar to the Baroda State. (Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 44)

¹⁰⁶ Vaidya, M. (2003). 333

¹⁰⁷ Sharma, G., & Saxena, R. (1989). 333

upper hand on the *potedar*. The state began to acquire more rights which entitled it for a share in the income rising for *potedari* transactions. Firstly, the state rewarded the *potedar* for their services. For instance, Haribhakti was granted *watan* (land) for his service as the *potedar* of Baroda State.¹⁰⁸ Secondly the *potedars* gained profit from high interest that they charged. This equation was maintained when the circumstances were favourable to both the parties. Therefore, relations between the state and the *potedars* kept changing with circumstances. The *potedar* clearly enjoyed privileges by taking advantage of the state's financial need. At one point they had established relative supremacy over the financial administration and politics of the Baroda State. Simultaneously, the *potedars* had positioned themselves in such a fashion that neither the *izaradar* nor the state could bring them under their control. At one point of time, it was believed that both *izaradars* and state were into the grip of *potedars*. Despite much attempt even the British Resident could not control the autonomous position of *potedars* directly. It was only through the introduction of *bahendari* system (guarantee system) that the power and position of *potedar* came to an effectively checked and subsequently became limited. By the end of the second half of nineteenth century, the *potedars* remained only as a supplier of funds and official to the state.¹⁰⁹

4. Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad II (1818-1848) and *Potedari* System: Maharaja Sayajirao-II's rule was ridden with friction and tension. The Maharaja continuously made attempt to regain the state control. The office of the *potedar* suffered a setback in this power struggle. There were many reasons for this friction.¹¹⁰ By the second decade of the 19th century, due to relative peace in the region at the time, the need for a standing army was not felt. Hence the money required to pay to the troops supplied by the *potedars* was not needed. Also, the Gaekwads had surrendered the right to maintain external relations to the British when they had

¹⁰⁸ Sharma, G., & Saxena, R. (1989). 333

¹⁰⁹ Vaidya, M. (2003). 333

¹¹⁰ Vaidya, M. (2003). 311

signed a Subsidiary Alliance treaty with the British in the early nineteenth century. This meant that the British were managing whatever little troops that Gaekwad were 'allowed' to have.¹¹¹ So far as the economy of the state was concerned, the depredations of the eighteenth century had ended and the relative peace ensued had bettered the conditions of people as well. Trade in cotton seems to have been introduced in the State from 1811 and might have balanced the loss that the agriculturalist suffered owing to the newly imposed restrictions on the export of opium. Although a cold spell at the beginning of 1820 and a failure of rains in 1824 must have told heavily upon the land.¹¹²

Maharaja Sayajirao-II's reign began with a great promise of successful run for the *potedars*. They were also asked meet the expenses incurred by the East India Company on behalf of the Baroda State. For instance, the Order dated 26-6-1820 issued a draft on the *sahukars* to meet the expenses incurred by the Company on behalf of the Baroda Government. Rs. 11,531 paid to the Dr. Campbell in commutation of *asami* granted him by the Maharaja Sayajirao-II; Rs. 2,521 paid to Mr. Amru for the servants he had employed during his stay at Baroda; Rs. 37,207 for the *nemnook* of Malharrao Gaekwad of Kadi; Rs. 12,300 for the *nemnook* of Kanhojirao Gaekwad; Rs. 3,282 as the price of the quarters of Mr. Jarvis in the Residency (present Kothi) purchased by the Baroda Government; and Rs. 10,043 paid to Dr. Povil of the Company for preparing medicines on cholera then prevalent in the army.¹¹³

The *potedar* had to forward the order of the government together with the receipt of the person to whom money had been paid, to the *kamavisdar*. The latter repaid him the sum he had expended at the time when the rent of his revenue farm had to be sent in. The *kamavisdar's*

¹¹¹ Joshi, C. V. (1943). HSB. Volume. VII. iv

¹¹² Joshi, C. V. (1943). HSB. Volume. VII. v

¹¹³ Joshi, C. V. (1943). HSB. Volume. VII. 940

dues to government were paid in quarterly instalments, and for the most part they went to clear off the *potedar's* *varat* in the particular manners.¹¹⁴

The *potedars* also helped Maharaja Sayajirao-II in times of crisis and rose in ranks in the third decade of the nineteenth century. For instance, Gopalrao Mairal, lent the Gaekwad large sum of money, and soon became indispensable to that prince. Maharaja Sayajirao-II early took a liking to Gopalrao Mairal and often consulted him. In 1826, he farmed in succession almost all the *mahals*, Sinor, Koral, Dehgam, Rund, Okahamanadal and the large *suba* of Navsari and Amreli. He even was appointed as the Dewan of the state for some time.¹¹⁵ However, soon the *potedars* and subsequently the system fell out of favours with the Maharaja Sayajirao-II.¹¹⁶

5. Abolition of *Potedari* System: On certain occasions, the Maharaja himself became the *sahukar* of the state. Under Maharaja Sayajirao-II, the *potedari* system came to be abolished but not completely. The next Maharaja Ganpatrao Gaekwad neither tried to curb the powers of the *potedars* nor gave them any further foothold. The houses of *potedars* fell apart due to personal reasons or due to family feuds.¹¹⁷ The decline of the *potedari* did not mean decline in indigenous banking system. The indigenous banking as a state enterprise functioned and continued through *sarkari pedhis* till 1875. The system of *potedari* was abolished completely by Sir. T. Madhavrao when he established an account department.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 219-220

¹¹⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 247

¹¹⁶ Vaidya, M. (2003). 312

¹¹⁷ Vaidya, M. (2003). 312-313

¹¹⁸ Vaidya, M. (2003). 230, 334

Intermediary Revenue Functionaries and Their Relationships with Land and Peasantry

Within the boundaries of the Baroda State, there subsisted network of intermediary classes. Mostly, these were revenue functionaries as their main task was to collect revenue or provide assistance in the process of revenue collection. Some of these were appointed by the state whereas some were appointed by elite revenue functionaries, others were from small scale contractors. For instance, *bhagdar*, *narwadar*, *ankadedar*, *mulgirasia*, *matadar*, *mehwasi*, *talukdar*, *watandar* etc., used to collect revenue from the peasants and paid a share to government. The *izaradars* and *potedars* were dealing directly with the administration of state whereas the other intermediary classes were dealing with the peasants in relation to the collection of land revenue. A comprehensive account of these intermediary revenue functionaries and their relationship with land and peasantry is give below.

1. Bhagdar and Narwadar: The *bhagdars* and *narwadars* used to collected the revenue from cultivators as per the *bhagdari* and *narwadari* system of revenue collection. These systems were in prevalence since early times. The *bhagdari* system was prevalent in the Kamrej and Mangrol Talukas whereas the *narwadari* system in Bhadran and Petlad Talukas.¹¹⁹ The *bhagdars* mostly collected arbitrarily from the cultivators which was generally excessive. There was no system of state intervention between the *bhagdars* and the cultivators regarding the revenue collection as it was concerned only with the dues received from the *bhagdari* villages.¹²⁰ The *narwadari* tenure was prevailed in about 80 villages of the Petlad Taluka and Bhadaran Peta Taluka.¹²¹ Over the period of time, these revenue functionaries became quite powerful due to virtually no intervention from the state.

¹¹⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 57-58

¹²⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 359

¹²¹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 29

2. Ankdedar: The *ankdedars* had acquired proprietary rights over the lands and villages in the early 18th century. However, when the Gaekwads brought these estates under their control their status was reduced to that of tenants. Therefore, they paid *jamabandi* or land revenue to the Baroda State.¹²² The state did not interfere with the internal fiscal management of *ankadia* villages. It merely fixes the lump sum to be paid either once a year or at short intervals.¹²³ The *ankdedars* came from the classes of Rajputs, Kolis, Thakardas, Kathis, Muslims, Barots, Brahmins, Barias and Charans.¹²⁴ The villages that were under the control of *ankdedars* were called as *ankadia* villages. However, most of them were part of government property and *ankdedars* were revenue collectors. The *ankadia* villages were divided into *ak ankada* and *farta ankada*. The *ankadia* villages in which one *ankada* was fixed during the old time and had not changed during the later period was called as *ak ankada* villages whereas the villages in which *ankda* was not fixed and changed over the time was called as *farta ankada*.¹²⁵ The *ak ankada* and *farta ankada* (sometimes called *isthenorar*) villages were present in Kadi and Baroda Prants and *ankdedars* were generally *thakur* and *rajput*.¹²⁶ In the villages other than those of the Baroda, the amount of *ankda* was fixed under a lease for a number of years whereas in Baroda the amount of *ankda* was either fixed for 10 years or 30 years according as the villages was *ak ankadia* or *farta ankadia*. These villages were further classified into *thakrati* and *matdari*.¹²⁷

3. Mulgirasia: Owing to the uncertain political condition and constant harassment in the beginning of the 18th century, the holders of theses villages had brought protection of Gaekwad against their strong neighboring chiefs like Bhavnagar. In return of protection, they gave

¹²² Mitter, B. L., (1947). *BAR, 1945-46*. Baroda: The Baroda State Press. 24-25

¹²³ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 58

¹²⁴ Patel, G. D. (1954). *The Indian Land Problem and Legislation*. Bombay: N. M. Tripathi LTD. 77

¹²⁵ Patel, C. B. (1920). 31

¹²⁶ Mitter, B. L. (1947). *BAR, 1945-46*. 24-25 and Patel, C. B., (1920). 31

¹²⁷ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 522

Gaekwad the portion of their estates and retained the reminder for themselves for maintenance. This portion came to be known as *giras* (mouthful: the property for maintenance). The Gaekwads granted *mulgirasia* the 'parwanas' from 1811 to 1816. According to the condition laid down in *parwana*, the *mulgirasia* agreed to rendered service (*chakri*) to the Baroda State. This service was rendered in term of maintaining peace and security. The *mulgirasia* along with their estates therefore had become integral part of the Baroda State. Unlike other *barkhali* holders, never claimed settlement of any *haks*.¹²⁸ In short, the *mulgirasias* were not the grantees of the Gaekwads but the proprietors of their villages and lands. They held their estates rent-free except in the case of Piplog whose *mulgirasias* paid *ankada* and *desai dasturi* to the Gaekwad.¹²⁹

4. Matadar: The *matadars* functioned in the *matadari* villages. The *matadari* estates were tribute paying villages. The *matadars* were bound to pay tribute to the state. The tribute apparently was not fixed as it was depended more on the generosity of Gaekwad than the capacity of the villages to pay. The tribute was collected by *mulkagiri* troops. In the beginning of nineteenth century, British made settlement with *matadari* villages. The *mulkagiri* armies were disbanded. At the time of settlement of Mahikantha in 1812, the tribute was fixed according to previous year's assessment. In 1820, the British gave guarantee to recovery and payment of tribute from villages of Bawishi Thana to the Gaekwad. As a result of this settlement, *mulkagiri* army of Gaekwad ceased to collect *ghasdana* from these estates. In 1840, the system of *nisha* was introduced according to which one man stood surety for all villages for payment of tribute. But this system did not work efficiently and came to be abolished¹³⁰ Similar circumstances existed in Vatrak Kantha estates of Jeher and Nirmali. These estates were paying *ghasdana* to state in addition to land revenue. The *matadars* of these estates were

¹²⁸ Patel, G. D. (1954). 130-131

¹²⁹ Patel, G. D. (1954). 131-132

¹³⁰ Patel, G. D. (1954). 99

mere hereditary village servants and had no interest in the proprietorship of the soil. These estates originally belonged to the Mia of Mandwa but, in the year 1789, these estates were usurped by the Thakor of Ambaliara. However, Ambaliara Thakor became compelled to surrender these estates after Mandwa Mia took help from Gaekwad. In consideration, Mandwa Mia surrendered the estates to the condition that he would enjoy 1/3rd and Gaekwad 2/3rd of the total revenue of the estates. Thus, these estates came to be co-shared between the Mandwa and the Baroda State in proportion of 1:2. This practice was subsequently substituted by a fixed annual payment to Baroda and Mandwa of Rs. 961 and Rs. 464 respectively. The practice was peculiar to these estates because the surplus revenue in other non-*rajawat* villages was utilised for the public purposes of the estates. In Gadhwana Thana estates of Chandap and Gazipur, the estates were *bhagdari* villages in which *matadars* managed the collection and payment of tribute.¹³¹

A land register called *jarif kharda*, the most important village records, was mentioned since 1853. According to this register, the village land was divided into two viz, (i) *sarkari* and (ii) *barkhali*. The *sarkari* land was held by a whole body of *matadars* or the village communities and occupant were merely tenants although they were allowed to sell or mortgage the land in their possession. The tenants paid assessment according to the village rates. The *barkhali* land covered different categories of alienations like *vechania*, *gherania*, *karamehas*, *pasaita* etc., and were in the possession of individual *matadars* or *bhayats*. All the *barkhali* lands were originally held by *matadars* as well as non-*matadars*. Lands inherited by the same family came to be known as *karamchas* (hereditament). When these lands changed hands or mortgaged, they were called as *vechania* or *gherania*. Before the introduction of *jarif kharda* (1853), the original owners of such lands paid very little or no assessment. The *matadars* generally did not

¹³¹ Patel, G. D. (1954). 99-100

receive any revenue from the villages of *gharkhed*, *jiwai*, *devasthan*, *dharmadaya*, *vechania*, *gherania*, *pasaita*.¹³²

5. *Mehwasi*: The *mehwas* were prevalent in the villages of Kadi, Kalol, Vijapur, Mehsana and Patan Talukas of Kadi Prant. They were tributary paying chiefs who often had to coerced to pay.¹³³ The issues with *mehwasi* chiefs were settled with mutual arbitration between Maharaja Sayajirao-II and British. In this year 1825, the Gaekwad and the British came to a mutual agreement. It was stipulated that the tribute of the larger estates should be paid through the British Government and of the smaller through the local authorities. Maharaja Sayajirao-II confirmed the proprietors in their existing rights of every description. He also agreed that all boundary and other disputes were be settled through the medium of the Political Agent; acknowledged the independence of the chiefs in their own villages; and their rights of hereditary succession and adoption. As a result, the *mehwas* were left to be controlled and managed by the Political Agent. After the agreement of 1825, the *mehvasi* proprietors gave little trouble. They had ceased to be robbers and freebooters, paid their tribute regularly, and accepted the Political Agent's settlement of their boundary and succession disputes they have spread tillage and increased the resources of their estates.¹³⁴

6. *Talukdar*: The *talukdars* held their estates mainly into the districts of British Gujarat. In Baroda State, the *talukdari* estates had prevailed into Amreli and Kadi Districts.¹³⁵ The *talukdari* estates were neither alienated nor unalienated. During the initial period, they were not the guarantee of the government but enjoyed the proprietary right in their estates including the ownership of land, mines, minerals, tree and forests.¹³⁶

¹³² Patel, G. D. (1954). 104-105

¹³³ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 59

¹³⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 336

¹³⁵ Patel, G. D. (1957). *The Land Problem of Reorganized Bombay State*. Bombay: N. M. Tripathi LTD. 172

¹³⁶ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 513

7. Watandar: The *watans* consisted of villages, lands and cash *haks* held by the *watandars*. According to the historical and administrative importance, *watandars* were belonged to various classes in different *talukas* such as Maratha in Baroda and Sinor, Patidar in Savli, Nagar Brahmin and Kayastha in Dabhoi, Kayasthas in Gandevi and Navsari and Nagar Brahmin in Petlad, Vadnagar and Visnagar.¹³⁷

It is found that, during the initial period the state generally did not interfere in the land administration of intermediary revenue functionaries but only intended to enjoy the share of produce. But during later period, the state made certain attempts to establish landed relationships directly with the peasants at the place of these classes. It is also important to note that, the position and status of the *izaradar* was highest among all the intermediary classes.

Changes Made by State During 1857-1875 and Its Impact on Land Tenures and Landed Relationships

After the Uprising of 1857, the rule of English East India Company was abolished and the rule of Crown began. The Queen proclaimed in 1858 that she did not plan to annex any more state. Those who had remained loyal to the British were rewarded. Amongst them was young Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad. He and his successor made attempts at their levels to introduce changes in the existing land revenue tenures. The following section describes the various changes introduced by the state from 1857-1875.

1. Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad (1857-1870): The first structured attempt to bring about change in the land related policies was carried out under the reign of Maharaja Khanderao.¹³⁸ During this period, the Maharaja Khanderao made several attempts to bring reforms in state administration. His main aim was to abolish the *izaradari* system and to replace it with a

¹³⁷ Patel, G. D. (1954). 114-115

¹³⁸ Desai, G. H. (1918). *A Statistical Atlas of the Baroda State*. Bombay: The Times Press. 10

modern new one. At that time, *izaradars* were judges, magistrates, military commanders and most importantly the collector of revenue.¹³⁹ Maharaja Khanderao's action on administration of land was threefold; First he launched an offensive on the alienation of land by introducing an Inam Commission; Secondly an attempt was made to abolish the *izaradari* system and to introduce first revenue survey; and lastly introduction of a new system of management of fiscal units.¹⁴⁰

(i) Changes in Administration of Alienated Lands: The considerable pressure was sometimes put on the villages for increased revenue. The portion of the *khalsa* lands were granted to particular persons to meet out those demands. Other grants were also made by state from time to time such as *inam* to favoured individuals or to religious and charitable institutions and thus entire villages and large portion of assessable village lands became alienated.¹⁴¹ The grant of lands was involving the state in great loss of revenue and in the payment of large sums. The plot of lands was not only alienated but the whole villages were similarly disposed of. Although, alienation was the sovereignty of the state but the great numbers of unauthorized alienations were also made at one time or another by *mahal* or village authorities. In this context, the unauthorized *sanads* and valueless deeds termed as *mahal sanads* in contradiction with the Huzur Sanads were issued without the consent of central authority. For instance, the *izaradar* often made unauthorized alienations in order to the raise money or to acquire popularity during the tern of their farm. They did not only enjoy by making alienation but also disregarded the instructions given to them by the state. At a time, as regards the *khalsa* villages, one-third were alienated.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 367

¹⁴⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 367 and Patel, C. B., (1920). 45-46

¹⁴¹ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 494

¹⁴² Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 85

The first major reform introduced by Maharaja Khanderao was appointment of Inam Commission. It was, as the name suggests, with regards to alienated lands or those non-taxable lands which were given away by rulers at various points of time. The previous rulers had tried to convert these lands into taxable lands. For instance, Maharaja Anandrao had issued a proclamation to the effect that *izaradars* were to take immediate steps to put a stop to any further alienation of lands.¹⁴³ In 1827, further instructions to the *izaradar* had been issued by Maharaja Sayajirao-II. Accordingly, the *khabedia*, *vechania*, *adania* and *pasaita* lands were to be listed and *izaradar* were instructed to send this list to the government. Beside it, the *lekhs* (written orders) were to be given to each holder on stamped paper. It was unfortunate that this design never carried into effect. Maharaja Khanderao took several actions with regard to alienated lands which differed from that of his predecessors. He resolved to settle some of the alienated lands by removing them from all liability on payment of government of a quit-rent of two *anna* in the rupee.¹⁴⁴

Maharaja Khanderao established an Inam Commission in 1862 and instituted an enquiry into *inam* lands. He refused to acknowledge the alienated lands that were sold or mortgaged after 1827.¹⁴⁵ On the lands where tenure dated before 1827, he ordered that an assessment of one-fourth should be levied in excess of the survey rates that was four *annas* in the rupee. In other words, where the land was held under tenures such as *pasaita*, *wanta*, *giras*, *dharmadaya* or *ranvatia*, the government should take two *annas* per rupee in excess of the survey classified rates and four *annas* per rupee in the case of *watandar*'s lands. According to Assistant Resident, Maharaja Khanderao followed the laws of the British Government. However, there were certain differences between the two systems. The alienated lands were removed from all scrutiny on payment of a quit-rent to government of two *annas* per rupee (Act VII of 1863).

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 86

¹⁴⁵ Desai, G. H. (1918). 10

The state however sought to impose a tax of 1/8th on cash *haks* that were undisputed and the advantage of freedom from inquiry into the validity of tenures was not given.¹⁴⁶ Maharaja Khanderao imposed and collected the quit-rent for three years. After which he withdrew the special agency charged with its collection and handed over the task to the newly formed revenue department. It was a challenging task and more than often the overworked revenue department was busy performing the duties which were earlier with the *izaradars*.¹⁴⁷

Along with the government lands, the alienated lands were also taken into consideration for utilization and revenue assessment. The arbitrary alienation of lands also came to be restricted and such attempts were made liable for inquiry. Along with peasants cultivating the government land, the state also tried to establish direct relationships with peasants of alienated lands. However, there were some limitations of Maharaja Khaderao's reforms regarding the administration of alienated lands. For instance, there was an absence of registration and vagueness pervading the final arrangement. This permitted the rejection of the terms on the part of many *inamdars* and left the matters in a state of considerable confusion.¹⁴⁸

(ii) Abolition of *Izaradari* System and Introduction of Revenue Survey and Settlement:

The second major reform of Maharaja Khanderao was entrusted with administration of government land by abolishing the *izaradari* system and introducing the new one. Before 1856, the agricultural population of the Baroda State was comparatively small and land available for cultivation was abundant. The villagers lived their own self-contained life with the exception of the occasional interference of *izaradaras* and other intermediary classes.¹⁴⁹ Till the survey and settlement introduced in Baroda State, many of the disputes under *izaradari* system remained unsettled and it was especially difficult to find out what the tenants had paid. There

¹⁴⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). *Volume VII*. 352

¹⁴⁷ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 86

¹⁴⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). *Volume VII*. 352-353

¹⁴⁹ BSA. (1920). *Baroda Economic Development Committee, 1918-19: Report*. Bombay. The Times Press. 56

was outstanding balance of unrecovered revenue, amounting to perhaps sixty lakhs.¹⁵⁰ After 1856, the system of revenue farming came to be abolished and *ryotwari* system of land assessment and holding organized. The population of the state also increased and prospered due the establishment of organized law and order and abundant and regularity of the rainfall.¹⁵¹ In order to improve the condition of people, the state also took several measures in fields of railway, road, irrigation, education etc. which resulted with prosperity.¹⁵²

After the abolishment the *izaradari* system, the payment of land revenue made in cash and a state service was established for the collection of revenue instead of contracting it out to *izaradar*.¹⁵³ In consideration to the collection of land revenue directly from the peasants, Maharaja Khanderao introduced the survey of land in 1862.¹⁵⁴ After which, the land revenue was fixed on the basis of survey and settlement like one which was in vogue in Bombay Presidency.¹⁵⁵ The survey and settlement substituted a fixed money payment followed by a ten years' settlement of *jamabandi*.¹⁵⁶ Thus, after the abolition of *izaradari* system and introduction of survey settlement under the reign of Maharaja Khanderao, the direct landed relationships established between the state and the peasants. It was probably the first time when state became successful in making the direct relationship with the peasants without any intermediary class such as *izaradar*.¹⁵⁷

(iii) Management of Fiscal Units: Beside the introduction of *inam* commission and abolition of *izaradari* system, there were several reforms introduced which were not there before. For instance, in order to collect the revenue, *mehta*, *thanedar*, *vahivatdar*, *talati* etc., were

¹⁵⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 366

¹⁵¹ BSA. (1920). Baroda Economic Development Committee, 1918-19: Report. 56

¹⁵² BSA. (1920). Baroda Economic Development Committee, 1918-19: Report. 57

¹⁵³ Dutt, R. C. (1905). *BAR. 1902-1903 and 1903-04*. Bombay: The Times Press. 119

¹⁵⁴ Patel, C. B. (1920). 6

¹⁵⁵ Desai, G. H. (1918). 10 & Patel, C. B. (1920). 46

¹⁵⁶ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 232

¹⁵⁷ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 60

appointed at the certain units of administration.¹⁵⁸ The *talati* was appointed in every village while *mehta* and *thanedar* in group of villages.¹⁵⁹ When the crop was ripe, *talati* used to collect the revenue from peasants and then send it to the *thanedar*. The *thanedar*, after listening to the complaints of cultivators and settling all claims, transmitted this revenue to the *vahivatdar* of the *taluka* who remitted it to the state treasury.¹⁶⁰ The general state treasury was under the charge of the *Sar Suba* or Revenue Commissioner of all districts of Baroda State. The complain of cultivators against *talati* could be passed through official commencing *mehta* up to the *Sar Subha* at Baroda and finally to the ruler himself.¹⁶¹

Up to 1860, the *thanedar* had *fauzdari* (maintenance of law and order) and *mulki* (revenue) work to do. Under Maharaja Khanderao's administration, the two duties were separated. A *fauzdar* was appointed to do the *fauzdari* work only and at time more than *fauzdar* was appointed to do the same work. They were not to do the *mulki* work. This continued till 1868 when both the offices were unified and were entrusted to the *thanedar*. The powers of *thanedars* were expanded and was given the power inflict fines, was placed in charge of a larger number of villages, and was granted the assistance of a *karkun*.¹⁶²

As per considering these reforms it can be said that the position of *izaradar* had been replaced by the certain officials of the state. Before the abolition of the *izaradari* system, the *izaradars* had positioned themselves between the state and the peasants. But after the abolition of *izaradari* system, the official had been positioned between the state and the peasants. Thus, *izaradar's* bilateral relations between the state and the peasants had been replaced by the new officials. It is also important to note that, excepting the *izaradars*, the other intermediary classes

¹⁵⁸ Patel, C. B. (1920). 46

¹⁵⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 60

¹⁶⁰ Dutt, R. C. (1905). BAR. 1902-1903 and 1903-04. 119

¹⁶¹ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 524

¹⁶² Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 228

were also taken into consideration for either making them under the direct control of the state or the payment of regular revenue. For instance, the inquiry made on *girasia* and *waghers* in order to settle the payment of revenue in their particular estates.

(iv) Settlement with *Girasias*: Up to 1862, the *girasias* enjoined their *wanta* and *garas* without much interference from the state of Baroda. *Desai* and others hereditary officers encroached upon these rights but generally everything was settled between the *patels* and the *garasia*. By taking the advantage of the weaknesses or inefficiency of *girasia*, the *patels* took the opportunity to reduce or deny their caste rights and encroached upon their lands. On the other hand, in many villages the *koli* and *rajput patels* were the kinsmen of the *girasias* and as rule the relations of the *girasias* with the villagers were pleasant enough and their disputes were generally settled in the village without reference to the state of Baroda. But in 1862, Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad took action which eventually affected among others *garasias* who held the British guarantee that the Gaekwad would not interfere with or reduce their *garas haks*. Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad imposed a tax of two *annas* per rupee on all *wanta* lands and placed a similar tax on *toda garas* payments. The idea of imposing this tax on *giras* right and lands was borrowed from British Gujarat practices.¹⁶³

In the year 1862, Maharaja Khanderao remeasured *wanta* and yards lands, employing for that purpose a measure shorter than that employed in measuring *sarkari* lands and the result was an increase over and above the traditional or nominal area. The excess was called *vadharo*, and was assessed at the full *sarkari* or government rates, not that the *vadharo* land was separated from the rest, but the total out turn was entered in the records as liable to government according to the fictitious increase. Maharaja Khandderao had just introduced the *bighoti* system into

¹⁶³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 344

several districts, according to which the government dues were paid in money and not in kind.¹⁶⁴

(v) Settlement with Waghers: The origin of *salami* tenure is traced to the uncertain political condition of Okhamandal and aggressive temperament of the *waghers* and *wadhels* inhabiting it. It arose out of the administrative difficulties faced by the Gaekwad in controlling the turbulent tribes. The records suggest that the *waghers* revolted six times against the Gaekwad during the period from 1818 to 1861.¹⁶⁵ It is important to mention that during the revolt of 1857 the *waghers* under the leadership of Mulu Manek were the only persons in Saurashtra who took part in revolt against the British.¹⁶⁶ Up to 1861, the *bhagbatai* system had prevailed in Okhamandal Taluka.¹⁶⁷ In 1861, the Waghers were defeated by the British forces.¹⁶⁸ After the defeat of *waghers*, Okhamandal placed under the charge of Lieut. Barton who accepted the surrender of arms from *waghers* and made settlement with them.¹⁶⁹ During his charge, practically almost all the *waghers* were deprived of their *giras* possessions and pensionary allowances. Hitherto, the *waghers* enjoyed the cultivation of their lands holding rent-free till this settlement. But after the settlement, they were obliged to pay annually a *salami* on any land allotted to them.¹⁷⁰ Thus, in consequence of this political arrangement, the *salami* tenure arose in Okhamandal. The assessment fixed by Lieut. Barton which the *wagher* agreed to pay was Rs. 6-8-0 per *santi* annually and Rs. 2-0-0 per season for *wadi* cultivation. If the behavior of the holder of land was good then the concession was given. But if any offence was proved against him or if he crossed the *Ran* without the permission of government, he was to pay rent at the same rate as the common cultivators of Okhamandal. The Resident sanctioned these rates

¹⁶⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 111

¹⁶⁵ Patel, G. D. (1954). 141-142

¹⁶⁶ Patel, G. D. (1957). 189

¹⁶⁷ Desai, B. V. (1932). *Note on the Administration of Okhamandal*. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 4

¹⁶⁸ Desai, B. V. (1932). 25

¹⁶⁹ Patel, G. D. (1954). 142

¹⁷⁰ Patel, G. D. (1957). 188

with the exception of that for sugarcane plantation which he fixed at Rs. 10 per *bigha*.¹⁷¹ These rents were sanctioned in March 1860 and in November 1861, the Resident reduced them considerably. He allowed *waghers* to cultivate as much as area of land as they could on payment of rent at the rate of Rs. 1 per *santi* and 4 *annas* per *wadi*. Between 1872 to 1875, *sanads* were granted to the *waghers* subject to certain conditions. The motive behind this arrangement was frankly political because the British wanted the *waghers* to give up their independent attitude and settle down on the lands.¹⁷²

(vi) Abolition of Miscellaneous Tenures/Taxes: There were numerous items of miscellaneous land revenue, some of them were collected in *bighoti* and some in *bhagbatai* villages. These were for the most abolished by Khanderao when he introduced survey and assessment. In *bhagbatai* villages, the *babtis* (miscellaneous taxes) was an old tax and could be collected without any survey. A local tax was levied on tree of every kind of holding, except *dharmaday* and *devasthan*. This tax was regulated by a *Kalambandi* passed in 1864-65 by Khanderao. By the *Kalambandi* of 1864-65, the cultivators were allowed, with the sanction of the police *patel*, to take whatever woods they wanted from their own holdings for agricultural purpose or for fuel.¹⁷³

The *dumla* and *khang*i villages were scattered all over the Gaekwad's territory from Songadh to Amreli. At a time, the *khang*i villages constituted the private estate of the Raja. Some of these villages were originally public property and were given as *nemnuks* or *jagir* to members of the royal family but as they lapsed, they were retained by the Maharaja. The *dumla* villages were assigned to individual as military *saranjam*.¹⁷⁴ In 1867-68, Maharaja Khanderao

¹⁷¹ Desai, B. V. (1932). 25

¹⁷² Desai, B. V. (1932). 26-27

¹⁷³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 379

¹⁷⁴ It was associated with '*kanyadan*'. On the marriage of a daughter of a Gaekwar, villages were formerly presented her as *kanyadan* and her children inherited them.

Gaekwad resumed most of them and substituted cash payment.¹⁷⁵ These villages were not at once absorbed into the *talukas* to which they geographically belonged. The political motive perhaps was to allow the previous owners to retain the hope that village might be restored. These villages had been therefore segregated from the several *talukas* in which they were situated and placed under the management of officers whose headquarters were at Baroda. Over the period of time, these villages absorbed into the *talukas* to which they geography belonged.¹⁷⁶ According to Baroda Administrative Report of 1875-76, the system of *dumla* and *khangi* villages was a most inconvenient arrangement which caused abuses, conflicts and embarrassments without any real advantage.

(vii) Limitations of Reforms Under Maharaja Khanderao: Despite the reforms introduced under Maharaja Khanderao, there were some limitations. For instance, these reforms did away with the oppression of revenue farmers but was not altogether a gain to the people. The unvarying money demand in the years of good and bad harvest, of high and low prices, was not so much convenient to the cultivators. The authority of village communities was weakened by the dealings of officials with individual tenants.¹⁷⁷ The assessment of individual fields had been left to the will and judgement of the settlement officers. Beside it, the survey settlement was neither so much accurate nor fair. The measurements were inaccurate and lands were entered as assessable in excess of their actual area. Even the maps were made only for assessable lands and not for alienated lands and villages. Beside it, the land was classified into three classes but the assessment was mere guess work. In Navsari District, the assessment was unduly high. In Amreli District, the assessment was one-third of the produce while in Okhamandal the assessment was generally light and almost nominal on the turbulent Wagher

¹⁷⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 347

¹⁷⁶ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 20

¹⁷⁷ Dutt, R. C. (1905). BAR. 1902-1903 and 1903-04. 119

population. The people who were lazy or backward were assessed more lightly than the more industrious classes and thus a premium was set on idleness.¹⁷⁸

During the later period, the *bhagbatai* system came to be undesirable and as a result it abolished in almost all territories excepting the Amreli. This encouraged the necessity of a regular survey and re-assessment to fix the land tax moderately and equitable.¹⁷⁹ There were discrepancies of the amount of revenue into the different villages. In some villages, the revenue was increased one time while in some village it was increased two times since it was first introduced. In many of villages, the *bhagbatai* system was replaced by the *bighoti* system. In some of the villages, the *jamabandi* was less due to the inaccurate survey. Therefore, many of people with the consent of government taken the administration of land in their own hands and collected the revenue from the peasants. This system was like that of *izaradari* but it was different from the *izaradari* system carried out under Maharaja Malharrao.¹⁸⁰

2. Maharaja Malharrao Gaekwad (1870-1875): During the period of Maharaja Malharrao, no major improvement took place into land administration of Baroda State.¹⁸¹ Under his regime, new system called *kamavisdari*¹⁸² was introduced at the place of old *izaradari* system. In this system, the revenue administration of the *mahal* or *prant* was authorized or farmed out to the Maharaja's court favourites or relatives who came to be called as *kamavisdar*. For instance, Malharrao's daughter named Kamabai Saheb was granted the administration of *jakat* and Nanasaheb Khanvilkar was granted the *kamavisdari* of Navsari and Patan.¹⁸³ As these people were powerful and the favourites of Maharaja, they did not perform themselves the duties of *kamavisdari*. But their duty was done by the *karkun*. These people who performed the

¹⁷⁸ Dutt, R. C. (1905). BAR. 1902-1903 and 1903-04. 120

¹⁷⁹ Rao, M. T. (n.d.). 1998a

¹⁸⁰ Patel, C. B. (1920). 46

¹⁸¹ Desai, G. H. (1918). 11

¹⁸² During the early period of Baroda State, both *kamavisdari* and *izaradari* systems are considered as same.

¹⁸³ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 59

duties of *kamavisdar* were called as *vahivatdar*.¹⁸⁴ An *izaradar* was liable to meet with competition but a *kamavisdar* was not. The former had at any rate been bound to pay government a fixed sum for his farm whereas the *kamavisdar* was simply supposed to collect what he could.¹⁸⁵ As *kamavisdar* were the favourites of Maharaja they could not be punished even then had done the big corruption or cruelty. The officials were not selected on the basis of their merits but the favouritism. The *kamavisdar* used to take as much money as he could from the peasants and give as little as he could to the government. These favourites embezzled large sums of money and thus caused huge loss to government yields. In addition, the people to get *kamavisdari* offered big *nazrana* to the king. They used many tricks to reimburse this amount from the *peasant* by exploitation.¹⁸⁶

The sources have so far revealed that under Maharaj Malharrao's regime, the Baroda State was in debt, though he subsequently did little to reform the finances. The estimated revenue for the year 1870-71 was Rs. 1,37,00,000 while the expenditure of the army and for the *devasthan*, *dharmada* and state establishments amounted to Rs. 1,15,00,000. But the private expenses of the Maharaja Malharrao had at the same time been enormous. According to the Commission of 1874, after the six or seven years of Khanderao's life, the government underwent a serious decadence; the proceedings of the chief were more arbitrary than earlier, new cesses and levies were imposed without consideration of the previously heavy assessments to which the peasants were subject, and the collection of the government dues was enforced by the local officials by harsh and compulsory measures.¹⁸⁷ In 1874, the Resident advised to Maharaja Malharrao to prohibit the barbarous processes for realizing revenues and to remove the cause of discontent by a moderate and equitable land settlement. But Maharaja Malharrao did not take this advice

¹⁸⁴ Patel, C. B. (1920). 46

¹⁸⁵ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 499

¹⁸⁶ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 59

¹⁸⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 244

in good part and matters grew worse instead of better. This ignorance resulted with certain crises such as the whole villages had been depopulated, and all over the state the *peasants* had to offer a passive resistance to the demands of government.¹⁸⁸

The reign of Maharaja Malharrao came to an end the local revenue of all kinds amounted to only Rs. 94 lakhs, while Rs. 171 lakhs had been spent. At the time of the arrest of the Malharrao a few thousand rupees only were found in the public treasury while Rs. 40 lakhs were discovered hid away in the palace. During his reign, not only high rates of assessment was imposed but resorted to the most reprehensible of the old means the Gaekwads had employed to raise money. In addition to the great burden of the overtaxed *peasant*, he imposed on him a heavy “accession *nazrana*”, a large impost of the same nature was laid on the *vahivatdars*, and these, being for the most part men of no respectability, recouped themselves ten-fold by robbing the taxpayers, while the sovereign was unwilling to listen to complaints against the employees who had in a manner purchased their right to peculate. Beside it, Malharrao did not scruple to strain his relations with the *sahukars* who had long supplied the government with ready means, hoping to drive bargains with new men and to dispossess in an arbitrary manner *inam*-holder and holders of hereditary emoluments of their property.¹⁸⁹

Between the period from 1800 to 1875, along with certain changes there has also been a great sense of continuity of the traditional systems. This can be seen particularly in context to the power structure and administrative set-up. The state and *diwan* continued to be predominant and political and official hierarchy maintained. The local revenue functionaries or hereditary officers such as *desai*, *amin*, *manotidar*, *mazmudar*, *patel* etc., continued their offices and performed their duties with certain limitations. The intermediary revenue functionaries such as *izaradar/kamavisdar*, *bhagdar*, *narwadar*, *ankdedar*, *girasia*, *matadar*, *mehwasi*, *talukdar*,

¹⁸⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 245

¹⁸⁹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 246

watandar etc., also continued their position by following certain obligations which were given to them by state. The continuity is also maintained in social and economic structure i.e., feudal class, money-lender, peasantry, agricultural, traditional industry, land revenue administration, legal, customary and institutional framework regulating relationship between state and its people.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Bajpai, G. D. (1979). *Baroda in Transition: 1860-1884*. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis). Faculty of Arts, The M. S. University of Baroda. 775-783