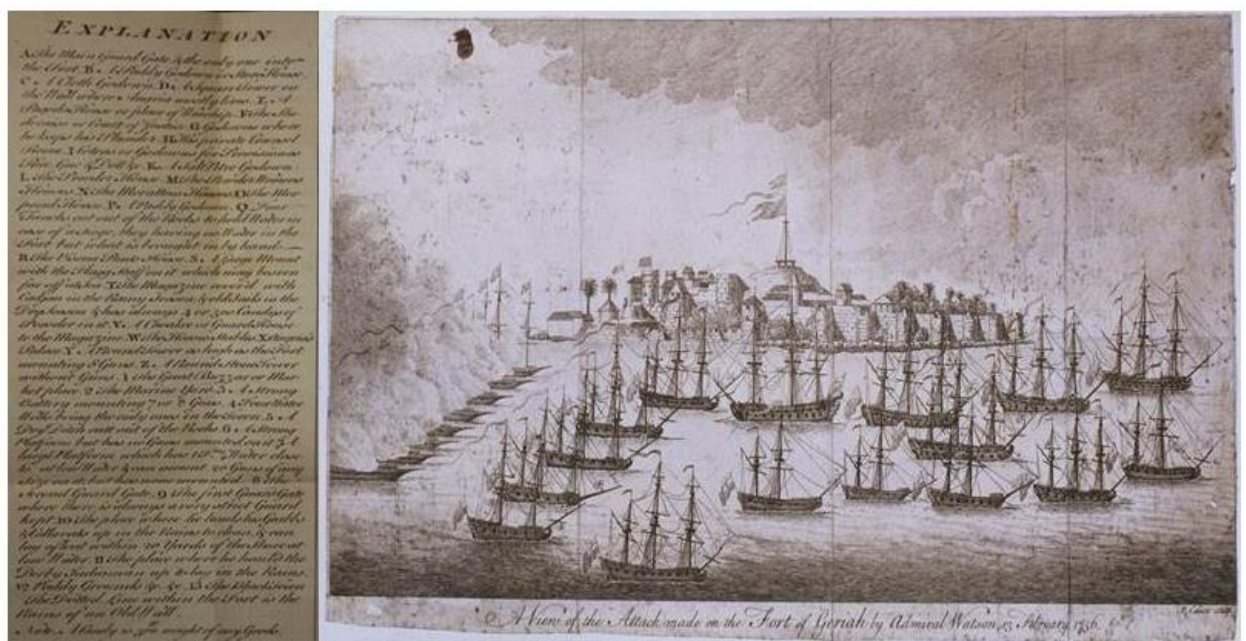


## Chapter V

# Politics of Piracy and British Paramourcy in Western Indian Ocean during c. 1750-c. 1850



- A view of Geriah as it was taken by the British fleet under the command of the Admirals Watson and Pocock, 13<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1756

by M. Hore and W. Tringham

- “A closer look at the attack in progress:  
"from the logbook of the H.M.S. Elizabeth, 1759"

Source: <http://www.gtyj.org.uk/en/item6/22048>

<https://thewire.in/books/when-indians-fought-british-colonialism-at-sea>

*When the fish are fighting in their own pond,  
that is when you know the English (British) were there*

This Turkish proverb stands true for the Indian Ocean as it became a ‘theatre of conflict’<sup>1</sup> with the coming of European companies<sup>2</sup> and resistance<sup>3</sup> from the central and regional powers (Marathas, Mysore and Hyderabad) of the inland region and also from native potentates<sup>4</sup> of the coast like Malabar, *Kathiawad* and *Kachchh* against their actions since the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A peep into the colonisation trajectory of the Indian sub-continent and in the nation-states around Indian Ocean waters establishes Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French as ‘political / strategic’ masters in ‘time and space’; however, it was the English (EIC) who succeeded in emerging as controllers of the destiny of Indian, Arab, Armenian, Persian and Afrikaner subjects.<sup>5</sup> This period can be termed as ‘transition process’ with salient features of ‘continuity and change’<sup>6</sup> under the hegemonic tendencies of alien element i.e.

<sup>1</sup>Ruby Maloni “Intra-European Rivalries in the Indian Ocean Trade: A Study of the Surat Factory Records (1630-1668).” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 47, 1986, pp. 351–61. [www.jstor.org/stable/44141563](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44141563).

<sup>2</sup>J. Gommans, “Continuity and Change in the Indian Ocean Basin” in J. Bentley, S. Subrahmanyam, & M. Wiesner-Hanks (eds.), *The Cambridge World History*, Vol. VI, Part 1, 2005, pp. 182-209. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139194594.009

<sup>3</sup>Randolf G. S. Cooper, *The Anglo-Maratha Campaigns and the Contest for India: The Struggle for Control of the South Asian Military Economy*, 2007, pp. 1-81.

<sup>4</sup>Lakshmi Subramanian, “Contingent Developments in Antipiracy Politics in Asian Seas” in Ota Atsushi (ed.), *In the Name of the Battle against Piracy*, 2018, pp. 69-170.

<sup>5</sup>James Onley, “The Raj Reconsidered: British India’s Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia and Africa”, *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, No. I, March 2009, pp. 44-62.

<sup>6</sup>J. Gommans, “Continuity and Change in the Indian Ocean Basin” in J. Bentley, S. Subrahmanyam, & M. Wiesner-Hanks (eds.), *The Cambridge World History*, pp. 182-209; doi:10.1017/CBO9781139194594.009 and see C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World 1780-1830*, 1989.

the Europe in English (British after 1858).<sup>7</sup> During this phase, South Asians and subjects of the Arab World and Swahili culture could see themselves as potent players in the role of contributors to both agrarian and emerging non-agrarian economy within the paradigm of 'mercantilism and capitalism'<sup>8</sup> which was taking shape under immense 'competition' between the nation-states and 'West vs. East'. Chapter II & III have drawn discrete lines to show that 18<sup>th</sup> century was having several kinds of 'business and commerce'. The peaceful commerce was mercantile activity and turbulent one was due to maritime violence. Piracy falls in the category of business and its apparatus remain maritime violence. Pirates did behave like 'custom officials' in both the categories of westerner and easterners in the role of pirate, privateer, *corsair*, *buccaneer* and so on within the Braudelian paradigm. The story of maritime violence, thus, reveals that it was always European companies on the winning edge while venturing in Asia and Africa

<sup>7</sup>[The Indian Empire comprised of British India-colonial provinces (1858–1947) headed by a British governor, etc. and Princely India-'native states' and tribal territories' chiefs overseen by a British resident/agent. The Indian Empire included Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Arabia, and Somalia. British India's primary motive for entering into these relationships was strategic: to establish a *cordon sanitaire* around India. To protect its trade and communication route through the Persian Gulf and prevent the establishment of a foreign naval base there, British India established spheres of influence in Persia and Ottoman Iraq, and offered a series of treaties through which it became increasingly responsible for the protection of coastal Eastern Arabia and the island of Bahrain. Through these treaties, the British were able to get local rulers to collaborate in the pacification of the Persian Gulf and in the later exclusion of foreign influence threatening British Indian interests. To protect its shipping routes through the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, British India annexed the port of Aden and established consulates and agencies in Western Arabia, Ottoman Egypt, and Zanzibar. After Aden became a vital port, British India signed protective treaties with the rulers of the Aden Protectorate and the tribes of the British Somaliland Protectorate to safeguard the port].

<sup>8</sup>S. B. Clough & C.W. Cole, *Economic History of Europe*, 1952, pp. 233-73.

to carve out their colonies, enroute markets and defense bases. This in fact, has been demonstrated in several treatises on history of piracy for the ancient, medieval and modern period profusely used by me to construct the chapters II, III & IV. As far as administering the colonial India is concerned, the colonial period can be divided in two phases: pre-1858 and post-1858 which is spelled here through well-known lecture of Curzon<sup>9</sup> orated in University of Oxford in 1907:

.... The enemy to be feared a century ago **was the Maratha host...**the Rajput States and Oude were maintained as a buffer. On the North-West Frontier, Sind and the Punjab...warded off contact or collision with Baluchistan and Afghanistan, while the Sutlej States warded off contact with the Punjab. **Gradually, these barriers disappeared as the forward movement began: some were annexed, others were engulfed in the advancing tide, remaining embedded like stumps of trees in an avalanche, or left with their heads above water like islands in a flood...**Further to the east and north the chain of Protectorates is continued in Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan:.. At both extremities of the line the Indian Empire, now vaster and more populous than has ever before acknowledged **the sway of an Asiatic sovereign**, (1) the administrative border of **British India**, (2) the Durand Line, or Frontier of active protection, (3) the Afghan border, which is the outer or advanced strategical Frontier...All of the states and territories ...incorporated into a **vast diplomatic network controlled from British India**. The British placed each state or territory into a district known by the mid-18th century as a 'residency'.

**The number and size of these residencies fluctuated from year to year.**

**By the 1880s, there were 56 residencies and independent agencies in all. The bulk of them, 47, were in South Asia, These residencies and agencies were run by what came to be known as the Indian Political Service (IPS), the diplomatic corps of British India. The head of a residency was usually known as a 'resident'. Originally, residents took their orders from the headquarters of one of the Company's three Presidencies in India: Surat (1616–87) later Bombay Castle in Bombay; Fort St George in Madras (established 1653); and Fort William in Calcutta, Bengal (established 1698). Fort William was the seat of the Governor-General, later Viceroy, who exercised ultimate authority over British India's military affairs from 1773, foreign affairs from 1784, and domestic affairs from 1833. After the Governor-General became responsible for foreign affairs, residents**

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<sup>9</sup>Curzon in James Onley, "The Raj Reconsidered: British India's Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia And Africa", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, No. I, March 2009, p. 46.

**reported either to the Indian Foreign Department in Calcutta (1784–1912), then New Delhi (1912–47), or to the Political Department of one of the subordinate provincial governments of British India.**

[Political Department, Govt. of Bombay Winter HQ: Bombay, Summer HQ: Poona & Mahabaleshwar]

Based on the understanding developed from Onley's article on 'The Raj Reconsidered', I place my study region (WIO) for providing a gaze in the management of British Empire which coincided with primary source material used by me.

**Table I: Profile of English East India Company (EIC) from c.1600-c. 1858<sup>10</sup> Related to its Administration**

<b>1610–1690</b>	<b>1700–1800</b>	<b>1810–1858</b>
President of a Presidency	Governor of a Presidency	Governor of a Presidency or Province, Lieutenant-Governor of a Province, or Chief Commissioner of a Province
Agent of an Agency	Agent of an Agency	Political Resident of a Residency Political Agent of an Agency
Chief Factor of a Factory	Resident of a Factory or Residency	
Broker of a Brokerage	Broker of a Brokerage	Native Agent of an Agency

<sup>10</sup>James Onley, "The Raj Reconsidered: British India's Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia and Africa", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, No. I, March 2009, p. 48].

**Table II: Profile of British Indian Empire, c.1880 onwards**

Sr. No.	Domain	Nature of Control
British India's Residency System in the 1880s in sphere of WIO		
<b>A. British India Diplomatic Districts Abroad</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Persian Gulf</b> (Eastern Arabia)	Political Residency
<b>2</b>	<b>Aden</b> (South Arabia* & British (Somaliland))	Political Residency
<b>3</b>	<b>Zanzibar</b> (Sultanate of Zanzibar, East Africa)	Consulate-General
<b>B. British India Diplomatic Districts Domestic</b>		
<b>1.</b>	<b>Baroda</b>	Political Residency
<b>2.</b>	<b>Kachchh</b>	Political Agency (Independent Office)
<b>3.</b>	<b>Kathiawad</b>	Political Agency (Independent Office)
<b>4.</b>	<b>Kolaba</b>	Political Agency (Independent Office)
<b>5.</b>	<b>Sawantwaree</b>	Political Residency
<b>6.</b>	<b>Surat</b>	Political Agency (Independent Office)
Notes: *South Arabia and the Aden Residency were known as the Aden Protectorate after 1890s.		
<b>British India's Commercial and Diplomatic Districts Abroad c. 1616- c. 1947</b>		
Region	District Responsible for this area (HQ)	Period
<b>PERSIA</b>		
Whole Country	Persia Agency (HQ: Jask)	1616–1623
	Persia Agency (HQ: Bandar Abbas)	1623–1763
	Basrah Agency	1763–1778
Southern	Bushire Residency <sup>1</sup>	1778–1811
	Tehran Legation / Mission	1811–1860
	Bushire Residency	1778–1822
	Lower Gulf Agency (HQ: Qishm / Kishm Island)	1820–1822
	Gulf Residency (HQ: Bushire)	1822–1878
	Fars Consulate-General (HQ: Bushire)	1878–1946
Northern & Central	Tehran Legation / Mission <sup>2</sup>	1811–1853
	Tehran Legation	1859–1860
Eastern	Tehran Legation / Mission	1811–1889
	Khorasan Consulate-General (HQ: Mashhad)	1889–1947
<b>ARABIA</b>		
Eastern	Muscat Agency	c.1758–1810
	Bushire Residency	1810–1820

	Lower Gulf Agency (HQ: Qishm Island)	1820–1822
	Gulf Residency (HQ: Bushire)	1822–1946
	Gulf Residency (HQ: Bahrain)	1946–1971
Southern	Mocha Agency	1618–1752 1802–1829
	Aden Settlement [the port of Aden]	1839–1932
	Aden Province [the port of Aden]	1932–1937
	Aden Agency	1839–1859
	Aden Residency	1859–1873
	Aden Residency [Aden Protectorate after 1890s]	1873–1917 <sup>3</sup>
Western	Jeddah Agency (under Egypt Consul-General)	c.1802–1870
	Jeddah Agency	1870–c.1918
<b>EAST AFRICA</b>		
British Somaliland Zanzibar	Aden Residency	1884–1898 <sup>4</sup>
	Zanzibar Agency & Consulate	1843–1873
	Zanzibar Consulate-General	1873–1883 <sup>5</sup>
Notes:		
1. The Bushire Residency was established in 1763, but was subordinate to the Basrah Agency until 1778. 2. Established in 1809 by the Foreign Office. Outside of the years listed, Ministers came from the Foreign Office. 3. The Aden Protectorate was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1917. 4. The British Somaliland Protectorate was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1898. 4. The Zanzibar Consulate-General was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1883.		
<b>British India's Representatives outside India with Foreign Office Rank</b>		
1. The Minister of the Tehran Legation (Northern and Central Persia), 1811–60, 1894–1900, 1918–20 <sup>1</sup> 2. The Consul-General for Egypt in Alexandria, 1833–70 3. The Consul, later Consul-General, for Zanzibar (East African coast), 1843–83 4. The Consul, later Consul-General, for Turkish Arabia (Ottoman Iraq) in Baghdad, 1844–1914 5. The Consul for Chiang Mai (Northwest Siam), 1884–1947 6. The Consul-General for Chinese Turkistan (Sinkiang/Xinjiang) in Kashgar, 1891–1947 7. The Consul-General for Fars (Southern Persia) in Bushire, 1878–1946 8. The Consul-General for Khorasan (Eastern Persia) in Mashhad, 1889–1947 9. The de facto Consul-General for Tibet in Gangtok (Sikkim), 1904–47		

10. The Minister of the Kabul Legation (Afghanistan), 1922–47
11. The Envoy/Minister of the Nepal Legation in Kathmandu, 1923–34/1934–47<sup>2</sup>

Notes:

1. The British Minister in Tehran was directly responsible for Northern and Central Persia and oversaw the Consul-Generals in Southern and Eastern Persia. Tehran was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1860, but Indian Political Service officers served as Minister on two more occasions.
2. The Nepal Legation was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1934, but it continued to be run by the Indian Political Service until 1947.

**Source:** James Onley, “The Raj Reconsidered: British India’s Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia and Africa”, *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, no. I, March 2009, Appendices, pp. 55-58

A long history of monarchical tradition in the Indian subcontinent under Mughals or Persian Empire under Safavids; and authority of central nodes under African tribes had a tradition of monopolizing the region / sub-region or a locality which was part of navigational acumen legacy to indulge in long-distance trade on waters. The clash of interest of monopolies on the two ends created an environment where process of laying down of agreements, treaties and regulations became the necessity of time. These took shape in relation to existing ones and were formalised in the light of ‘which’ and for ‘whom’ it was designed.

It has already been said on several occasions in the previous chapters that the route via the Cape of Good Hope had established European monopoly in the Indian Oceanic trade by c. 1750 and interest of the natives and their respective authorities were at stake, meaning thereby, the native authority either in India or in Persia or in East Africa (and in later period by authority along the Swahili coast) agreed for treaties and agreements under the threat of

maritime violence; signed but their executions of either side evinced violation.

The Portuguese were the first of the Europeans to trade in India and concluded commercial treaties, “Articles of Agreement”<sup>11</sup> with Indian rulers in 16<sup>th</sup> century and Portuguese vessels predominantly commanded the Afro-Asian waters (Annexure- XII depicting Portuguese vessels and techniques of sail) and often engaged in conflict with the merchant vessels of Asia.<sup>12</sup> Asian economies which were mostly agrarian now started transforming into market-oriented non-agrarian economies as per the new demands of international trade.<sup>13</sup> The Dutch East India Company (VOC)<sup>14</sup> came on the scene in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was able to acquire access to a lot of ports in Indian Ocean which was seen as a challenge by the English who were also contending for the supremacy (See Annexure X). By the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, English were successful in eliminating the Dutch, who started looking for alternatives along western seaboard of India; and they found some concessions in the Gulf of *Kachchh* after the relative decline of trade traffic at Surat port. For instance, when the Dutch were pushed from Surat in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, they started

<sup>11</sup> Philip Gosse, *History of Piracy*, 1934, pp. 213-31.

<sup>12</sup> Om Prakash, *International Consortiums, Merchant Networks and Portuguese Trade with Asia in the Early Modern Period*, pp. 1-27. <http://www.helsinki.fi/iehc2006/papers1/Prakash.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Frank, Andre Gunder, "India in the World Economy, 1400-1750." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 31, No. 30, July, 27, 1996: PE50-PE64.

<sup>14</sup> Nadri, Ghulam. "Exploring the Gulf of Kachh: Regional Economy and Trade in the Eighteenth Century." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 2008, pp. 474-82.

looking for cotton in *Kachchh* as a main commodity and found operational base at Bhuj and Anjar. Ghulam Nadri, using Dutch sources, brings in that the cotton *bales* produced in *Kachchh* were supplied to Holland which lasted for a short period. A study of the port towns of Mandvi and Mundra also establishes the Dutch connection because the *Mallums / Malam* of *Kachchh* Mandvi were trained by the Dutch and it is popularly known that one of them (Ram Singh *Malam -Kharwa*) has sailed as far as England and Holland and it was in Holland he learned various arts: particularly glass and clock making. Similarly if one attempts to look into the French East India Company's scenario, we find limited nodes where the Company had its holdings. The period of Robert Clive and Dupleix clearly demonstrate the aspirations of the companies where both land and sea became the 'bloody-waters'. Subsequently, the English in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century clashed with the French East India Company also; and established their hegemony over other continent fellows.<sup>15</sup> Once the English Company was successful in Bengal, it started heading in the 'northward direction', towards the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Aden and Red Sea. Mia Carter and Barbara Harlow have rightly observed that the East India Company exploited trade and commerce through 'military support' in the Western Indian Ocean: Africa and Asia.<sup>16</sup> A light on interruptions is also reviewed here. The Danes came to

<sup>15</sup>John Biddulph, *The Pirates of Malabar and an Englishwoman in India Two Hundred Years Ago*, 1907, pp. vii-xi and 1-36, 69-83 & 132-60.

<sup>16</sup>Barbara Harlow and Mia Carter *Archives of Empire: From the East India Company to the Suez Canal*, 2003, pp. Introduction.

India as traders in 1616 and obtained Tranquebar port from the *Nayaks* of Tanjore in 1620 and setup factories at Masulipatnam, Porto Novo and Serampur but could not trade for long owing to scanty resources and left India in 1845 after selling their factories to the English. The Swedish East India Company traded in India from 1731 to 1813 and the activities of Flanders' merchants were limited to India for a short while.<sup>17</sup> The East India Company had discretion of making laws and had judicial powers to punish the offenders as per the mandate from the Crown; and the Crown along with Parliament controlled the East India Company through Charters<sup>18</sup>. In India, each factory was administered by a Governor-in-Council (refer Table I & II) by the end of my study period.

A note on Surat port and trade of Surat for 19<sup>th</sup> century based on the analysis by V. A. Janaki<sup>19</sup> suggests that after establishment of hegemony by English and their factories (see Janaki- Map, p. 54) a trend appeared where Bombay remained prime hub for all export and imports but new line were created to reach to Daman, Bassein, Goa, Karwar, Honawar, Bhatal, Mangalore, Kannur, Cranganore, Mannar, Colombo, Galle within the limits of WIO so the ready goods from Europe can be distributed in Indian markets and the raw stuff was carried to Europe via Bombay. She provides

<sup>17</sup><https://doi.org/10.1080/03585522.2003.10414232>

<sup>18</sup> Charter Act of East India Company 1793 & East India Company Act 1813. Visit <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/> parliament-and-empire/parliament-and-the-american-colonies-before-1765/east-india-company-and-raj-1785-1858/

<sup>19</sup>V.A. Janaki, *Some Aspects of the Historical Geography of Surat*, Geography Research Paper Series No. 7, 1974, pp. 52-53.

trading figures for the year 1802-1803, 1815-1816, 1830-1831 and 1800-1875 for export, import and nature of commodities in order to map the decline scenario and gain to the new ports within the Indian in Western Indian Ocean rim. She also records the initiative taken by the British to bring Surat under directly administrative area and providing Surat administrative management in terms of security to its subjects who were interested in mercantile commerce. This means that British were controlling the western Indian seaboard for their economic interest and did not want any interruption in their imperialistic design. Piratical aggressions along the side of Surat waters were a great impediment in the fulfilment of imperial designs towards Persian Gulf and East African possessions.

The East India Company's victorious journey was initiated with Battle of Plassey (1757) that provided it an edge over their European rival companies in three ways which have been expressed by Holden Furber<sup>20</sup>: first - the Company had strengthened land route and communication to Europe; second - Bombay Marine which was established to suppress *Angrias* and Malabar pirates in order to secure the Persian Gulf for themselves; and third - they supported Hindu, Muslim and Armenian traders and provided their service in transport. They interfered in the local politics frequently especially the incidences of sea plunder by

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<sup>20</sup>Holden Furber, *Rivals Empire of the Orient 1600-1800*, 2004, pp. 1-30.

natives; this furthered fulfilment of their interest in the Western Indian Ocean.

A peep into the historiography of establishment of East India Company's hegemony in WIO waters is acquired through the works of Gerald S. Graham<sup>21</sup> and C. H. Philips<sup>22</sup>. For instance, the EIC was financed by home government following a procedure of first taking a loan for financing of trade and later re-investing the money. In due course they emerged independent and developed an attitude of a ruler. Gerald S. Graham analysed that by the close of Napoleonic Wars, the English had control over the Atlantic Ocean and its supremacy extended up to the Indian Ocean. English deployed its naval forces to protect its merchants from pirates and marauders active in the Indian Ocean. The international circumstances due to the presence of French and Russians pressed Great Britain to take cautionary measures in order to continue carving their web towards Persian Gulf as they wanted Russia to confine to Black Sea. Russia had connection with Persia via the Caspian Sea. Britain thought that Russia might open its military base in the Persian Gulf which will threaten its interest in Persia, Afghanistan and India. The English faced turbulence due to the presence of native sea plunderers:

...Farther south, every watering-place on the African coast was infested by the English and French pirates who had their headquarters in the West Indies. From the Cape of Good Hope to the Head of the Persian Gulf, from Cape Comorin to Sumatra, every coast was beset by English, French, Dutch, Danish, Portuguese,

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<sup>21</sup>Gerald S. Graham, *Great Britain in the Indian Ocean: A Study of Maritime Enterprise 1810-1850*, 1967, pp. 130-45

<sup>22</sup>C. H. Philips, *The East India Company 1784-1834*, Vol. VI, 1998, pp. 23-58.

Arab, Malay or other local pirates...There was no peace on the ocean. The sea was a vast 'No Man's domain, where every man might take his prey...

-John Biddulph, *The Pirates of Malabar ...in India Two Hundred Years Ago*

Lakshmi Subramanian-senior scholar and an authority on the 'politics of piracy for northwest India' emphasised to understand 'trade structures of western Indian littoral' and 'trading groups' to evaluate the politico-economic situations with specified role to EIC in the category of 'quasi-monopoly' on the condition to ascertain 'security for the seekers' and 'peaceful environs to the traders and merchants' for their day to day chores. It is here, one understands the politics when sets of conditions are constructed to strengthen themselves, the English created a naval base in Mumbai (Bombay Marine) by shifting from Surat which was their first Factory. Like her, I will also bring in the cases to emphasise the vertex of 'Politics of Piracy' and emergence of British 'Paramountcy' in the Western Indian Ocean.

### **Conflict between the English East India Company and the Marathas in Western India**

The East India Company tried to monopolize the eastern goods: raw cotton, cotton textiles, pearls, pepper, cardamom, spices, etc. which adversely affected the trade interests of the local merchants and the handicraft industry which in turn affected the urban producers who reached out to their rulers with complaints and requested to raise objections. In fact, one finds a recurrence of this not only in the Maratha and Zamorin territory but also in *Kathiawad* and *Kachchh* under native rulers who were mostly from the Rajput clan and had hereditary rights awarded to them and

preserved since the time of Emperor Akbar who first visited Gujarat and has seen the waters of the sea; Emperor Jahangir and Shah Jahan respectively. While tracing the trajectory of movement of pirates and privateers from Europe traversing in the Indian Ocean waters offered a challenge to the frequenting mercantile vessels. On way to Indian Ocean via Atlantic *buccaneers*, *corsairs* and pirates created havoc, leading to piratical aggressions. The European companies therefore came up with the system of issuing passes to the merchants' vessels for assured voyage. All rulers on the western seaboard refused and resisted the pass system of Portuguese, Dutch and English. Even on occasions they sided with the natives when they were caught and were placed under trial. In particular, Marathas and Zamorin hired mercenaries and tried to implement their pass system referred as '*dastaks*' which shaped another opportunity of conflict in Indian Ocean waters converting it to 'theatre of conflict'(**my emphasis**).

It has also been observed that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when EIC has pushed its competitors to WIO in limited locations (Goa, Diu & Daman on the Western Coast), started targeting the merchant vessels if they traversed without their permissions. For instance, the Malabar and the Konkan vessels were seized by the Bombay government because it was interested in the northern trade i.e. the Arabian Sea, the Gulf and the Horn of Africa.<sup>23</sup> Maratha Confederacy: Gaekwad of Baroda, Sindhia of Gwailor, Holkar of

<sup>23</sup>C. R. Low, *History of the Indian Navy (1613-1863)*, Vol. I Appendix B, pp. 537-41

Indore, Bhonsle of Berar, and the Peshwa whosoever had coast under their control started supporting the native seafarers to carry out piratical aggressions, in some cases it was for fulfilment of their revenue impositions. Reference to pirates of *Okhamandal* and *Kachchh* at this juncture is pertinent to understand the nature of conflict and politics behind it. For instance, the ruler of Bhavnagar paid tribute to both Peshwa and Gaekwad of Baroda<sup>24</sup> for protection against onslaughts from European privateers or native sea-plunderers. There are cases related to Bhavnagar which establish Bhavnagar-Surat conflict on cotton and the issues of revenue settlement.<sup>25</sup> In response to this, Colonel Alexander Walker, first Resident of Baroda State arrived in 1802 for carrying out settlement in *Kathiawad* territory so that the subjects of the *Kathiawad* Agency and *Kachchh* Agency live in peace as per the agreements with the local potentates, Gaekwads and *Jadejas*.

The East India Company shifted its headquarter from Surat to Bombay in 1687. A reading of the ‘Public Department Diary Consultations’ reveals how Bombay Marine was able to subjugate the *Angrias*, *Malwans* and the *Desais* of *Sawantwaree* through rigorous confrontations at sea and on coast. This shifted the balance of power and the English were able to claim their supremacy over the natives by stating that ‘they would not take passes from any Indian Nation (local rulers), but would grant them

<sup>24</sup>For detailed clauses of treaty see Annexures I, II & III.

<sup>25</sup>Nadri, Ghulam. “Exploring the Gulf of Kachh: Regional Economy and Trade in the Eighteenth Century”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 2008, pp. 432-82.

Passes’.<sup>26</sup> Understanding on the evolution of Bombay Marine has already been discussed previously.<sup>27</sup> The Maratha naval power was subdued and the English proved their hegemony over the seas and land. By 1730, Kanhoji Angria made frequent piratical assaults on the East India Company and its clients (refer Chapter II & III). In the north *Siddis* also offered challenge to the Marathas. After the death of Kanhoji Angria, his sons continued depredation to the East India Company’s merchant vessels but it was vulnerable position for the *Angrias*. The East India Company became powerful along the sea-route to Bombay. In 1740, the Maratha navy captured four of the English ships and the Company decided to station its marine to counter the Maratha Navy, thus showed its naval superiority against the Marathas and assured protection to the traders. There were more than hundred ships built at Bombay between 1740 and 1850. Many of these ships were attacked and plundered by *Angrias*, *Sawantwarees* native plunders and *Kharwas* in the Arabian Sea heading towards north. C. R. Low, while tracing the history of Indian Navy provides us the list of the vessels in immediate waters of WIO which got affected due to maritime violence. The appendices of the volumes by Low throw light on vessel type, captains on sail and who targeted the vessel to become

<sup>26</sup>Lakshmi Subramanian, *The Sovereign and the Pirate Ordering Maritime Subjects in India’s Western Littoral*, 2016, pp. 43-44.

<sup>27</sup>C. R. Low, *History of the Indian Navy (1613-1863)*, Vol. I Appendix B, pp. 537-41; Sir Charles Fawcett (ed.), Sir Evan Cotton, *East Indiamen: The East India Company’s Maritime Service*, 1949, pp. 21 & 149-51; and Andrew Lambert, “Strategy, Policy and Shipbuilding: The Bombay Dockyard, the Indian Navy and Imperial Security in Eastern Seas, 1784-1869” in Bowen, H.V., Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby, (eds.), *The Worlds of The East India Company*, 2002, pp. 137-52.

the victim of predation. Many of the ships belonging to Bombay marine are mentioned in the narrations highlighted in chapter III.

The Bombay Marine which in due time evolved into the Royal Indian Navy had its origin in these corvettes which acted as escort to the merchantmen of the Company for protection against *Angria's* power. In 1858 there were around fifty ships categorized as war vessels. We have already briefly referred to the expedition sent against them in 1765. It was under the joint command of Major Gordon,<sup>28</sup> and Captain John Watson of the Bombay Marine.<sup>29</sup> The objective of Bombay Marine was to check piracy and piratical aggressions in the Persian Gulf and west coast of India. Annexures III–IX amply bear the intentions and actions of the colonisers which are illustrated in terms of articles of treaty and follow-ups in reports and minutes. The Company's war against pirates; the Anglo-Maratha (1803–1805) and Anglo-Mysore wars (1798–99) reinforced each-other, providing a strong opposition to the English under the leadership of the Peshwa of Pune and Tipu Sultan of Mysore respectively. An attempt to construct larger picture on the canvas of Indian peninsula, it can be precisely stated that the 'struggle of natives to fight for their rights led to establishment of English supremacy gradually'. Reference to Anglo-Maratha wars, Carnatic wars, and Anglo-Mysore wars is essential as they are responsible for establishment of paramountcy

<sup>28</sup>Gowan and Goreham, as well as Gordon, in the records of the period.

<sup>29</sup>The same who, as Commodore Watson, was killed at the siege of Tannah (Thane).

of the British.<sup>30</sup> The native sea-farers' attempts to wage offensive defense wars has been contended by the Company as piracy or piratical aggressions (illustrations and maps in chapter II & III based on the narration in the text).

The Battle of Plassey (1757) and the Battle of Buxar (1764) gave the *diwani* rights of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa to the East India Company. Further, the British government financed and issued charters like the Charter Act of 1793 which allowed continuation of trade and monopoly in India and China for twenty years; Company officials and individuals were allowed to have personal trade and the Company was financially and militarily supported.

### **East India Company and Gaekwad of Baroda**

The English, in order to curb the pirates and the chiefs supporting them from the pockets of *Okhamandal* carried out military expeditions and ceded it to the Gaekwad State of Baroda but the *Waghers* of *Okhamandal* continued to be a constant threat as assessed in chapter III based on the Correspondences between Company's officials, instructions to the Gaekwad rulers and briefings made to England.<sup>31</sup> Under Anandrao Gaekwad, ruler of Baroda State tried to control piracy and piratical aggressions

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<sup>30</sup>James Onley, "The Raj Reconsidered: British India's Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia and Africa", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, No. I, March 2009, pp. 53-54

<sup>31</sup>Mani Kamarkar, *British Paramountcy: British-Baroda Relations 1818-1848*, 1980, Preface, pp. 1-19 Appendix A, pp. 228-38. And see V. K. Chavda, *The Gaekwad and the British: A Study of Their Problems* (1875-1920), 1967.

through their naval forces.<sup>32</sup> In 1813, the East India Company agreed to send Dart and Barbara *pattamar* to the Gaekwad of Baroda who paid for its expenses an amount of Rs. 14,429-2-13<sup>33</sup>. They tried to make some serious arrangements with the Chiefs of Okha, Byet, Dwarka and Dhingi but failed to suppress the piratical aggressions.

**East India Company, *Kachchh* and Piracy:** A revisit to the chapter III on the Gulf of *Kachchh* and the navigability of the *Rann* appraises the importance of *Kachchh*' hinterland not only for the EIC but also for the inhabitants of *Kachchh*, because the coastal trade with the interiors depended upon tidal waters in the rivulets. The villages in these creeks and along the rivulets were the safe-havens of native sea plunders (pirates) of *Kachchh*. Rulers of *Kachchh* in second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were unsuccessful in curbing piratical aggressions as per the expectation of EIC. The mounting pressure on EIC for creating sphere of influence forced

<sup>32</sup>In late 18th century, the Baroda state established a Naval set up at Billimora, a port about 40 miles south of Surat, known as *Bandar Billimora Suba Armor*. Here a fleet of 50 vessels was stationed, which included mostly sails, cargo vessels for trading and military vessels to secure the sea from Portuguese, Dutch and French. When political alignments changed, after the Second Anglo-Maratha war, a joint expedition of British and Baroda state troops under Colonel Walker, approached Kathiawad in 1808, and **eventually obtained bonds from the chiefs of Okhamandal and from the maritime states of Kathiawad renouncing piracy**. Then in 1813, the Baroda government acquired the *parganah* of Kodinar (in present Junagadh district), where at port of Velan a small fleet of four frigates with 12 pounder guns on each for the protection of the trade between Bombay and Sindh was established. These four armed vessels were named Anandprasad, Sarsuba, Anamat Vartand Anne Maria, which was purchased from the Shah of Iran, and was known as 'Shah Kai Khusru' until then. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. VII, 1908. pp. 31-32.

<sup>33</sup>J. H. Gense, & D. R. Banaji, *The Gaikwads of Baroda*, Vol. X, p.1 and see John McLeod Sovereignty, Power, Control: Politics in the States of Western India, 1916-1947, 1999 pp. 88-114.

them to interfere. This was particularly due to frequent piratical aggressions that the Company had to withdraw its factory in Sind. It is also known to us that *Kachchh* had discrete arrangement with the Mughals earlier, so when in the 19<sup>th</sup> century English tried to control issues they figured differently but had legacy of this period because controlling the feudatories of *Kachchh* had always been a challenge. The process began with the signing of treaties, agreements and process of execution between the Princely State rulers on one hand and monitoring by the representatives of the Company on the other.

Aitchison's description about *Kachchh* at this juncture is crucial to understand the circumstances:

The first Chief of Kutch with whom the British Government formed treaty relations was Rao Rayadhan, who commenced to rule in 1778, and died in 1813. Between Rao Khengar and Rao Rayadhan, there were eleven successions. The cruelty and tyranny of Rao Rayadhan, who was issue insane, **alienated the Chiefs of the country**, and in 1786 they seized person and placed him in confinement. ...Thus in 1809, when the first treaty with Kutch concluded, Hansraj, a rival of Fateh Muhammad, ruled independently in Mandvi in the south-western portion of the province, and the other Chiefs, with the exception of some of the Jareja Chiefs, who took no part in the quarrel, **were divided in their allegiance; some acknowledging the supremacy of Fateh Muhammad, and others that of Hansraj.**

To check the political dissent between Hansraj and Fateh Mohammed, the East India Company offered mediation. Hansraj was succeeded by his son, Shivraj, who imposed taxes on all vessels irrespective of the English pass and refused to lead the vessel used for anti-piracy expedition. The English decided to curb piracy through peaceful means and sent an agent to negotiate an agreement regarding sheltering and sponsoring of piracy which was signed by the petty chieftains but was not followed. EIC was

facing problems in carrying out trade peacefully and therefore needed strong naval and military force to suppress piracy.<sup>34</sup>

Aitchison further informs us that Fateh Muhammad carried out raids into Gujarat and *Kathiawad* and as a result British interfered through signing of treaty. In *Kachchh*, the Maharaja Mirza Rao Bharmuljee agreed to sign an agreement with the East India Company about the lasting peace and amity between the two governments. *Wagher* in the *Kachchh* continued with their depredation in the territory of Peshwa and Gaikwad in the *Kathiawad* Peninsula. Mirza Roa agreed to compensate the loss and pay the military expenses. The agreement bound the subject of *Kachchh* State on no account to cross the Gulf or *Rann* for hostile purposes; neither shall they cross to act against the subjects of the Honourable Company or those of Peshwas and Gaekwads.<sup>35</sup> Rao agreed that he will not engage with foreigner, European, American

<sup>34</sup>In 1802, when Captain Seton was deputed to Kutch, the Diwan offered to conclude the following treaty, but owing to the distracted state of the country it was deemed inexpedient to contract any close alliance with Kutch:-AGREEMENT between the HONOURABLE COMPANY and MAHA RAO RAYADHAN, RAJA OF KUTCH, by CAPTAIN DAVID SETON, for the HONOURABLE COMPANY, and HANSRAJ SETH, DIWAN, on the part of the RAJA. ARTICLE -15. If the Honourable Company wish to attack the Okha pirates, the Raja will assist and land their troops at Kachchi Garh. ARTICLE 16-The troops of the two governments shall take Beyt, Dwarka, and every place in Okha where pirates are, and after taking them, the collection of the revenues shall remain with Hansraj and Sundarji, one-fourth to the Raja, and three-fourths to the Honourable Company. Byet and Dwarka being sacred places shall be garrisoned by the Kutch troops, and the management of government left to Hansraj and Sundarji. The troops of both governments shall be at their respective expense. ARTICLE 17- If a factory shall be granted the Raja at Bombay, his staples shall also be at half the duties paid by other merchants, as the Honourable Company at Kutch.

<sup>35</sup>C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, Bombay Presidency: Kutch Agency, Cambay, Surat Agency, Jauhar, Janjira, Satara Jadirdars, Kolhapur and Southern Maratha country, Sawantwari Country Agency and Lapsed States*, Part II, 1909, p. 15.

force or agent to pass and reside in *Kachchh*. He will effectively suppress the practice of piracy. The Company does not want Arab mercenaries employed in the *Kachchh* and Rao was restricted to few numbers employed in *Kachchh*. This is expressed here in detail:

British Government, in October 1809, Treaties (No. II) concluded with Fateh Muhammad on behalf of the Rao, and with Hansraj, by which they renounced all claim to interference in the countries to the east of the Gulf of *Kachchh* and the Rann, and engaged to suppress piracy and to exclude Europeans and Americans from their possessions. Hansraj was also guaranteed in the separate possession of Mandvi till such times as the Rao should assume the government. **Notwithstanding repeated remonstrances, these engagements were not kept; piracies were not suppressed. Retaliation was more than once threatened,** and in 1813 a British officer was deputed to insist on immediate compliance with the demands of the British Government. During the negotiations Fateh Muhammad died, on the 5th October 1813. Rao Rayadhan survived him only a month. On his death the succession was disputed between Man Singh or Bharmal, his illegitimate son, and Ladhubhaa, the legitimate son of his brother. The former was supported by Hussain Main and Ibrahim Mian, the sons of Fateh Muhammad, and with their assistance succeeded in overcoming his cousin. The rule of this Chief, who was afflicted with the same malady as his father, presented a succession of the most atrocious cruelties and aggressions on the territories of his neighbours. **No restraint was put on the lawless inhabitants of Wagar, who made constant inroads into Gujarat and Kathiawad, and after repeated remonstrances on the part of the British Government, it became necessary to move a force into Kutch. On the 14th January 1816, a Treaty (No. III) was concluded, by which the Rao agreed to pay indemnity for the losses caused by the inroads from Wagar; to suppress piracy; to exclude Europeans and Americans and Arabs mercenaries from Kutch; and to give no shelter to outlaws; and the British Government engaged, in consideration of the cession of Anjar and other villages, and the payment of two lakh Korris<sup>36</sup> annually, to reduce the Rao's subjects to his authority and to reform the Wagar district.** Within a month after the conclusion of this treaty, the whole of Kutch was reduced to the Rao's authority. **As the country had been greatly impoverished by the twenty years of turmoil and misrule, the British Government, by a supplementary Treaty (No. IV) voluntarily remitted the whole of the military expense the State had incurred, and the annual sum which the Rao had engaged to pay.** Not long after order had thus been restored, the Rao returned to his civil courses. He murdered his cousin, Ladhubha; deprived many Chiefs of their estates; increased his troops; and showed such manifest hostility to **the British Government, that the provisions of**

**the treaty of 1816 were suspended.** The interference of the British Government was again earnestly invited by the principal Jareja Chiefs.

Later the East India Company with the help of a guarantor, the chief of Positra made *Nackwa* Neya of Mandvi sign a security bond agreement<sup>37</sup> *Nackwa* Neya wrote a security bond to Sundarjee Shivjee in presence of Dewjee Praggee and gave names of other pirates *Nackwa* Mokum, *Mallum* Mungeya, *Mallum* Hesam, *Mallum* Namoril, *Mallum* Lalil, *Nackwa* Mahomed and *Nakwa* Kalla. The plundered property was confiscated by the manager of Mandvi which included 2 *Jhanjeers* or silver anklets, 1 *mhadella* Talisman, 1 *Jumna*, 2 *Waneks* or Bracelets, 1 *Popinia*, 6 Empty Boxes, 3 Brass Cooking utensils, 1 Iron Straines, 5 *Culreys* and 23 *Manas* of *Teb* which being in a state of decay has been sold for 61,874 *Cories*.<sup>38</sup>

Continuing our discourse between *Kachchh* and *Kathiawad*, some cases of Piracy in this pocket needs mention. These are Nawanagar, Bhavnagar and Porbandar for which information is derived from *Gazetteers*, Selections, Aitchison's treaty collection and British Parliamentary Papers which are provided as annexures for the chapter V.

Pamela Nightingale<sup>39</sup> who has also examined the primary sources seen by me, particularly "treaties and agreements" opines on East India Company's expansion in terms of laying hand on

<sup>37</sup>Letter from J. R. Carnac, Baroda to Francis Warden Chief Secretary to Govt. in 25<sup>th</sup> July 1810, Political Department Diary No. 360 (3) of 1810, p. 4025.

<sup>38</sup>Annexure I, II & III.

<sup>39</sup>Pamela Nightingale, *Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806*, 1970, pp. 210-12, 225-33.

fortunes and carving of sphere of influences. EIC avoided straight wars and depending upon the circumstances, chose for arrangements based on the tactic of negotiation in the matters related to the piracy, i.e. “sending agents to make treaties and agreement with local potentates along with the guarantor not to indulge in piracy, shelter, sponsor or claim over shipwreck.” This is demonstrated in case of Porbandar-Alexander Walker, Resident of Baroda signed treaty and agreement with Rana Sirtanjee and Kooer Hallajee of Porbandar which mentioned that those who trade on land or sea should be protected from pirates (Annexure IV) The Company appointed their agents which would be allowed to see the whether the treaties signed with the local potentates were followed or not. It was also checked that the signing parties won’t harass the vessels or ships with the English pass. They were allowed to visit each other’s ports and while in distress they could stay as long as they wish. Their merchants had liberty to trade with ports which were under their respective jurisdiction and had to pay duties (refer table I and II). The East India Company suggested the local potentates that they should selectively issue the ‘pass’ to the merchants. If the local boats having the English pass’ were found assaulted, then the Company would punish the pirates. Both the governments tried to make sure that peace and stability of the regions by giving assistance in finding cargoes and stores of the shipwreck and the saved articles to be restored to owner. Therefore, vessels from or belonging to the ports of Bombay, or

those under the Gaekwad government, Junagadh, Nawanagar, Bhavnagar, Porbandar, Jaffrabad, and Mangrol, trading with any ports under the English Government, driven by stress of weather into Mandvi or any other ports, shall, provided they depart without having landed their cargo, or any portion of it, be exempt from payment of duty on the same, with the exception of a charge of five corries, which is to be levied as a fee on all vessels under the foregoing circumstances.

### **Nawanagar (Jamnagar)**

Then *Jam* of Nawanagar, which was in the Halar district of *Kathiawad*, was governed by the same family as the Raos of *Kachchh* and has a large *Bhayad*, of whom the most important and powerful were the chiefs of Gondal, Rajkot and Dhrol. These Chiefs, however, had long since disused the name of *Bhayad*, and considered themselves as heads of families with a *Bhayad* of their own. The family emigrated from *Kachchh* to *Kathiawad* and founded Nawanagar later Jamnagar in the year 1442, driving before them the *Jethwa* family, who formerly possessed the region but were confined at Porbandar. According to 1808 Engagement (No. LXXIV) made with the *Jam*, he renounced piracy and all right to wrecks but the 1811 turbulence made it necessary for the British Government to reduce him by force. He refused to settle heavy monetary claims of the Rao of *Kachchh* which he had against him, for military assistance rendered in time of danger; he ejected from

his State the Agent of the British Government, who was making enquiries regarding the prevalence of infanticide; and made preparations to assert his independence by inducing other Chiefs to combine against the paramount power. A force was marched against him, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1812, and after much evasion, he agreed to terms of submission (No. LXXV)<sup>40</sup>. Engagements exempting the duty of vessels entering his ports from stress of weather were executed by the *Jam* of Nawanagar in 1846 and 1849 (Nos. LXXVI & LXXXIV) and in 1873, the vessels of the Rao of *Kachchh* were also exempted. In 1885 a telegraph line was built by Government under Agreement with the State between Nawanagar and Rajkot (No. LXXVII) which was extended from Dhrol to Jodiya and the usual Agreement (LXXVIII) was executed by the *Jam*. This trajectory curbed sea plunder by the natives and subjects of Nawanagar.

## BHAVNAGAR

The Thakur *Sahib* of Bhavnagar belonged to the tribe of Gohil Rajputs who settled around Bhavnagar in c. 1200 under their Chief Sejakji; who had three sons-Ranoji, Sarangji and Shahji. They became the Chiefs of Bhavnagar, Lathi and Palitana respectively. The town of Bhavnagar was founded in c. 1742 by Bhavsinghji. It remained a major port for almost two centuries, trading commodities with Mozambique, Zanzibar, Singapore, and the Persian Gulf. The volume of trade from this port to various

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<sup>40</sup> See Annexure III.

destinations can be gazed from *Bombay Presidency Gazetteers* and Marine Reports. The chiefs of Bhavnagar took great pains to improve the trade of their state and destroyed the pirates<sup>41</sup> who infested the neighbouring seas; which led to an intimate connection with the Bombay Government. Bhavsinghji entered into an agreement with the *Siddis* which controlled Surat and as a price of protection from the enmity of the Nawab of Cambay and gave 1.25% of the revenue by Bhavnagar port. In 1759, the right to one-fourth share of the customs of the port of Bhavnagar was acquired by the British Government from the *Siddis*.<sup>42</sup> In 1771, Rawal Akherjji assisted the Bombay Government in reducing piratical aggressions by *Kolis* settled in Talaja and Mahuva and the Bombay Government offered the fort of Talaja to Akherajji after the conquest but he refused to accept it, and was handed over to the Nawab of Cambay instead. Wakhat Singh, after his accession, expelled the Nawab of the fort and retained it by paying a sum of

<sup>41</sup>It is uncertain whether the Chief of Bhavnagar signed the general engagement to suppress piracy which was concluded in 1808 with other Chiefs of Kathiawar. His hostility to the pirates was probably too well known to make any engagement on the subject with him necessary. The engagement given at page 62 of Mr. Hughes Thomas's collection of Treaties as having been made with Bhavnagar was made with Jam Jassaji of *Nawanagar*, not with Bhavnagar.

<sup>42</sup>Under the Treaty of Bassein (1802), Bhavnagar and Sihor, along with the district of Dhandhuka and Gogha were ceded to the British Government by the Peshwa. Thus, Kathiawad partly became British territory, while a part remained under the Gaekwads. The revenue demanded from the British portion was Rupees 11,651/- and that payable to the Gaekwad was fixed at Rupees 74,500. But as it was convenient to consolidate in the hands of the British Government the various claims over Bhavnagar, an Agreement (No. LXXXI) was made with the Thakur's consent for the transfer to the British Government of the Gaekwad's revenue in Bhavnagar, which was accordingly included in the additional cessions made in 1807 by the Gaekwad for the support of a contingent force.

Rupees 75,000/- to the British Government in 1773 under an Engagement (No. LXXX).

When Gujarat and *Kathiawad* were divided between the Peshwa and the Gaekwad, the western and larger portion of the Thakur's possessions were included in the Gaekwad's share, and the eastern and smaller portion, including Bhavnagar and the original estates of the family in Sihor, fell to the Peshwa. In 1839 the mint at Bhavnagar, where copper money had previously been coined, was closed. As compensation for this a sum of Rupees 2,793-6-5/- a year was granted to the Thakur. Additionally, a sum of Rupees 4,000 was given in lieu of resigning all claims to share in the land and sea customs Gogha port. This amount was annually paid under an Agreement (No. LXXXII) resolved on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1840. The Thakur also subscribed the usual Engagements (Nos. LXXXIII and LXXXIV), exempting from duty vessels putting into his ports from stress of weather. The exemption was extended in 1873 to vessels belonging to the Rao of *Kachchh*.<sup>43</sup> After the Treaty of Bassein in A. D. 1802, when the Peshwa of Poona authorized the British Government to receive Wakhatsinhji Gohil's tribute, the rights of the latter in the districts of Dhandhuka, Gogha, and Ranpur became a subject of dispute. While the British collected the revenues, Wakhatsinhji was permitted to retain civil and criminal

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<sup>43</sup> C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries: The Peshwa, Baroda, Kathiawar, Palanpur Agency, Mahi Kantha and Rewa Kantha*, Part-I, Vol. VI, 1892, pp. 194-96.

jurisdiction over the three districts, and this system of dual control was doomed to failure. Wakhatsinhji had cultivated terms of friendship with the British Government, and realized to the full the security in the undisputed possession of his territories and conquests he was thereby afforded. But he resented stoutly the interference in the affairs of the three places which the terms of the Treaty of Bassein rendered necessary. Nevertheless, he met in a friendly spirit the wishes of Colonel Walker and the Gaekwad's Government and a settlement was satisfactorily concluded.

After the cession of Dhandhuka and Gogha to the British Government, the Thakur of Bhavnagar, was permitted to exercise the same power as before in his estates in consideration of his influence. But due to a serious abuse of power, these estates were brought under the jurisdiction of British courts, and the revenue payable by him was raised. By these measures the Chief was placed in an anomalous position very irritating to him. In his estates in *Kathiawad* he continued to exercise his former powers, paid fixed revenue, while in his estates in British territory, which included his two largest towns and his place of residence, he was subject to ordinary British laws. The Thakur complained of this and to bring forward many claims against the British Government. These were all carefully enquired into 1859, and an Agreement (No. LXXXV) was concluded on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1860, and by which the Thakur's revenue in this British estates was fixed at

Rupees 52,000 and his other claims were adjusted. The town of Bhavnagar, Sihor, village of Wadwa, and ten other villages which formed the old possession of the family, on the same footing as the estates in *Kathiawad*; but, owing to some doubts as to the precise legal status of *Kathiawad*, this was not at that time effected.

### **Porbandar<sup>44</sup>**

Porbandar was ruled by the *Jethwa* clan of Rajputs and since the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. The state was under the control of the Mughal governor of Gujarat till the Marathas incursions in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and were subject to the authority of the Gaekwad court at Baroda and later that of the Peshwa. In 1807, the EIC guaranteed protection to Porbandar in lieu of a fixed annual tribute to be paid to the Peshwa and the Gaekwad. In 1817<sup>45</sup>, the Peshwa ceded his share to the EIC; in 1820, the Gaekwad agreed to have the EIC collect his due tributes in *Kathiawad* and remit the same to his treasury. British intervention in Gujarat was to pacify the inhabitants and crush the rebellions. Precursor to this interference is the incident of 1803, when the Rana of Porbandar had plundered property of the Persian ambassador, and did not redress the issue; to prevent the possibility of such outrages in future and to curb the disorder prevalent in the peninsula due to Maratha incursions, the British picked up arms. In

<sup>44</sup>H. Wilberforce-Bell, *The History of Kathiawad: From the Earliest Times*, 1916, p. 178.

<sup>45</sup>**The Treaty of Poona** signed on 1 June 1817 between the East India Company and the Peshwa Baji Rao II which resulted in the British gaining control of the territory north of the Narmada River, including Kathiawad

1808-1822, disturbances broke out in Porbandar when Prathiraj, the son of Rana Haloji, rebelled against his father and seized the fort at Chhaya. All the efforts to dislodge him failed, and finally the Rana asked aid from the British. A force was sent to co-operate with him, and after a siege lasting for two hours the fort of Chhaya fell and Prathiraj surrendered, after having been wounded. His grandmother, who was with him in the fort, when captured was found to be wearing golden anklets, and the victors, greedy for spoil, cruelly cut off her feet to procure them. Porbandar was now placed under British protection and a detachment of one hundred men was stationed in the fort for the protection of the Rana. The Rana ceded one-half of the revenue of the port to the British, in return for which they advanced him fifty thousand rupees, so that he might payoff a portion of his debt to the Gaekwad's Government.

### **Jaffrabad**

Also referred as Mumfarabad, named after its founder, Muzaffar Shah, in 1575—was a seaport town surrounded by a strong wall belonging to the Nawab of Janjira, and famous for the fish known as "Bombay Duck," which were annually caught in great numbers off its coast. In 1807 Colonel Walker was unable to ascertain how the fort and district came to be independent. It was then owned by *Siddis*, or Abyssinians, from whom the present Nawab of Janjira descended, and who had established themselves

in India some time during the fifteenth century (refer chapter II). Muslim pirates used the place as a stronghold until conquered by Siddi Hilal of Surat, who levied on the pirates a heavy fine, which they proved unable to pay.<sup>46</sup> They therefore sold Jaffrabad to the *Siddi*, who in his turn in A.D. 1762 sold the place to the *Siddi* Nawab of Janjira, on account of the unsettled condition of affairs in Saurashtra. Siddi Mal became a general in the Nawab's service and remained at Jaffrabad. The *Siddis* became admirals of the Moghal fleet, and on the dissolution of the Muslim authority in Gujarat, themselves took to piracy, for which purpose Jaffrabad formed a convenient base. By their courage and activity they had succeeded in maintaining their independence and paid tribute to none.

### A BRITISH AGENCY AT RAJKOT<sup>47</sup>

Sundarji Shivji, the British Agent, was then given Balambha and Jodiya districts in farm for eight years, agreeing to pay to the British and the Gaekwad the instalments of the sum promised by the *Jam* for the aid was given to him. Sundarji Shivji now aspired to the *Diwani* of Junagadh, and by way of preparing a path for himself, succeeded in placing *Diwan* Raghsmathji in an unfavourable light before the Nawab. He promised that were he himself been *Diwan*, he would recover Upleta and Dhoraji for

<sup>46</sup>Radhika Seshan, "Human Networks in the Pre-modern World: Rumours of Piracy in Surat", pp. 249-58 in Rila Mukherjee, (ed.), *Ocean Connect*, 2013.

<sup>47</sup>Harilal Savailal, *Samaldas Parmananddas*, 1912, pp. 92-155

Junagadh, and also Mangrol and Wadasinor (Balasinor) in Gujarat, which was in the possession of a branch of the *Babi* family. The British Government supported Sunda, and eventually he succeeded in being appointed Diwan in 1818, much to the disgust of Raghunathji, whose whole-hearted enmity he earned. But Raghunathji was permitted little time for indulging in counter-intrigue, for in the following year he died. On June 16, A.D. 1819, *Kathiawad* experienced a most severe earthquake, which caused much alarm. Porbandar, Morbi, and Amran suffered extensively, many houses being destroyed and many deaths thereby occurring. Captain Barnewall was appointed to be the first Political Agent sent to *Kathiawad* to represent the British Government on the establishment of an Agency at Rajkot in 1820, following on the Gaekwad of Baroda's agreement that year to make no demands on the *Kathiawad* chiefs except through the British. Colonel Walker's settlement now bore fruit, and the British assumed the general administration of the province, while they under-took to collect and pay annually the sums due from the tribute-paying chiefs to the Marathas. Thus, came an end to the last vestige of direct Maratha sway over the Kathiawad peninsula. An officer of the Gaekwad's Government resided at Amreli in nominal charge of the province for two years longer.

On hearing the news of the death of his son, Hada Khuman planned an attack on Wanda, a village in the Kundla district. In 1821 the *Kathis* raided Wanda, but while endeavouring to reach the

Gir Forest with their plunder, they were overtaken near Dedan by a force from Kandla under the command of Kala Bhati, and being defeated in the fight which ensued, abandoned their booty and sought refuge in flight. But Mansur Khuman, son of Jogidas Khuman, was killed by a musket-ball, and his brother Laicha was wounded, and smarting at their inverse and losses, they returned to their depredations in Bhavnagar territory with greater obstinacy and fury than before. The country became so disturbed, that in 1822 the Political Agent, Captain Barnwell, marched to Amreli with a force and called upon Wajesinhji Gohil and all other neighbouring chiefs to meet him. He earnestly asked for the co-operation of all in hunting out and exterminating the outlaws—known generally as "*Baharwatia*," from the two words '*Bahar*', outside, and seat, a road, indicating action of an improper nature and offered all assistance in his power to enable them to preserve peace and punish the offenders.<sup>48</sup>

After being engaged in pursuing the fugitives for a short time they captured Jogidas Khuman and six of his relatives, all of whom were ringleaders in the outlawry. These were all handed over to Captain Barnwell and lodged by him in prison.

### ***Kolis plunder in Dharangadhara:***

Eventually they were all—with the exception of two who had died meanwhile in jail—handed over to the Jetpur chiefs' hostages, who took them to Bhavnagar in 1824. Negotiations were now

<sup>48</sup> Harilal Savailal, *Samaldas Parmananddas*, 1912, pp. 23-55.

opened with Wajesinhji, but no satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at between the parties, and finally the hostages took the captured Khumans with them and returned to their villages.

The result of this hesitation and vacillation on the part of Wajesinhji was that at the end of the year the *Kathis* again went into outlawry and attacked Jesar, a Bhavnagar village. The troops at Mahuva and Kundla at once started off in pursuit of the marauders and came up with them at Mitiala, where Champa Khuman was killed. But the rest escaped to the Gir Forest, and the Bhavnagar troops were obliged to return. Meanwhile fighting had been going on in the North of the peninsula, the *Kolis* from *Kachchh* having crossed the *Rann* in 1821 and invaded and plundered the Northern part of Dhrangadhra. Amarsinhji Jhala appealed to the British, and asked for compensation from the Rao of *Kachchh*. Captain McMurdo, of the 7<sup>th</sup> Bombay Infantry, was therefore sent with a detachment of troops to exact compensation, as the Rao's control over the *Kolis* was little more than nominal. Finally, the Rao himself was obliged to pay about two lakhs of rupees to cover the damage done by his lawless subjects. In 1821, also part of the district of Jhinjhuwada, which had been conquered by Amarsinhji seven years before, was taken out of *Kathiawad* and has since formed a part of the British Collectorate of Ahmadabad. Inability to pay arrears of tribute

had resulted in 1816 in its administration being taken over by the Gaekwad's Government, and it did not again revert to the Dhangadhra State. While the Khuman *Kathis* were occupying the attention of Bhavnagar, an outrage on a British officer was committed in 1822 by a Wala *Kathi* outlaw in the Gir Forest named Bawa Raning. Captain Grant, an officer of the Indian Navy, had been appointed in 1813 to the command of a naval force that was formed by the Gaekwad of Baroda for the suppression of pirates on the coasts of *Kathiawad* and *Kachchh*. In A. D. 1820 this naval force was abolished, as the piracy had been so reduced that it was not considered necessary to maintain it any longer, and Captain Grant was then directed to proceed to Amreli and handed over the charge of the fleet to the Gaekwad's representative. He landed at Diu, and was proceeding inland with a small escort when Bawa Wala with thirty-five other *Kathis* attacked him. Being armed only with a riding-whip he was unable to make any effectual resistance, and after a Sowar had been killed and a clerk severely wounded, he was captured. Bawa Wala now came up, and Captain Grant was ordered to dismount. After a short discussion he was told to mount again, and the whole band galloped with him into the forest, where he was kept a prisoner for two and a half months. He was guarded day and night, and was permitted no chance of escaping. Captain Grant's pitiable case came to the ears of the Political Agent,

who at once took steps through the Nawab of Junagadh to effect his release. It appeared that Bawa Wala had been forcibly dispossessed of his lands by another *Kathi* more powerful than he, and had become a "*Baharwatia*" in consequence. The Nawab induced the other *Kathi* to restore his lands to Bawa Wala, who released Captain Grant on thus obtaining his object. When found, he was wandering in a field at night in a state of delirium, covered with vermin, and severely ill with ague and fever caused by exposure and fatigue. In A. D. 1822 Sundarji Shivji died, and the Nawab expelled his son from Junagadh on account of his dissatisfaction at the promised recovery of Dhoraji, Upleta, and Wadasinor not having been effected.

### ***Sawantwaree Agency***<sup>49</sup>

According to British Parliamentary papers referred in annexure and bibliography, *Sawantweree's* pirates, remained positioned between Goa and Malwan which British tried to bring under their (Annexure III) control following the same procedures and strategies as happened in the case of *Kachchh* and *Kathiawad*.<sup>50</sup>

Continuing discussion on 'within' the limits of the British Empire and the 'arrangement' made in pre-1858 under EIC one find

<sup>49</sup>Refer Table I of the Chapter & C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sannads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries: The States within the Bombay Presidency*, Vol. IV, 1876, pp. 435-50.

<sup>50</sup>*British Parliamentary Papers, Appendix to Report from Select Committee (Political Appendix No.20) on the Affair of the East India Company*, 1970, p. 869.

categories as ‘their possessions’ which remained outside Indian subcontinent but lied within the rim of WIO. These were, according to Onley, British India Diplomatic Districts Abroad: Persian Gulf (Eastern Arabia) as Political Residency; Aden (South Arabia & British (Somaliland) as Political Residency; Zanzibar (Sultanate of Zanzibar, East Africa) under Consulate-General which were also Commercial and Diplomatic Districts. For instance, Persia- Southern, Northern & Central, and Eastern; and Arabia- Southern & Western, were under Agency and Residency as shown in the Table II which has been classified by Glen Balfour-Paul ‘protectorate’ and ‘protected state’. He argued that the British Crown was empowered to make and enforce laws for the “peace, order, and good government” of its own subjects and dependants in the former, but not in the latter.<sup>51</sup> ‘British-protected persons’ or ‘British dependants’ outside their own states, giving them the same rights as British subjects; in effect, placing them in the same position as British subjects for international purposes, except that they were not permitted to fly the British flag on their ships before 1892. In the same way, foreign relations between their rulers and foreign governments were conducted through and by the Indian Political Service—in effect, treating these states for international purposes as if they were provinces of British India.

As stated earlier in chapter III, maritime piracy is conducted largely in the island areas, along the creeks or at choke points to push the victim vessel at safe-haven or sites of hiding,

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<sup>51</sup>James Onley, “The Raj Reconsidered: British India’s Informal Empire and Spheres of Influence in Asia and Africa”, *Asian Affairs*, Vol. XL, No. I, March 2009, p. 52.

Madagascar<sup>52</sup> also falls within the purview of the on-going discussion to understand the politics of piracy and emergence of paramountcy of West Europe in the East however it was not part of the British Indian Empire. In the history of maritime piracy and armed robbery against ships, Madagascar was known to be a pirates' notorious haven even before the golden age of piracy because of its location close to two trading routes which are the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean is discussed in chapter II & III.

### **Politics in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf:**

In order to understand the politics in Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, one has to visit its trade history in the pre-1750 period as the Red Sea had been an important trading centre which had ports like Aden and Jeddah since antiquity. Surendra Gopal, while documenting the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> century Gujarat's commercial enterprise records piracy in Indian Ocean waters which in fact was in volume. The English Factory Records are full of detailed descriptions. A peep into them reveals piratical aggressions by English seizing the Indian merchants' ships particularly from Gujarat (Mughal period):

- **September 1635:** pirates commanding Roebuk held two Gujarati ships in the Gulf of Aden, the Taufiqui of Surat belonging to Mirza Mahmud and the Mahmudi of Diu.

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<sup>52</sup>C. Vallar, *Notorious pirate havens part 3: Madagascar*, 2002, <http://www.cindyvallar.com/havens3.html> and Jean Edmond Randrianantenaina "Maritime Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships: Exploring the Legal and the Operational Solutions: The Case Of Madagascar" pp. 5-6.

- As a retaliatory measure the Englishmen at Surat was imprisoned. The president of the English East India factory was released on the intervention of Surat merchants and after Rs. 1,25,000/- had been paid as compensation for the Taufiqui.
- **1637:** English pirates again robbed a vessel of the governor of Gujarat and others owned by traders of Surat and Diu engaged in Red Sea traffic.
  - Piracy and internal anarchy had disrupted the Mocha trade.

Surendra Gopal, while detailing on the amount of trade carried between Gujarat and Red Sea, that due to piracy by English had created disruptions and the situation has worsened to such an extent that the actors of the mercantile activity in this circuit were searching for other alternatives. A quote from Surendra Gopal's book titled *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries: A Study in the Impact of European Expansion in Pre-capitalist Economy* is self-explanatory.

Piratical activities by some Englishmen during this period led to the deterioration in relations between the English and Gujaratis...The commodities had piled up as no buyers were available. The disruption of the link with Cairo, which was under Turkish control had affected business in Mocha. In 1639 Gujarati ships turned back without unloading their cargoes because there was a glut of Gujarati goods. **The English decided to move on to Basra in the Persian Gulf.** They began purchases of goods, suited for Basra, in Ahmedabad and Cambay with borrowed money. In Basra the demand for Gujarati goods had arisen, **because of the war between the Mughal emperor and the Persian shah.** The former had forbidden Gujarati shipping from visiting Bandar Abbas, the main sea-port of Iran in the Gulf. Basra was to serve Bandar Abbas for its needs of Gujarati products. Basra began supplying Indian commodities to Bandar Abbas and the Mediterranean world. **Basra was regarded potentially the most profitable market by the English.** The setback to the Red Sea trade in the forties was apparent. **Indigenous and Asian exporters from Gujarat preferred European shipping to Indian shipping for the Red Sea because of pirates.** The English were accused of fomenting the 'pirate-phobia'. However the big ones were unaffected because of their strong links with the Europeans. The English utilized their services. In 1644 they sent goods on Salamati belonging to Haji Zahid Beg to Mocha because the terms of freight and insurance were 'easy'. Somaji Parak, a famous Jain or Hindu broker of Surat, also took passage on the same ship. The entire stock of coral brought from Mocha in the Discovery by the English was purchased by Virji Vora. ... English East India Company on the occasion were

gratefully appreciated. Individual traders were also active. **A junk of Diu was identified in the Red Sea. Once it was found that heavy exports of calicoes to Jidda and Mocha had caused a scarcity and consequent rise in prices in home market.** Similarly large-scale imports of corals caused a glut in 1682 at Surat. The English had to send their stock to Karwar and Calicut for clearance. But the picture was deceptive. Several factors were at work sapping the vitality of their trade. **Bombay was fast emerging as a rival port to Surat for international shipping.** In 1675 its inhabitants were permitted to trade with Red Sea ports. **Many Gujarati traders had been moving to Bombay. Barring the top stratum, the mercantile community had been impoverished due to disturbed conditions arising out of the Maratha invasions.** Further the law and order situation had considerably deteriorated in the Red Sea owing to a considerable rise in piracy. **The Muscat Arabs had been playing havoc with the traffic and had sacked even Diu. In 1691, the booty of the pirates amounted to 1,20,000 larins.** Next year they repeated their exploits. Several Surat merchants went bankrupt due to these losses. When European sea-robbers came into picture, the woes of Gujarati shippers further increased. It has been rightly said “it was in the last half-dozen years of the seventeenth century that European piracy in Indian Ocean attained its most formidable character”... Henry Every, a notorious pirate, captured two vessels the *Fath Muhammadi* of ...Surat merchants further suffered as the Imam of Mocha ordered seizure of their goods for non-payment of compensation which he claimed for his lost cargo on Hussain Hamidan's ship, pirated by Kidd. Gujarat's trade with the Red Sea had been disrupted in the nineties. This is best revealed in the difficulties experienced by the Dutch in obtaining goods of the Red Sea region in Surat. They were forced to resume their voyages suspended in the eighties. But they too were apprehensive of risks on the high seas. Hence, along with the English and French they established a convoy service to the Red Sea to protect their shipping. The measure prevented a complete extinction of the Red Sea trade-off Gujarat. At the end of the century the presence of Gujarati merchants was still noted in the area.

During 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was visited by the merchants from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and China. It was in 1799, East India Company came in contact with the cosmopolitan world in the Red Sea and the Gulf section because they wanted to control the Island of Perim to check the growing French influence. A treaty was concluded between the Sultan of Aden and the East India Company in 1802 to ally against the French (see Annexure V). The plunder of the *Deria Dowlut*, was a notable case as it paved the way for the cession of Aden in 1937 to the English East India Company by Sultan Mahsin

who had to give a part of the property, and paid compensation of 8,700 crowns annually for the rest.<sup>53</sup> *Wahabis/Wahabees* who were the active pirates in the Persian Gulf insisted on the strict observance of Quran's maxims and considered the right of conquest over infidels, the promulgation of the faith by fire and swords, and the right to dispose of the lives and properties. Sharjah and Ras al-Khyma were the pirate haven of *Wahabi* and *Qawasimi*<sup>54</sup>. *Qawasimis* were small traders, pearl fishers, pilots, and enterprising seafaring tribes which had turned into ruthless pirates of the Persian Gulf extending their activities up to Malabar due to the European interventions.

As stated earlier the native and the pirates from this end intervened in the matters of state in the nineteenth century.

❖ *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXI of New Series<sup>55</sup> reveals:

- Those portions of the coasts of the Persian Gulf which are not occupied by tribes having treaty relations with the British Government are either under the dominion of Turkey or Persia. The Turkish suzerainty is acknowledged on the southern shore from the Shat-el-

<sup>53</sup>C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds relating to India and Neighbouring Countries: Sindh, Beloochistan, Persia, and Herat; Turkish Arabia and the Persian Gulf; and the Arabian and African Coasts*, Vol. VII, 1865, p. 368. [From 1839 until 1937, Aden was ruled as part of the Bombay Presidency of British India and was known as Aden Settlement. Its original territory was enlarged in 1857 by the island of Perim in 1868 by the Kuriya Muriya Islands, and in 1915 by the island of Kamaran. The Colony of Aden was a British Crown Colony from 1937 to 1963, and consisted of the port city of Aden and its immediate surroundings (an area of 192sq km). Aden was declared a free port by Act X in 1850, according to which no customs duty was payable on any goods carried by sea or land to or from Aden.]

<sup>54</sup>Buckingham, J.S. *Travel in Assyria, Media and Persia*, Vol. II, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1830, pp. 199-220.

<sup>55</sup>*Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXI of New Series, pp. 243-46.

Arab to a point nearly opposite Demam, a small portion nearest the Shat-el-Arab being directly under the Pasha of Baghdad, **and the rest being occupied by Arabs Chiefs**, who acknowledge dependence on the Turkish Government. The northern shore nearest the Shat-el-Arab is held by Arab Chiefs owing allegiance to Persia, and the coast eastward to a point nearly opposite to the western extremity of the **Island of Kishm** is governed directly by officers of the Shah of Persia. Said Sultan was killed on 14th November 1803 in battle with his enemies the **Uttoobees and Joasmees**. The rights of his two young sons were disputed by their uncle Said Ghes of Sohar, who aimed at usurping the government of Muscat. To oppose their uncle's pretensions the two youths put themselves in the hands of their cousin Said Budr bin Halol, who called in the Wahabees, and with their help defeated Said Ghes and recovered Bundur Abbass and Hormus, which had been seized by the Shaikh of Kishm. ...**They reduced all the sea coast of the Persian Gulf from Bussora to Debaye, released the Chiefs of Zaheera and Sohar from allegiance to Muscat, and forced Said Sultan to beg for a three years' truce, which they broke soon after. They would probably have conquered all Oman if they had not been stopped by the assassination of their Chief.**

- The Wahabees reached the height of their power shortly after the accession of Said Saeed, the second son of Said Sultan, who succeeded Budr bin Halol in 1807. This Chief, ...ruled for fifty years, during which time he cultivated a close intercourse with the British Government. In 1808 the Imam, ...If Muscat had fallen under the Wahabees, the Imam would have been drawn into the general system of piracy which the Wahabees encouraged, and would have been converted from a friend into a dangerous enemy. The British Government, therefore, resolved to support him. **An armament was accordingly sent towards the close of 1809, which destroyed the piratical boats at Ras-ool-Khyma, Linga, and Luft, and bombarded and took Shinas. No arrangements, however, were made permanently to secure the advantages then obtained.**
- Piracy was soon renewed, and another expedition had to be sent against the pirates in 1819, in which also the Imam co-operated. **With these exceptions, till the year 1822, when a Treaty (No. LIII) was concluded for the suppression of slavery, there is nothing requiring special notice in the intercourse between the British**

**Government and Said Saeed, who was chiefly occupied in wars with his rivals, the Joasmees, and in fruitless attempts to possess himself of the Island of Bahrain.**

### **Treaties for curbing Piracy with respect to Bahrain<sup>56</sup>**

The Island of Bahrain, owing to the richness of its pearl fisheries, was long a field of contention between the different powers that toward the end of the last century strove for supremacy in the Persian Gulf.

- In the year 1799, after having often changed masters, it was conquered by the *Uttoobee* tribe, by whom it has ever since been held under allegiance at one time to Muscat and afterwards successively to the *Wahabees*, to Turkey and to Persia, and now in independence.
- In 1820, after the capture of Ras-ool-Khyma by the expedition sent **against the piratical tribes in the Gulf, the two Chiefs, Abdoolla bin Ahmed and Suleiman bin Ahmed, who then ruled Bahrain conjointly, signed a preliminary engagement (No. LXXII.) not to permit in Bahrain the sale of property procured by plunder and piracy, and to restore all Indian prisoners then in their possession. They also subscribed the general Treaty (No.LXV) for the pacification of the Persian Gulf.**
- The Chiefs of Bahrain were not parties to any of the agreements concluded after 1820 with the Arab Chiefs except the engagement (No. LXVIII) in 1847 for the suppression of the slave trade. This was signed on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1847 by Mahomed bin Khuleefa. ...than Mahomed bin Khuleedfa of Bahrain commence to levy forceable imposts on *Wahabee* vessels and to carry off their property. On being remonstrated with, he ostensibly put himself under allegiance first to Persia and then to Turkey.
- The policy of the British Government, however, as guardians of the general tranquillity of the Persian Gulf, required that Bahrain should be considered independent.

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 263-267.

- Early in the year 1861, therefore, when the Chief of Bahrain, in violation of his Treaty engagements, **again blockaded the Wahabee ports, he was forced by the Resident in the Persian Gulf to withdraw the blockade, and was required to conclude a perpetual Treaty (No. LXXIII) of peace and friendship, binding himself to abstain from war, piracy, and slavery by sea on condition of protection against similar aggressions, and to permit all British subjects to trade with Bahrain on payment of an ad valorem duty of 5 per cent on their goods.**

### **Treaties for curbing Piracy with respect to Aden<sup>57</sup>**

On the expulsion of the Turks in 1630, the greater part of Southern Arabia fell into the hands of the Imams of Senna. In 1735, the latter were in turn expelled from Aden and other districts by the native Arab tribes who assumed independence. Aden, Lahej, and some villages to the north of Aden, with the country round them, were occupied by the Abdalee tribe. Aden, with the country round them, were occupied by the Abdalee tribe.

- A Treaty (No. LXXIV), however, was concluded with the Sultan in 1802 by Admiral Sir Home Popham, who was instructed to enter into political and commercial alliances with the Chiefs on the Arabian Coast of the Red Sea.
- From that time there was little or no intercourse with Aden till 1837, when attention was drawn **to the plunder and maltreatment of the crews of British vessels wrecked on the Aden Coast.**
- The most notable case was the plunder of the *Deria Dowlut*, the crew of which were stripped and most barbarously treated. **Captain Haines, who was then employed in the survey of the Arabian Coast, was instructed to demand satisfaction. He was at the same time to endeavour to purchase Aden as a coaling depot for the steamers plying between India and the Red Sea.**

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.268.

### Political Rivalries in Africa:

Africa is rich in natural and human resources which were exploited by the Europeans at length in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Slave trade was an important component of the European interests in Africa. Natives there like India also resisted and participated in attacking the vessels crossing Mozambique channel along the Madagascar coast.

To elaborate it further a portion of treaty is quoted here by citing example from Somalia wherein the clauses of the treaty emphasised on: use their utmost endeavour to deliver up the murderers, allow free trade with their territories, abolished traffic in slaves, and treat with respect any British Agent who was deputed to see that the conditions of the treaty were observed<sup>58</sup>:

- The Habr Owul-In 1827 a British vessel trading at Berbera was attacked and plundered by the Habr Owul tribe of Somalees. Berbera is a port to the east of Zaila and Tajowra and nearly opposite to Aden. In Consequence of unhealthy winds it is deserted for six months every year. During the rest of the year **it is visited by caravans of different tribes from the interior of Africa.** A vessel of war was sent to punish the tribe for the outrage which they had committed.
- On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1827 a Treaty of Peace and Commerce (No.XCIX.) was signed by the elders of the tribe.
- An expedition was sent in 1854 to explore the country between Berbera and Zanzibar. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1855 the party were suddenly attacked by Somalees of the El Moosa tribe; two British Officers were wounded, one was killed, and the entire property of the expedition was carried off.
- A demand was at once made on the Habr Owul tribe for the surrender and punishment of the chief offenders and the demand was enforced by the blockade of Berbera. The elders of the tribe did their best to comply with the demand, but were unable to apprehend the actual murderers, who took refuge in the interior.

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<sup>58</sup>C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds relating to India and Neighbouring Countries: Sindh, Beloochistan, Persia, and Herat; Turkish Arabia and the Persian Gulf; and the Arabian and African Coasts*, Vol. VII, 1865, p. 319.

- The British Government at last consented to withdraw the blockade on the Somalee binding themselves by a Treaty (No. C) to use their utmost endeavour to deliver up the murderers, to allow free trade with their territories, to abolish traffic in slaves, and to treat with respect any British Agent who might be deputed to see that the conditions of the Treaty were observed.
- Other Tribes.-In 1855 the elders of the Habr Gerhagis and the Habr Taljala tribes of Somalees entered into an Engagement (No. LXXXV) with the Political Resident at Aden to prohibit the Slave trade.

## ZANZIBAR<sup>59</sup>

The Portuguese occupied the Island of Zanzibar in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The natives of Mombasa, invited the assistance of the Imam of Muscat, in 1698 to fight the Portuguese. Zanzibar was under nominal control of the Muscat Arabs till 1807. In 1746, the people of Mombasa, elected Sheikh Ahmed as their Sultan. On 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1824, Mombasa and its dependencies such as Zanzibar, Pemba, Melinda and Pangani became British protectorate owing to the threat of invasion by Muscat and the Company's ships were deployed to capture slave traders. Zanzibar, being an island has also observed instances of piracy, being closer to Somalian coast.

Richard F. Burton, the Resident of Zanzibar has observed, "Earth, sea and sky, all seem wrapped in a soft and sensuous repose".

Zanzibar has been a land, frequently fought over by missionaries, abolitionists, unscrupulous traders, local leaders and invaders. It

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<sup>59</sup> Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873*, 1987 pp. 12-34 & 78-157, also see Appendices pp. 249-258. & C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds relating to India and Neighbouring Countries: Sindh, Beloochistan, Persia, and Herat; Turkish Arabia and the Persian Gulf; and the Arabian and African Coasts*, Vol. VII, 1865. p. 324.

had been the home of Tippu Tib, the 19th-century trader, slaver and clove plantation owner and legendarily of Scheherazade.

The Zanzibar dominions extend from Cape Delgado.

- In 1844, Said Sayed of Muscat appointed his son Said Khalid as his deputy and successor in Zanzibar and his son Said Thuwaini in Muscat.
- On the Imam's death in 1857, Said Thuwaini, being ruler of Muscat, laid claim to Zanzibar. He concluded an engagement, however, with his brother Said Majid, by which the latter was left in possession of the African dominions, subject to an annual payment of 40,000 crowns.
- A dispute soon arose regarding the nature of this payment and whether it implied the dependence of Zanzibar on Muscat. War was threatened but both parties were persuaded to refer the question to the arbitration of the Governor General of India and to abide by his decision.
- A Commission was appointed to investigate the case. On the evidence obtained by this Commission, Lord Canning gave an award (No.CI.) to which both parties agreed, viz., that Said Majid should be declared ruler of Zanzibar and the African dominions of the late Said Saeed and be subject to an annual payment, with arrears, of 40,000 crowns in perpetuity to Muscat, which payment was not to be considered as implying the dependencies of Zanzibar on Muscat.
- The Sultan of Zanzibar is of course bound by those Articles of the Treaties concluded with his late father which refer to Zanzibar. He has recently prohibited the transport of slaves from one port in his dominions another during the slave season, that is, from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> April in each year.

Having examined the sets of treaty and processes of curbing & control within the limits of Western India Ocean, the colonisers successfully brought the Western Indian Ocean as their territory which they continued to hold till the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Historiographically, as stated earlier, this process of carving control in the east by English company and British government has been studied by many scholars who have described the mechanism for the fulfilment of the politico-economic designs carved as a strategy of the larger project 'Empire Building'. While on the incidences on piracy one can observe that the process of curbing was "interplay of the expanding dominion of the English East India Company and the varied and mobile occupants of present-day India's north-western coastline in *Kathiawad* and *Kachchh*, on Malabar & Konkan Coast, in Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Horn of Africa" and along the Madagascar coast which fall apart of the British India dominions. Another observation could be on Piracy is that it has been the pertinent feature of Asian maritime historical process for establishment of hegemony by west on the eastern traders who were no ordinary merchants but smugglers in one sense 'as relied on merchants to outfit their ships and sell their plunder', further they have connections with local potentates and regional ruler or central authority, they were in other sense 'political actors'. The entire narration in chapter II, III & IV with reference to Western Europe and West Asia it is reflected that

piratical aggressions have political context, which presumably stands true in my study period for the Western Indian Ocean rim.

It can be concluded in this section with following Malayan saying:

*the first ship ever built was to catch fish,  
while the purpose of the second was to  
rob the first one of its haul*

Piracy and Piratical Aggressions have agenda in it.

