

CHAPTER-II
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The collapse of the Mughals' central authority in the early eighteenth century led to the loss of political stability in Gujarat. The provincial governors began to exercise power rather independently and often undermined imperial expectations. Non-compliance with imperial orders contributed to political chaos and confusion. To continue in power, the governors resorted to forging alliances, political manipulations and military force. Since the 1720s, each succeeding governor of Ahmadabad displaced his predecessor militarily from office.¹ The unstable political situation in Gujarat encouraged the Marathas to participate in race. They soon emerged more powerful than the rest and the Marathas got a share in the land revenue (*chauth* literally one-fourth).² The Marathas, too, were politically fragmented and some warrior families such as those of Dabhade, Gaekwad, Sindhia, Holkar and Bhonsle, were only nominally under the control of the sovereign and the Peshwa. These warrior groups came to form complex political factions which was fluid in nature insofar as their allegiance to and support of some major political players was concerned. From the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the Gaekwad ruled over Gujarat and controlled the fiscal resources of the region. Initially, the Marathas adopted the strategy of invading, roving and taking possession of the region or otherwise at least forcing the local governors to surrender a part of the revenue of those regions. Mughal imperial control was gradually pushed back to some major cities and forts such as Ahmadabad and Broach.³ In the year 1753, the Gaekwad took control of Ahmadabad and thus put an end to the hundred and eighty years of Mughal rule in Gujarat.

¹ Gordon Stewart, (1993), *The Marathas 1600-1818*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 114-16

² Thus in 1723, Surat lost to the Marathas the huge resources that it used to draw from the Athavisi that is twenty-eight parganas (Subramanian, Lakshmi. *Indigenous capital and imperial expansion*, Oxford University Press, (1996), 32

³ Wink Andre, (1986), *Land and sovereignty in India: agrarian society and politics under the eighteenth-century Maratha Svarajya*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 115-27; Gordon, *The Marathas*, 121-2.

The decline of Mughal authority in Gujarat in the 1690's, led the region to evade their payments of tribute to their authority. To force them to remit their dues, the imperial viceroy of Gujarat, backed by an army called the *mulukgiri*, annually visited the peninsula to collect the year's payments. After the death of the emperor Aurangzeb in the year 1707, many of the rulers became dependent, and for a time were freed from paying tribute. By the mid-1730s, however, the Gaekwad, the principal Maratha leader in Gujarat, had begun to bring Saurashtra, Banas Kantha and Mahi Kantha under the suzerainty. He did not at first levy tribute systematically as the Mughals had done, but occasionally sent troops to extort money or crops from the states. In the year 1753 the Marathas captured the Gujarati capital, Ahmedabad.⁴ This event marked the definitive transfer of control over Gujarat from the Mughals to the Marathas, and they thereafter compelled most of the regions of Gujarat to acknowledge their subordination by paying an annual tribute to the Gaekwad and their overlord, the Peshwa.⁵ The Gaekwads as the commanders of the armies of Peshwa came to dominate the region of Gujarat by the mid eighteenth century. They shared with the Peshwa in Pune the tribute and revenues of the region. Gaekwads also obtained control over other regions in Gujarat too like Kathiwar. The following section discusses the rise of Gaekwad's in Gujarat.

Section-1: Struggle for Control: Rise of Gaekwads in Gujarat

The Gaekwads of Baroda, as generally known in history belonged to the Village Davadi near the Maratha region of Poona. They were the village revenue collectors, under whom few villages were placed. One of these Gaekwads, Damajirao-I, was a trusted man and a right-hand of Khanderao Dabhade.⁶ Khanderao Dabhade was a Commander-in-Chief appointed by Ram Raja, son of Shivaji. He was entrusted with the work of collecting *chauth* (one-fourth of the tax) and *sardeshmukhi* in Baglan, Gujarat in the year 1699.⁷ Although, there were not notable achievements that he was credited with, but he credited for making unsuccessful attempts to raid Surat between the years 1700-1704. However he achieved success in plundering region across

⁴ Aitchison C U, (1932), *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Vol. VI, Government of India, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 283

⁵ McLeod John, (1999), *Sovereignty, Power, Control: Politics in the States of Western India 1916-1947*, Vol. 15 Brill, 16

⁶ Chavda V K, (1962), *Gaekwad and the British- A Study of Their Problems 1875-1920*, University Publisher, Delhi, 1

⁷ Clark A C & Desai G H, (1923), *Gazetteer of the Baroda State*, Vol- I & II, Bombay, Vol- I, 433-34

Narmada in the year 1705. From then on Dabhade and his army led several expeditions into Ahmedabad territory.⁸ This continued for some time, when in the year 1711, the forces of Khanderao Dabhade had to face defeat at the hands of Mughals near Ankleshwar. He retreated to the rim of Khandesh but only temporarily as he continued to raid Gujarat. He had aspirations to wrest entire Gujarat from the hands of the Mughals including Kathiawad. First Maratha invasion in Kathiawad was made by Khanderao Dabhade and he with him took his trusted agent Damajirao-I Gaekwad. This made the first appearance of Gaekwads in the history of Gujarat.⁹

Khanderao Dabhade did not stay in Gujarat for too long as there was continuance disturbance in Deccan. Asaf Jah, the Nizam-ul-Mulk had attacked Alam Ali Khan, Viceroy of Deccan. Khanderao aided Alam Ali Khan against the Nizam in the struggle. In this battle Damajirao-I Gaekwad outshined and was noticed by Shahu for his valor. For which in the year 1721, he was rewarded with the promotion to be the second-in-command with the title of '*Shamsher Bahadur*' which since then remained with ruling Gaekwad of Baroda.¹⁰ Damajirao-I, who inaugurated the presence of Gaekwads in history, did not live long to witness the glory of his clan. On the other hand Khanderao Dabhade also died. While Trimbak Rao Dabhade succeeded his father's command, Damajirao-I's title in absence of legitimate son devolved upon his nephew Pilajirao-I.

Pilajirao-I Gaekwad (1721-1732) is attributed to be the founder of the fortune of the Gaekwad family. He was stationed in Navapura in Khandesh. Pilajirao-I, from mere commandant of forty to fifty horsemen of *khas paga*, rose to be in command of three hundred horsemen. He was able to carry on with the work of his predecessor in Gujarat and soon posed a threat to other Maratha contenders like Udaji Pawar and Kantaji Kadam Bande over jurisdiction of Navapur. Later he selected "a hill in a wilderness difficult of access", belonging to the Mevasi Bhils, and there constructed Songadh, a cradle of the Gaekwads' house, for many years (till the year 1766) the capital of their dominion.¹¹ The chief contention between the three Maratha chiefs was to enforce payment from the *atthavisi*, the twenty-eight sub-divisions, of the Surat

⁸ Ibid., 433-34

⁹ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad and the British- A Study of Their Problems 1875-1920*, 1

¹⁰ Chavda V K (2007) *Gujarat in Transition*, Sanket Publication, Vadodara, 113

¹¹ Elliot F A H, (1879), *The Rulers of Baroda*, Baroda State Press, Baroda, 19-20

province.¹² Pilajirao-I Gaekwad strengthened his position by defeating the army of Shiakh-ul-Islam, *mutasaddi* of Surat. For this he was able to secure the support of the locals by cultivating friendship with Raja of Rajpipla, Bhils and the Kolis. Nizam of Hyderabad too was interested in obtaining the revenues of Gujarat. For that he had assigned Hamid Ali Khan. He decided to play one Maratha against the other and thereby offered the right of collecting Chauth in Gujarat to Kantaji Kadam Bande in lieu for his assistance in war against the viceroy of Ahmedabad.¹³ This drove Pilajirao in the opposite camp. Hamid Ali however realizing that he was the stronger of the two parties succeeded in winning Pilajirao-I by his side. A battle was fought between Gaekwad and Bande, in which Pilajirao won the day. He was rewarded by Hamid Khan, with half the *chauth*, the whole of which had previously promised to Bande.¹⁴ This upset Bande, as he felt cheated out of his entire reward. This led to another struggle between the two leaders at Cambay, in which the Gaekwad was defeated. He was forced to withdraw to Matar near Kaira.

The Mughal court was anxiously watching these developments. With an intention to neutralize the growing powers of the Nizam, the court appointed Sarbuland Khan as the viceroy of Gujarat. This led to a skirmish between Hamid Khan (Gaekwad and Bande) against Sarbuland Khan, at Sojitra and Kapadvanj. In this struggle Hamid Khan and the Marathas were defeated. Hasan-ud-din, the representative of the Viceroy was appointed the governor of Baroda, Broach, Jambusar and Makhbulabad, displacing the Nizam.¹⁵ This battle spelt a temporary setback to the growing Maratha powers in Gujarat. The scenario changed when the Peshwa Bajirao-I, received from Raja Shahu, the power to act independently when dealing with the foreign powers. This gave him the opportunity to directly negotiate with the viceroy of Gujarat. This helped him to check the growing power of Trimbakrao Dabhade in Deccan as well as in the court of Raja Shahu. He also intended to bring Gujarat under his control. Circumstances turned in his favour when the concessions given by Hamid Ali Khan were discarded by the Delhi court. This threw the Marathas in Gujarat in disarray and soon they rebelled. The Mughal viceroy and the Peshwa joined forces. Peshwa sent Udaji Pawar to face the rebellious Marathas. However in a conflict that

¹² Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 438

¹³ Elliot F A H, 23-25

¹⁴ Ibid.,

¹⁵ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 441

ensued, Udaji Pawar was driven away leaving Pilajirao to occupy Baroda and Dabhoi. Kantaji Kadam Bande obtained the control over Champaner.¹⁶

Soon the Peshwa and Mughal court joined hands yet again, against the rebellious Maratha mercenaries. The Mughal court put forth few conditions forward to strengthen this alliance, which included that the Peshwa be given the rights of *sardeshmukhi* and *chauth* (with the exception of the post of Surat and the district attached to it); they also demanded 5% of the revenues of the city of Ahmedabad; the Peshwa should not send many revenue collectors; percentage should be calculated on the actual collection and not on the *Kamal* or the highest sum recorded as having been collected; and Peshwa and company were to support the Imperial authority and to maintain a body of horse. However for this alliance to succeed, there were many obstacles. Pilajirao-I posed a major threat as he soon switched over to the side of Abhay Singh, the new viceroy of Ahmedabad. His senapati or commander-in-chief Trimbakrao Dabhade, forged an alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad who soon signed various pacts. Soon Dabhade joined forces with Chimnaji Pandit, Pawar, Kanthaji Kadam and Pilajirao-I against the Peshwa.¹⁷ On 1st April 1731 a battle was fought in the region 'Bhilapur' between Baroda and Dabhoi. The Peshwa in spite of such strong opposition carried the day. He defeated the joint alliance killed Dabhade¹⁸ and wounded Pilajirao-I. He was forced to escape to Songadh with his surviving sons Damajirao-II and Khanderao-I.¹⁹

Peshwa then intended to make settlements with the Nizam. He found it safe not to cut the powers of the Maratha chiefs entirely. Yeshvantrao Dabhade (the son of the slain Trimbakrao Dabhade) was appointed as the commander-in-chief. He was to manage the revenues of Gujarat, half of which was given to the Peshwa and the half had to be given to Raja Shahu through him. Since, Yeshvantrao Dabhade was a minor; Peshwa Bajirao nominated Pilajirao-I as his *mutalik*, giving him the additional title of '*Sena khas khel*' or the 'Leader of the Sovereign Band'.²⁰ Abhay Singh, the Mughal viceroy was disillusioned. The Peshwa rendered him no help. Once he had defeated his rival, the Senapati Dabhade, at Dabhoi in 1731. The Gaekwads continued to

¹⁶ Ibid., Vol- I, 442

¹⁷ Elliot F A H, 25

¹⁸ Chavda V K, *Gujarat in Transition*, 114

¹⁹ Elliot F A H, 25

²⁰ Chavda V K, *Gujarat in Transition*, 115

encroach on Gujarat. In 1732, Abhay Singh treacherously murdered Pilaji and seized Baroda, but he failed to gain any lasting advantage, and after losing Baroda in 1734, retired to Delhi where he joined hands with the party led by the Wazir Qamruddin Khan, in urging armed resistance to the Marathas.²¹ This marked the end of an age of mercenary exploits for Gaekwads and the beginning of the better control in Gujarat under Damajirao-II.

Damajirao-II Gaekwad (1732-1768) was the eldest son of Pilajirao Gaekwad. He efficiently carried forward the work undertaken by his father which included the acquisition of substantial part of Gujarat. He first began by capturing Baroda, which was under the control of Sher Khan Babi. This he did with the help of locals from Gujarat, like, the Bhils and Kolis. The Desai of Padra stirred up the Bhils and the Kolis all over Gujarat so effectually that the Mughals were thrown into confusion.²² Assistance was also provided to Damajirao-II by the forces of Umabai, the widow of the late Senapati Trimbakrao Dabhade. Together they faced the Mughal viceroy and the governor of Baroda and eventually Baroda was recaptured in the year 1734.²³

Within two years, by 1736, Damajirao-II expanded his dominion in east Gujarat. In this task, he was helped by his chief Rangoji Gaekwad. However without confirmation with Damajirao-II, Rangoji captured Ahmedabad.²⁴ Prataprao Gaekwad and Devaji Takapir, Damajirao-II's brother and his General respectively, invaded north Gujarat. Damajirao-II controlled Sorath, Kathiawad, and Gohilvad. Things changed in the year 1737, when Momin Khan was made the new viceroy of Gujarat. Momin Khan instead of skirmishing with Damajirao-II, decided to make him his ally. He restored one-half of the revenue of Gujarat (excluding Ahmedabad City); area adjoining it and his head-quarter Cambay, to the Gaekwad.²⁵ Later he added the revenues of the half of the Ahmedabad City and entire Viramgam district to the initial grant for helping him in regaining Ahmedabad from Ratansing, his brother. Soon, Damajirao-II grew powerful by adding more areas of Gujarat and Kathiawad. He seized Borsad and obtained a share in customs of Broach from the Nizam. In the next few years, Rangoji Gaekwad continued to capture different areas of Gujarat, even when Damajirao-II was absent

²¹ Syed Nawab Ali, (1927), *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, Translated from Persian Text by Khan A M (Baroda, 1927), II, 120-25

²² Clark A C & Desai G H Vol-I, 446

²³ Elliot F A H, 34

²⁴ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 446-7

²⁵ Ibid., 449

from Gujarat. A strong opposition came in form of Jawan Mard Khan Babi in the year 1744. He had been appointed the viceroy of Gujarat after the death of Momin Khan.²⁶ However he had to face defeat at the hands of Gaekwad's agent Devaji Takapir near Surat. Damajirao-II didn't only have to face external problems but internal as well. Frequent expeditions of Damajirao-II from Gujarat to make his mark in Deccan at times deteriorated conditions in Gujarat. His trusted men like Rangoji, Trimbakrao Pandit and his own brother Khanderao Gaekwad intrigued against him from time to time. However through the policy of rewards and punishment, Damajirao was able to damage the repair much to the frustration of the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao.²⁷

The new Peshwa had succeeded after the death of Peshwa Bajirao in 1740. As always is the case Damajirao-II too intended to forge an alliance with the new Peshwa. The alliance worked towards temporary peace for about few years. He was in a position to negotiate due to the death of Umabai Dabhade in 1747, a formidable commander, who was in a position of influence due to the ineptitude of Yeshvantrao Dabhade. After her death, he was made the Damajirao-II was nominated deputy of the Marathas in Gujarat.²⁸ However, this peace was not to last a long time. There was soon a conflict of succession in the house of Shivaji, which had a direct impact on politics in Gujarat. The state of affairs became tense with the death of Raja Shahu at Satara in the year 1749. Sakwarbai, a widow of Shahu and firm opponent of the Peshwa, forwarded the claim of Sambhaji the Raja of Kolhapur as successor. It was certain that Damajirao-II would side with Sakwarbai against the Peshwa. He declined, in 1750, the command of the Peshwa to attend Poona as a representative of Yeshvantrao Dabhade but later on was forced to comply. In 1751 the Peshwa demanded of Damajirao-II to submit the rights of revenue collection of one-half of the Maratha possessions in Gujarat. Damajirao-II refused it. This led to confrontation between Damajirao-II and the Peshwa. The small battalion of Peshwa was defeated in skirmish that followed, but Damajirao was eventually defeated later by Peshwa himself. He had to come to terms with the Peshwa, after being imprisoned. Not only Damajirao-II but his family too was held in confinement. The only way to seek release was through submit to the demands of Peshwa. However, he had to release Damajirao when Jawan Mard Khan's took advantage of the long absence of Damajirao from Gujarat. However, Peshwa did obtain a better

²⁶ Elliot F A H, 31

²⁷ Clark A C & Desai G H, 448

²⁸ Kamekar M, (1980), *British Paramountcy: British-Baroda Relations 1818-1848* Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 2

deal from this arrangement and a treaty was signed between them, called as the Partition Treaty in 1752-53.²⁹ This treaty accorded a status of equality to the Gaekwads as the revenue of Gujarat was equally between Peshwa and Gaekwad. In accordance with this treaty, the revenues of half of Gujarat for all the current and future time were to be submitted to the Peshwa. The revenue could be either paid in cash or in kind. He also had to pay fifteen lakhs of rupees as the arrears. Damajirao-II also agreed to maintain an army of 10, 000 horse in Gujarat for the use of the Peshwa.³⁰ In addition he was required to maintain a contingent in Deccan at his own expense. So far as his relationship with the Raja of Satara was concerned, it was to be maintained in agreement with Peshwa. The position that Damajirao-II retained was still the *mutalik* of Dabhade. In that capacity, Damajirao-II agreed to pay 5 ¼th lakhs as tribute due to the Peshwa on account of the Senapati's establishment.³¹ He was also to maintain an annual sum for the support for the Senapati's establishment. Although, the treaty was formulated in such a manner to mean the maximization of benefits for the Peshwa, it was the Gaekwad, who came up with a better deal. He was treated at par with the Peshwa and knew that there would less interference of Pune in Gujarat. He was left alone for a long time to expand.

Damajirao-II's continued to expand his dominions and went as far as Kathiawad, especially in the areas of Amreli. This naturally did not fare well with Jawan Mard Khan, the Mughal viceroy. Damajirao wary of the constant threats of the viceroy arranged for a joint attack along with other Maratha leaders. In the year 1751 the alliance of Damajirao with Raghunathrao, the brother of the Peshwa, Holkar, Jayaji Sindhia and others proved successful and Jawan Mard Khan was defeated. The viceroy was forced to surrender. This rendered a death blow in the power of the Mughals.³² Things were looking up for the Maratha confederacy when, they had to face the Battle of Panipat against the huge army of Ahmed Shah Abdali in 1761. The result of this battle is too well known to be discussed here in details. The Marathas were routed, many were killed including Peshwa Balaji Bajirao and some were able to escape. Damajirao was lucky enough to escape the slaughter. After this, he confined himself to Gujarat to consolidate his position there. With the attention of the new Peshwa and other confederates diverted to

²⁹ Elliot F A H, 36

³⁰ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I 454

³¹ Ibid.,

³² Aitchison C U, Vol. VI, 284

recuperate from the loss at Panipat, Damajirao continued to expand his sway in Gujarat. Soon he was able to contain Momin Khan the Governor of Cambay and also the Babis.³³ He acquired Visnagar and then Kheda. He got hold of Jawan Mard Khan's chief dwelling of Patan which was then Damajirao-II's headquarter in place of Songadh. Between the years 1763 to 1766, the possessions of Jawan Mard Khan Babi were won over except Sami and Radhanpur from his successors. He made Idar and Rajpipla his tributaries between the years 1752 and 1764 respectively.³⁴ Stretching his control further in Kathiawad, he gradually was able to wrest away the districts of Amreli.

These many territorial exploits were enough for the Maratha confederacy and the new Peshwa to turn their attention towards Gujarat again. Besides being concerned about growing territorial power of Damajirao-II, Madhavrao was more anxious to see him forming alliance with his uncle Raghunathrao. Raghunathrao was the ambitious brother of Balaji Bajirao, who felt cheated, when after the death of his brother, he was not considered for the position of Peshwa. He was seeking support against his nephew, which he found in the willing Gaekwad. This was not taken too well by the Peshwa. This led to another Peshwa-Gaekwad struggle.³⁵ A battle was fought at Dhodap against the Peshwa. The opponents were devastatingly routed by the Peshwa. Govindrao, son of Damajirao-II, and commander of Gaekwad troops, was captured by the Peshwa along with Raghunathrao. The Peshwa agreed to release Govindrao but laid certain conditions which, included payment of heavy ransom. But before that Damajirao-II could pay the ransom to the Peshwa or could recoup his eminence, died in 1768, leaving behind the uncertainty of both waning possession and clashing succession.

The dispute over the succession after Damajirao-II's death was inevitable because, he had four sons of whom two were chief claimants. One was his eldest son Sayajirao-I by his second wife Kasibai and the second was Govindrao the son by his first wife Manubai. However, all his four sons namely Sayajirao-I, Govindrao, Fatehsingrao-I and Manajirao had got the fate to taste the power. But the first to be placed on *gadi* (throne) was Govindrao Gaekwad (1768-1771); not because he was competent, but, as he was imprisoned in Poona when Damajirao-II passed away and could make a deal with the Peshwa for the *gadi* by promising to disburse him half a crore of

³³ Elliot F A H, 37

³⁴ Chavda V K, *Gujarat in Transition*, 115

³⁵ Elliot F A H, 39

rupees. However, this could not continue for any length of time as Fatehsingh, the third brother had raised another claimant to the *gadi* of Baroda, Sayajirao-I (1771-1778). By 1771 Fatehsingrao strengthened his party at home and reached Poona to make negotiations with the Peshwa. The Peshwa actually was a major beneficiary in the entire deal. His favor to recognize the heir to the throne depended on who would pay larger cash. With change in circumstances and inference of a better deal, the decision tilted in favor of Sayajirao to be the next *Sena Khas Khel* of Baroda and his younger brother Fatehsinghrao as his *mutalik*.

Sayajirao-I was a mere marionette and all the affairs were carried out by the regent Fatehsingrao-I. This was the time when the British first appeared to be interested in the politics of Gujarat actively. By this time, the Mughal power had reduced to its vestiges and Marathas at the power seat in Pune were facing internal disputes. This left the space for the British to easily step in and take control. The Gaekwad brothers still not had settled the succession issue in their minds. There was a constant struggle between them. They had made failing efforts earlier to capture the fort of Broach which in the year 1772 was taken in assault by the British.³⁶ Fatehsingrao-I was keen to get hold of Broach to launch his further contests with Govindrao and Khanderao, his uncle and Jagirdar of Kadi. He struck a deal with the British to buy Broach and Surat, for an annual payment of 6, 00,000 rupees. There was also a change in events at Pune, which influenced the political scenario to some extent in Baroda too. Peshwa Madhavrao died in 1772, followed by the murder of his brother Narayanrao. Raghunathrao, the accused, seized the *gadi* and refused to surrender it even when a posthumous son was born to Madhavrao. This led to factional disputes at Pune. Raghunathrao in the meanwhile had signed a pact with the British and sought their assistance in a possible skirmish with the well wishers of Peshwa. However the British chose not to get involved. Raghoba turned towards the Gaekwads and won over Govindrao and Khanderao to his side. There was a fresh bid made to the British offering territories in Gujarat. It was too good an offer for them to resist. The Treaty of Surat was concluded in 1775 between the English East India Company and Raghunathrao, giving them the revenues of Bassein, Salsette and the districts round Surat. The share of Gaekwad in Broach was also offered to them.³⁷ The British soon realized that a lot depended on Raghunathrao succeeding as the Peshwa. If he failed, then, he was in no position to acquiesce the promised territories to

³⁶ Elliot F A H,44

³⁷ Ibid.,

them. The British still were in no position to challenge the might of the formidable Marathas at Pune. Therefore the British temporarily withdrew from the deal with Raghunathrao, leaving Raghunathrao and Gaekwad to face the joint forces of Marathas siding with Fatehsingh. The war of Pune was carried to Gujarat. The joint forces of Raghunathrao and the Khanderao of Kadi and Govindrao laid a siege on Baroda. The skillful generalship of Fatehsingrao forced them to flee. Although, the British had maintained a stance of non-interference, it was too good an opportunity for them to let it pass. They had realized they could still wrest away some territories from Gujarat, out of the control of the either of the Gaekwad. Col Keating joined the army of Raghunathrao near Cambay, later which was joined by Govindrao as well. The joint Maratha armies proved to be more powerful. The British barely managed to move out of the fall out. However they gained what they had hoped for. They were able to defeat Fatehsingrao and impose stricter terms on him. Colonel Keating signed a treaty on 6th March 1775 demanding revenues of the *pargana* of Broach, of Chikhli, Variav near Surat and Koral on the Narmada. However, the Governor-General Council disapproved the treaty of 6th March, as "impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized, and unjust" and made inconsistently with negotiations then being carried on with the ruling power at Poona as well as with the authority of the Calcutta Government.³⁸ Though Colonel Keating kept the message secret until Fatehsingrao-I paid the dues liable to them.

All was well with Fatehsingrao-I, as he had chosen the correct side—which favoured him by giving the control of Gujarat in his hands. He was bestowed the title of "Sena Khas Khel" in 1778. He was ambitious of adding to his might in Gujarat but this he realized was not possible due to the rise of East India Company in western India. According to the treaty of Purandhar, signed between the British and Nana Phadnavis (on behalf of the Peshwa) in Poona,³⁹ the Peshwa had surrendered to the British forever all the rights and titles to their share of the city and the parganas of Bharuch. In addition, territories worth three lakhs rupees adjoining to Bharuch were also were surrendered. Thus Fatehsingrao-I lost an important territory of Bharuch to the British.

In 1779, a fresh opportunity arose for Fatehsinghrao-I to gain footfall, soon with an impending war between British and the Peshwa. Here, the British never the one to hesitate to

³⁸ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 475

³⁹ Kamekar M, 4

retreat approached Fatehsinghrao and offered fresh terms of negotiation. It was too good an opportunity to miss for the Gaekwad. As a result, Col. Godard concluded a treaty with the Gaekwad at Dabhoi on 26th January 1780.⁴⁰ It was agreed upon as per the treaty a) Fatehsingrao-I would be independent of the Peshwa, all the possessions of the Gaekwad would retain with him permanently b) the share of the Peshwa in Gujarat would be of the British c) Gaekwad were to furnish 3000 horse to the ally during war d) to hand over Sinor and certain villages of Broach *pargana* and e) to give away Surat *atthavisi* to the British on occupying Ahmedabad which came about in 1780. Thus the Gaekwad was drawn into the war, and he allied with the British. However, the news of an alliance of the Nizam and Haider Ali with the Peshwa reached to the British and they decided to come to terms with the Peshwa. On 17th May 1782 an important treaty of Salbai was signed between the Peshwa and the British.⁴¹ For the working of the newly concluded treaty it was inevitable that the pact of Kundhela made with Fatehsingrao-I had to be nullified. Before Fatehsingrao-I could face the consequences he died on 21st December 1789.⁴²

From 1789-1793, the Gaekwad's remained engaged in conflicts with one another. After Fatehsingrao-I's death, neglecting the objections of Govindrao, the youngest of all Manajirao was made regent to Sayajirao-I. In 1792 he succeeded Sayajirao-I on his death. This all was invested on Manajirao only after offering a *nazar* of about 33,13,000/- and on promise to pay Fatehsingrao's arrears amounting to 36 lakhs to the Peshwa. Govindrao could not match the offer and was indulged in minor scuffles till Manaji's death. However for the benefit for Govindrao Gaekwad, Manajirao passed away on 1st August 1793⁴³. The rival less Govindrao once again was a successor. But his crown was still proving to be thorny. Govindrao was under a heavy debt accountable to the Peshwa. He was forced to pay all the arrears. But the British Government intervened and on the basis of the treaty of Salbai called off the ministerial design to dismember Gaekwad state. Govindrao was allowed to assume the title of *Sena Khas Khel* on 19th December 1793.

⁴⁰ Ibid.,

⁴¹ Aitchison C U, Vol-VI, 285

⁴² Elliot F A H, 55

⁴³ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 481

In the meanwhile at Poona too there was a change in the political scene, with the accession of Bajirao-II as the Peshwa in the year 1796. He was the son of deflected Raghunathrao. The newly appointed Peshwa Bajirao decided to look into the affairs of Gujarat and gain his lost rights. He sent his young brother Chimnaji Appaji. However, it proved more difficult for him to negotiate with the Gaekwad than he had thought. The negotiations were struck, whereby; the Peshwa had to accept the revenues being paid to him annually by the Gaekwad. Besides that, for all practical purposes, Ahmedabad remained in the hands of the Gaekwads, until it was surrendered to the British. The Ahmedabad farm revenue was leased to Govindrao by Peshwa at 5 lakhs rupees which was the highest price ever paid for the farm.⁴⁴ The Ahmedabad farm included the Kathiawad and Sorath tribute, the revenue of Petlad, Napad, Ranpur, Dhandhuka and Gogho, certain custom dues in Cambay and a share in the revenue of the city of Ahmedabad. Govindrao could not enjoy the benefits of final peace between warring factions of his state and died on the 19th September, 1800.⁴⁵ The history of Gaekwad in the nineteenth century can be said to be closely linked with formation of Baroda state. The following section discusses the formation and consolidation of different territories of the Gaekwad's into Baroda state.

Section-2: Formation of Baroda State: Medieval to Pre-Modern

As it is true with most of the cases of succession, the succession of Anandrao Gaekwad, the legitimate eldest son of Sayajirao-I was not smooth. It reeked of intrigue resolved with blackmail and threat.⁴⁶ Eventually in 1800, the weak minded and an opium addict Anandrao was instated on the throne. The politics in the Gaekwad darbar, involved both the local officers and the British, each outbidding the other in taking control of the rule of an imbecile ruler. Powerful characters were Raoji Appaji, the Dewan of Anandrao, the local but powerful *sahukars*, the mercenaries and the British. The whole interplay was to exert utmost influence to make greatest gains. Raoji Appaji, had played a very important role during the time of Govindrao Gaekwad, and hence worked to retain his influence. The *sahukars* in their various capacities, but primarily, as moneylenders, had so far been able to bail the Gaekwads from the continuous demands of money from Pune. Besides, they were also, looking after the day to day expenses of the rulers.

⁴⁴ *Historical Selection form Baroda State Records*(HSBSR)(1938), Vol-IV, Baroda State Press, 605

⁴⁵ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I ,484-49

⁴⁶ Elliot F A H, 64

Apart from this, one of the most important functions that they were playing at that time was that of *bakshis*, i.e. the military paymasters. Hence, the mercenaries which were largely Arabs were at the mercy of the *sahukars*. They in the early nineteenth century had begun to create havoc, clamouring for payment for their services and also its arrears. The Gaekwad's already had bailed out a major chunk of their territorial possessions to the *sahukars*, in lieu of their services. They had no more to give and Anandrao cared less. This attitude of the ruler thus drove the Dewan Raoji Appaji in the willing arms of the English East India Company. The British by this time had their complete attention on western India, as the south and the east were almost under their control. With the threat of Napoleon looming large, the officials of the Company were unwilling to take any risks, with any regional ruler. They were looking for complete control. So far their success in Gujarat was limited, but, circumstances like those arose at Baroda, provided them the opportunity to intervene without much ado. They had realized that for them to control Gujarat, they needed to negotiate with both the Peshwa and the Gaekwad. Raoji Appaji provided them with that very opportunity, when the Arabs rebelled against the Gaekwad, clamouring for release of payments. They were instigated and supported by a local distant relative of Gaekwad, Malharrao of Kadi. Malharrao felt cheated out of his rights by the Gaekwad and hence felt the only way to secure his position was to incapacitate the troops and launch an attack on the Baroda and laid a siege on the city in 1802. Raoji Appaji, met Governor of Bombay, Jonathan Duncan on 15th March, 1802.⁴⁷ As a result of this meeting, Major Alexander Walker was deputed to deal with the mercenary forces. Walker tried to settle the matters with the Arabs peacefully but they were not pacified. After obtaining help from Bombay, Baroda was attacked on the 18th of December 1802. The siege continued for ten days but at last the Arabs surrendered.⁴⁸ The British decided to end the conflict permanently and Malharrao and the Arab mercenaries were defeated. The troops were forced to accept the terms of payment offered by the British which was very less than what they should have been paid.⁴⁹ Gaekwad had to incur following loss for taking British help struggle. They had to surrender their territories in form of *inam* Chaurasi, Chikhli, Kheda, and *chauth* of Surat whose total value was Rs. 2, 58, 000 as agreement arrived at Khambhat in March, 1802. A subsidiary force of 2000 British soldiers was placed in the state.

⁴⁷ Chavda V K, (1962), *Gaekwads and the British: A Study of Their Problems, 1875-1920*, University Publishers, Delhi, 9

⁴⁸ Rajyagor S B, (1982), *History of Gujarat*, S. Chand, New Delhi, 366.

⁴⁹ Chavda V K, 117

The cost of which was Rs. 60, 000 paid by landed *jaidad* or funds. As an interim measure the revenues of Kathiawar and Kadi were pledged. The expenses of the army during the first year were Rs. 7, 80, 000. In 1803, Dholka worth four and a half lakhs, Nadiad one and three quarter lakhs were ceded to the British. The British also undertook to pay off the arrears due to the Arab mercenaries of the state, provided the Gaekwad paid them back by June 1805. The revenues of the *parganas* of Baroda, Koral, Sinor, Petlad and Ahmedabad were pledged to the British. The expenses of the army incurred during the first year amounted to 7, 80, 000 rupees bearing 9% rate of interest. To mete out that cost by January 1803, certain districts were ceded. The total of which came to be 7, 80,000/-.⁵⁰ As part of the treaty of Subsidiary Alliance, Major Walker was appointed as the Resident of the state.⁵¹

In the meanwhile, the Peshwa Bajirao-II was increasingly playing into the hands of the British further helped their case. The Maratha civil war further provided the British with an opportunity to weaken them. The two warring heads Sindhia and Holkar were vying with one another to obtain control over Gujarat and more importantly to secure the custody of the Peshwa. Holkar routed the armies of the Sindhia and the Peshwa at battle near Poona in October 1802. The Peshwa did not have an option but to seek the help of the forces of English East India Company. However it came with a price and that was in form of signing a treaty with the British. The Treaty of Bassein was signed on 31st December, 1802⁵². In accordance with which Peshwa had surrender his portion of Gujarat to the British. This can be discerned from the fact that the revenues of Surat were to be ceded to the British and for the payment of the Subsidiary Troops, substantial territories of Gujarat worth 12, 28,000/- were handed over to the British. The British were given the right to arbiter in the disputes between the Gaekwad and the Peshwa, which meant that the British had to right to jurisdiction in the Gaekwad ascendancy. British extended their protection to the Gaekwad and gained rights for interposition in the negotiation with Poona; British guarantee was needed for the succession to the *gadi* of the Baroda state. British also extended security for the Gaekwads' debts. The Peshwa thus surrendered all rights to the British except claims for the debts of the Gaekwad that was still due to the Peshwa.⁵³ The British came

⁵⁰ Clark A C & Desai G H Vol-I, 494

⁵¹ Chavda V K , 118

⁵² Kincaid C A & Pārasanīsa D B, (1918), *A history of the Maratha people*(Vol-I), Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 200

⁵³ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I 499

up getting lions share and much of a control over the Marathas.⁵⁴ All of this was confirmed and Gaekwad added more to the power of the British by signing the Definitive Treaty. In the year 1805, a Definitive Treaty of general defensive alliance was concluded⁵⁵ and in 1808 the Supplementary Treaty was concluded. According to the treaty the subsidiary force was increased and European artillery was engaged. There were clauses which curtailed the rights of state and renounced those rights to the British. The Articles that need mention are the Articles IX, X, XI of Definitive Treaty which say Gaekwad would not engaged in his service any European, or American or native of India subject to the Honorable Company without the consent of British Government, The foreign policy of the State was to be conducted by the British Government, and that it had to submit all the differences with the Peshwa to the British arbitration respectively. Armed with this, Major Walker went about to consolidate the Baroda administration. In this he dealt with both internal and external relations. Following is the discussion on his internal administrative reforms and others which commenced during the reign of Anandrao Gaekwad.

2.1 Internal Reforms in the Administrative Structure

- i. Administrative Reforms- Major Walker, along with settling territorial matters, made substantial efforts in organizing the administration of Baroda by introducing administrative reforms. He formulated a commission for the administration of Baroda wherein the members of the commission would work for and take decisions on behalf of the ruler. Babaji Appaji was made the member of the Council of Anandrao. He was gradually given more powers. The first durbar under the commission was held on 3rd of February 1807.⁵⁶ However this commission was not permanent, it was disposed of by Mr. Elphinstone in 1820.⁵⁷
- ii. Financial Reforms-The finance of the State had reached to its worst stage owing to the excessive expenditure incurred on the expansion and maintenance of the territories. Moreover there was no effective system to disburse the dues which led to increase in the arrears. Major Walker made an effort to revive the State finance in

⁵⁴ Elliot F A H, 64, Op. Cit

⁵⁵ Chavda V K, 115

⁵⁶ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 504-06

⁵⁷ Ibid.,534

following three stages. In the first stage a rough estimate of the total income (revenues) and expenditure was calculated. It was revealed that approximately the total revenues that were collected annually were fifty-five lakhs and the expenditure rendered was eighty-two lakhs. The state was in loss of virtually twenty lakhs of rupees. Almost entire district was mortgaged to the creditors or to the favorites to the Rajah or Dewan of the state.⁵⁸ On that account the districts were farmed out to the mercenary troops; to the *sahukars*; to the troops in arrears. The second stage commenced, when it was decided to reduce to cost of the armies. Hence the Arab *sibandi* was broken up and other reductions were made amounting to Rs 10, 80, 000 annually. This though enabled the reduction in cost of the maintenance of the troops, yet since the state did not have such money with them, therefore they once again had to depend upon the local *sahukars* to make payment. The *sahukars* in return of that had to be farmed more districts, thereby cutting off a steady income of the state. In the third stage, since almost all the avenues of the possible income generation were farmed out to the *sahukars*, therefore the Resident decided to impose stricter control on the expenses of the state. The expenses of the state however hinged on their expenses, the cost of which they neither reduced nor forgo. A large chunk of expenditure of the state was made on paying the British for Subsidiary forces and other expenses which were the cost of the British presence in the soil of the state. The British Residents claimed that the debts to the East India Company were cleared by 1812.⁵⁹ Initially the British thought that they had succeeded, eventually they realized that the state was still in a debt of a loan of over one crore of rupees.

- iii. Other important Measures by Major Walker:-Major Walker had put great effort to pull together the dismantled state of affairs of Baroda. He had directed the minister to revise accounts, to appoint new and efficient *kamvisdars*, to take for previous defalcations, and to institute judicial tribunal. He went on with his work by reducing the military establishment, resuming *jagirs* where it could be justly done, remunerating the holders by pensions, registering all *jagirs*, collecting the arrears of *vazifdars*, abolishing the *makta* system, removing or obtaining work from *assamdars*,

⁵⁸ Elliot F A H, 128-131

⁵⁹ Elliot F A H, 105

and finally to ascertaining and fixing the *mahal majkur*. In addition the expenditure, on the *pagadars* and *silledars*, was reduced by one-half, and peculations amounting to 30 lakhs were recovered; the *mahals* or the districts were better managed and supervised.⁶⁰ He brought all the forts under one head to be managed by *killedars* instead by *mamlatdars* or civil managers. These changes in the administration were favorable for retrieving the state finance and for smooth working.

- iv. Judicial Reforms: It was during the reign of Anandrao and the regency of Fatehsingrao that the *Nyayadhishi* (central court) came into existence. It was established in 1810. *Nyayadhishi* had *Sar Pant* with three *pants* (judges) including a *shastri* and a *kazi* to look into the Hindu or Muslim laws. Trials of both criminal and civil cases were judged in this court. The *Pants* recorded their cases separately and the *Sar Pant* after collecting them took to the *Huzur*. In 1833 the post of president to the *Nyayadhishi* court was abolished, and all the *pants* were done away with.⁶¹ Later judge was once again placed at the head of the court, with no *Pants* under him, assisted by *shastri* and *kazi*.

2.2 External Relations under Anandrao Gaekwad

So far as external relations were concerned, the Resident of Baroda, Major Walker, went about settling the affairs of Kathiawar and ensuring some stability in the region.⁶² This was done to work for the maximum advantage to the British. So far as the revenue farm of Ahmedabad was concerned, its term was renewed every five years. The British were keenly interested in the province for it was very lucrative. This continued twice, when in 1812, the Peshwa refused to renew the farm. Initially the negotiations were carried out between the Peshwa and the Gaekwad, with British acting as the mediator. However, this all changed when the trusted man of British Gangadhar Shastri who was sent to Poona to negotiate with the Peshwa brutally murdered at Poona. The murder of Shastri was enough reason and even a pretext for the British to intervene in the matter strongly. Moreover they discovered that relation of the Peshwa-Maratha leaders was at the verge of being cordial, which could be a challenge for the British. It was when

⁶⁰ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 504

⁶¹ Elliot F A H, 212

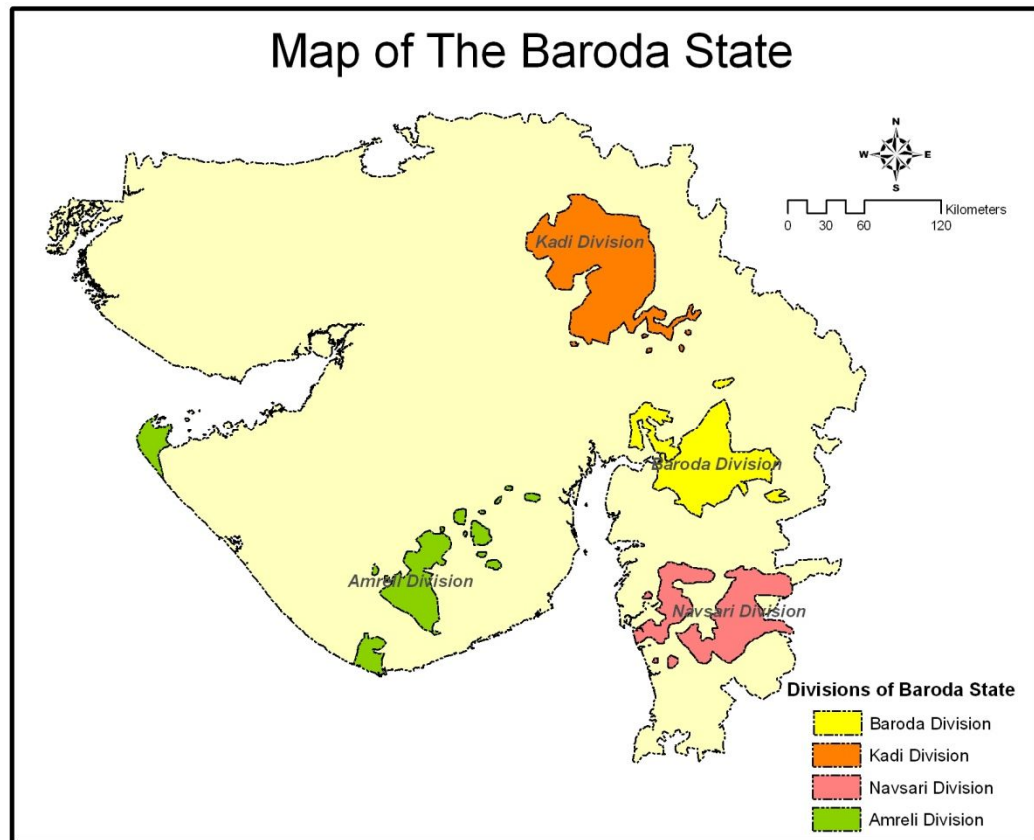
⁶² Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 504

the Peshwa tried to bring disorder in Gujarat, the British decided to confront the Peshwa. But this struggle was concluded when in June 1817 the Peshwa entered into a treaty with the British.⁶³ According to this treaty the Peshwa surrendered all past claims on the Gaekwad for an annual payment of four lakhs and renounced all future claims; the Peshwa ceded the tribute of Kathiawad to the British; the farm of Ahmedabad in perpetuity to the Gaekwad and his successor for the same sum i.e. 4.5 lakhs per annum; Jambusar, Amod, Desbora, Dabhoi, Bahadarpur and Savli were ceded to the British; and the most important was that the Peshwa renounced all future authority over the Gaekwad. The treaty brought the Peshwa's control in Gujarat almost to an end. The British wish to get greater hold in Gujarat turned practical. And the one amongst all who got the lion's share without much labour was Gaekwad. He earned the above advantage and in addition, as was declared freed of the Peshwa's authority to be an independent prince, could be free of the tributes, commutation for service and even of offering *nazarana*.⁶⁴ It was this surrender of Peshwa's authority over Gaekwad which made the Gaekwad, a ruler of Baroda State in a true sense. It was at this point that Baroda was given a recognition of truly being 'The Baroda State of Gaekwad' which consisted of four parts i) Baroda ii) Kadi iii) Amreli and vi) Navsari. For the administrative convenience they were divided into five divisions:

⁶³ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad-British Relations*, 116

⁶⁴ Elliot F A H, 118

Baroda; ii) Mehsana; iii) Navsari; iv) Amreli; and v) Okhamandal.⁶⁵ (See Map 1)



Section-3: The Pre-Modern Baroda State

The reign of Anandrao Gaekwad is most significant in the history of Baroda State for two reasons: i) Gaekwad of Baroda was freed from hegemony of Peshwa and was an independent ruler of his own consolidated State; and ii) It was for the first time that it experienced organized and systematized State affairs. Predecessors of Anandrao had to struggle for expansion and consolidation of the territories to form their own realm and then to maintain it. This hardly afforded them to carry reformative work. Whereas the successors of Anandrao were unbound to any such struggle, and could occupy themselves into formative work for improvement for State and its people. The predecessors of Anandrao looked upon the people

⁶⁵ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 2-5

Maharaja. They suggested Sayajirao-II should pay the dues from his privy purse. The remaining dues could be cleared by giving a seven year lease (septennial lease) to the *sahukars*, which would deprive Maharaja of any income from this source for that period of time.⁶⁷ Sayajirao-II initially did not agree to the proposal. Instead he appealed to the good office of the Bombay Presidency, hoping the whole unfairness of the system would be judicially handled. However, after making constant appeals to the Bombay government, he received no favorable response from them. He resorted to oppressive measures as a desperate attempt to gain control. He discontinued *chaloo potedari* and refused to recognize the guarantee of the British. He intimidated the *sahukars* by forbidding them to meet the Resident. This, of course was meted with disapproval from the Bombay government. They forced him to accept the septennial leases arrangement, as the only solution to the problem. Sayajirao proposed to pay off the entire debt within two years in one single installment out of his own pocket, in order to keep his lands from going away from his control. However the *sahukars* (who were covered under the guarantee of the British) refused. They insisted on the septennial leases arrangement. Sayajirao openly defied the authority of the British by cancelling all the guarantees of the British. He still insisted on his right to pay off the guaranteed loan in the one lump and in his own way.⁶⁸ This did not go too well with the British and they decided to relinquish the idea of septennial leases arrangement and instead focused on sequestration of certain districts of the Baroda state till the promised debts were paid.⁶⁹ Orders were passed for such more subsequent confiscations. However, the policy of sequestration was not accepted by the Court of Directors and therefore they had to withdraw from it with few conditions⁷⁰. The guaranteed bankers demands were to be satisfied; Maharaja was allowed to keep a contingent force; all the other claims to be settled in a year; all confiscated *mahals* were to be restored.

From then on, the British government did not interfere with the internal affairs of the state too much. They decided to discontinue the office of Resident at Baroda and no further appointments would be made. As a result the then Resident of Baroda, Mr. Williams, was sent Ahmedabad as political Commissioner of Gujarat. However on the 6th of June 1832 the government of India and on 6th of November 1833 the Court of Director's approved that

⁶⁷ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 541

⁶⁸ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad and British Relations*, 23

⁶⁹ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad and British Relations*, 23

⁷⁰ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 249

Residency should be reestablished in the state, which was done in 1835.⁷¹ Sayajirao-II throughout his life remained an "unconquered friend" of English.⁷² .

- i. Finance: Sayajirao took initiation to establish state sponsored financial institutions or *dukans* as they were called then. As can be gleaned, Sayajirao was facing financial crises and the debt to be paid to the *sahukars* had heaped high. Moreover a large amount was being paid by Sayajirao-II for the contingent force regularly. The *sahukars* were making large profits unchecked at the cost of the state income. This prompted Sayajirao to initiate the state into the business of money-lending. As a result, he established several *dukans*, prominent of which was *Ganesh Ishwar pedhi* named after his son. It was established with a sum of Rs. 5.5 lakhs. The *potedari* share of *Ganesh Ishwar* Bank later amounted to from Rs.11 lakhs at first to Rs. 14.25 Lakhs at last. Malharrao was thus able, when he came to the *gadi*, to do without any state bankers as *potedar* (state treasurer)⁷³.
- ii. Revenue: As can be seen from above, majority of the fertile lands were farmed out to the *sahukars*, who were covered under the guarantee of the British. In order to change that and bring some order and accountability to revenue collection process, Sayajirao passed a *kalambandi* (a circular order). This was passed in 1827.⁷⁴ The basic intention was to control the revenue administration. It also enjoined that an annual account of the sums along with the vouchers and receipts were to be sent to the government by the officers whose position was hereditary. This proved difficult as no account records were kept by the *izaradars* for the information of the government. The contract between the government and the *izaradars* was usually a sham. There were also no leases and *pattas* or the other any kind of written leases granted to the *desais* by the *izaradars*, who were responsible for appointing them. The entire running of the administration was verbal and nothing was written down. The system was that the Maharaja leased out the district to the revenue farmers for the period of five years and then completely forgot about it. The revenue farmers appointed people on behalf of

⁷¹ Ibid., 550-51

⁷² Chavda V K, Gujarat in Transition, 121

⁷³ Elliot F A H, 220

⁷⁴ Ibid., 224

the government but with no formal order from the government. They made informal agreements with the locals. This made the position of almost all the employees at the mercy of the revenue farmers. There was no fixed revenue demand from the people, as, as and when the revenue farmer felt he was running short of cash he went in for revenue collection. This left the people totally unprepared and unstable. In case of depopulation or land lying waste or failure of the rains, the revenue farmer without consulting the Maharaja used to farm out the land to someone else at a price. The next revenue farmer might not show any apathy towards the cultivator but that was not of any concern of the new revenue farmer. Sayajirao-II made an attempt to reform the system. According to the *kalambandi* issued, payment of the land revenue either in cash or in kind to facilitate the payments; in few districts part payment was allowed that is the revenue payment could be made in cash or in kind; some payments were also allowed to be made according to the agreements of the villagers and *patels* with the *kamavisdars*; the government had the right to collect one-half of the total produce of the *khalsa* land and this was generally done when the amount of *jama* was not fixed. The produce of the above lands which were called *maliat*, i.e. on which sugarcane, tobacco and red pepper were, cultivated exception to the above rule. Due to the expense of the cultivation, the revenue was determined from year to year; to secure timely payment, a class of agents was established under the title of *manotidars* who were basically usurers or the village money-lenders. They bound themselves to pay the revenue of the village or villages in advance in anticipation of that the crops will not fail. For that they charged interest as high as 25% from the villager or the cultivators; in case of default of the payments, either force was used to exact payment or they were fined.

- iii. Society: The only social reform brought in during his reign was abolition of *sati*. It was on 13th April 1840 that the abetment of the *sati* or of widows burning themselves on the death of their husbands was proclaimed throughout the Gaekwad's territories to be a penal offence.⁷⁵ The work of public service during his time was the construction of *ghat* over Vishwamitri River.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 573
a set of steps leading down to a river or lake



Vishwamitri Ghat Baroda State⁷⁷

An example of public health hygiene can be provided during his time by citing an incident where Sayajirao-II had made special arrangements for a prisoner who was severally ill. He ordered the killedars: i) to give him medical assistance; ii) to remove fetters to make him feel at ease; iii) to shift him to the village for some time also probably to avoid infection to other prisoners and ; iv) to get his food cooked by a Brahmin separately considering his health.⁷⁸ Sayajirao-II had abolished *sati* practice defying the old norm, but he was still a strong follower of community and caste norms. The following instance confirms his caste biased approach. The Sar-suba of

⁷⁶ Baroda State Archives (BSA), *Historical Selections from Baroda State Records* (HSBR), Vol- I, 1826-1835, Extracts from register of letters, Dastaks etc, February-March 1829. Letter dated 9/2/1829, 107

⁷⁷ <https://vmc.gov.in/History.aspx>

⁷⁸ *HSBR*, Vol- I, 1826-1835, March-April 1829, Letter date 17/3/1829, 111

Surat Atthavisi and a *Kamvisdar* of Gandevi had struggle with Brahmins who declined to abide their instructions regarding caste dispute. Sayjirao-II ordered these officers 'to stop harassing the Brahmins and to respect community rules'.⁷⁹

- iv. Legal Structure: In 1840, a Devaghar Kacheri was instituted by Sayajirao-II Maharaja, that a person discontented with the decision of the Nyayadhishi court might appeal to the Maharaja re-trial only by presenting Nazarana to him. However in 1846 Bhau Tambekar converted it into a joint civil court with the Nyayadhishi.⁸⁰ A notification dated 24/09/1826 held that public would submit the petitions henceforth on stamp paper only.⁸¹

Sayajirao-II died on 28th of December 1847. His death marked an end of an age of crisis.

3.2 Administrative Modification under Ganpatrao Gaekwad

Sayajirao-II was succeeded by his son, Ganpatrao Gaekwad. The new Maharaja was different in every respect from the previous one; in fact he was an opposite of the earlier one. He was in complete unison with the British. As a result of the influence of the British, Ganpatrao Gaekwad was able to carry out modern reforms. He ordered out from England, the models of steam engine and electric telegraph apparatus.⁸² Ganpatrao readily acquired the knowledge and efforts were made by him to bring notable changes. He ordered the roads to be made and planted wayside trees. The camp was connected with the city. Bridges and *sarais* were also built during his era.⁸³ He made *dharamshala* at Tankaria and designed a tram way from that city to the capital and constructed a road twenty-two miles long from that place to Mundala. Later in 1872-73 the tramway laid by Ganpatrao was converted into railways. When the railway was being laid from Bombay to Gujarat, the sizeable part of Gaekwad territory was covered and hence the negotiations were made to hand over that.⁸⁴ In 1856, Ganpatrao agreed to the proposal and gave the land required for the rail. He negotiated with the British and obtained payment of

⁷⁹ BSA, *HSBR*, Vol- I, 1826-1835, Letter dated 21/8/1826, 12

⁸⁰ Elliot F A H, 212-13

⁸¹ *HSBR*, Vol- I, 1826-1835, February-March 1829. Letter No. 13, 11

⁸² Clark A C & Desai G H Vol-I, 580-81

⁸³ *Ibid.*,

⁸⁴ BSA, *Huzur Political Office (HPO)*, Daftar No. 157, letter no. 4567 of 1853, dated 29th October, 1853

compensation to the owners of private land. He also, obtained the protection rights, against any loss which might accrue to Baroda revenue in transit duties. The Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway was thus started (the first train running in 1860).⁸⁵ Although, the state was the major beneficiary of this event, yet, it benefitted in terms of seeing a path towards the era of progress and modernization.⁸⁶

Ganpatrao Gaekwad issued a regulation prohibiting infanticide among the Lewa *patidars* of Petlad and other *pargana*. He gave away half of the proceeds of the *mohusal* fines in the Mahi Kantha to a fund for checking infanticide in that district.⁸⁷ An agreement was also signed with the chiefs of various communities to reduce the expenses of the marriage ceremonies. This was the time when slavery was not a penal offence and no laws were made to prohibit it. This had led to some other evils like stealing of children, buying and selling of those children who were either stolen or were orphan. They were forced to be slaves against their will; this was brought to maharaja's notice. It was now proclaimed an offence to sell a child without the knowledge of the Darbar, and a step was thus made toward the total abolition of slavery. Old claims for restitution for the robberies committed in the state were squared off; strict orders were issued to arrest and deliver up criminals after whom pursuit was being made from the British territory.⁸⁸ Besides this, introduction of vaccination was the significant measure taken in the field of public health. Thus his time had witnessed reforms in many fields as communication, medical, social, legal. He opened a port at Dabka on the river Mahi and intended to establish a salt work but British denied on the argument that being the success of the territories of Peshwa they had the power to permit or forbid the opening of port or the establishment of salt work throughout Gujarat.⁸⁹ Hence Ganpatrao had to suspend the idea of starting a salt work.

Ganpatrao Gaekwad died on 19th November, 1856 without legitimate son to claim the throne; he hence was succeeded by Khanderao Gaekwad, the eldest of his surviving brothers.

3.3 Administrative Alterations under Khanderao Gaekwad

⁸⁵ *Railways in Baroda Territory*, 1893, Baroda State Press, Baroda, 2-4; Sir William Wilson Hunter, *Bombay 1885 to 1890, A study in Indian Administration*, London, 1892, Oxford, Horace Hart, Printer to the University, 85 & 290

⁸⁶ Elliot F A H, 173-74

⁸⁷ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 581

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 581

a set of steps leading down to a river or lake

⁸⁹ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad and British Relations*, 133

Khanderao Gaekwad (1856-1870) endeavored to bring some changes in the state, which were important for moving towards the path of modernization. Politically, Khanderao obtained the support of the British, by aligning with them in the Revolt of 1857. This earned him some definite advantage, chief of it being, conferred the right to adoption.⁹⁰ Besides that there was remission of the three lakhs to be paid for the maintenance of the Gujarat Irregular Horse annually.⁹¹

- i. Legal Structure: In 1860, Khanderao instituted a new criminal court under a *Faujdari Kamdar*. It was both a magisterial and a criminal court which deprived the *Nyayadhishi* court of its criminal jurisdiction.⁹² The magisterial work and criminal cases were supervised by *Faujdari Kamdar*, along with the revenue appeals by *Sar Suba* and the civil suits by *Sadar Nyayadhishi*. Civil suits from the *Nyayadhishi* went to Members' Court which was a replacement of both *Nyayadhishi* and Special Court. The most effective of his undertakings was the abolition of the *izara* system or the revenue farming system which was the basis of nearly all evils. In a *mahal*, the *izaradars* were administering justice, military, revenue and were shouldering sizeable duties. They had thus become influential. These *izaradars* while administering justice were passing verdict in the favour of their benefactor. In addition, punishments were given mostly in the form of fine which became a great source of earning money. The dispensation of justice also had been a remunerative business for them.⁹³ Khanderao brought an end to *izaradari* and sub-divisions were placed under *vahivatdar* for each. The *vahivatdar* was assisted by four *silledars* or *aval karkuns* for: i) revenue; ii) civil; iii) criminal cases; and iv) military department. In 1867 Col. Barr made a mention in his report to the Bombay Government that the Judicial Department was becoming more and more organized rules and regulation having been issued for the guidance of all official.⁹⁴

Khanderao was the first among the rulers of Baroda to introduce system of codified laws. The first civil procedure was enacted in 1861 and revised in 1869-70,

⁹⁰ Elliot F A H, 184

⁹¹ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 587

⁹² Elliot F A H, 213

⁹³ Ibid., 206

⁹⁴ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 592

in the same year the Stamp Act and Registration Act were also made. The criminal code, framed in 1861, was first applied in Baroda city, and it was in 1863 that it was applied in the entire state. The revenue code was enacted in 1865. All of above were either drawn from or corrected on the lines of the Bombay Regulation of 1827. Thus it was under Khanderao that sweeping reform had been made, and the British method of administering justice had been copied as closely as possible.⁹⁵

- ii. Revenue: Khanderao also reorganized the system of revenue collection prevalent in Baroda state. He separated judicial and police departments in 1860. The beginning was made by introduction of revenues surveys. In a form of pilot study, he substituted a fixed payment and a ten years settlement for old levies in kind. The land was classified in three sections as per its nature and degree of fertility and rates were fixed accordingly. However this revenue survey system proved to be defective as no correct measurement or demarcation of boundary was done. Also, the surveys were not done on uniform bases and many *talukas* were not surveyed. There were no accurate maps designed to assist the surveyors and measurements were taken with ropes. In short the new system proved to be inaccurate.

In spite of the failure of the survey systems, Khanderao introduced a new system of revenue management to bring about changes at the functional level. His measure of removal of revenue farming or *izarar* was significant. Instead of *izaradar*, a village *talati* was appointed. The post of *Mehtas* was created for one or more villages according to their size. For ten or more villages, a *thanedar* was appointed. They all were placed under the *vahivatdar* or *mamlatdar* of the district or *pargana*.⁹⁶ There were also some selected heads in the village which were called as *matadars* or *ugharatdars* who at times were also assigned their work to *patel* or *mukhi*, i.e. to collect revenue on behalf of the *talati* or *mehta*. The revenue thus collected was deposited in the district treasury, from there to state general treasury at Baroda. The state general treasury was in the charge of *Sar Suba* or the revenue commissioner as styled in British India and thence to the *sahukars*. However, the system was not fully developed and hence lacked supervision and follow up.

⁹⁵Elliot F A H, 214

⁹⁶Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 8

Khanderao Gaekwad also undertook to introduce reforms so that alienated lands could be brought under state control. Previously, there was a practice of granting lands for: i) charitable religious endowment; and ii) non-charitable service grants. The state claimed no tax on these types of lands. The state had little or no claim on their revenues. These lands were called '*barkhali*' or alienated lands.⁹⁷ Grants of these lands deprived the states of a great loss in revenue. It was not that only plots of land were thus alienated, but whole villages were similarly disposed of.⁹⁸ Khanderao resolved to settle some of the alienated lands by removing them from all liability on payment to Government of a quit-rent of two *annas* in the rupee. He however refused to acknowledge as alienated, lands sold or mortgaged after A.D. 1827. He imposed and actually collected the quit-rent for three years. However, the task proved to be tedious and he had to withdraw the special agency charged with its collection. The work was transferred to the newly formed revenue department, which was already overwhelmed with the task of levying the land revenue.⁹⁹

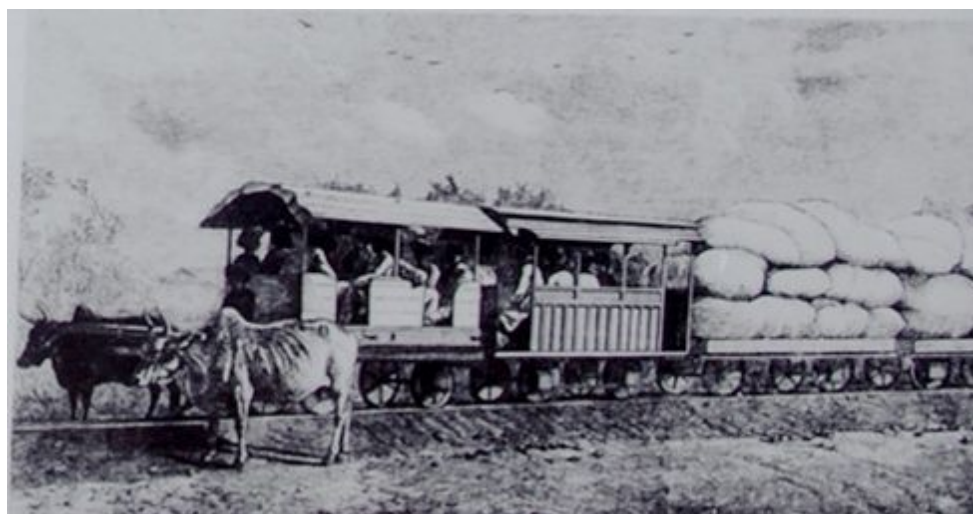
- iii. Law & Order: When the revenue and police department were combined the *thanedars* had to do both *faujdari* and *mulki* work. After the separation of the two in 1860, the *faujdar*s were appointed to do *faujdari*, i.e. to look after the maintenance of law and order in their jurisdiction. The basic functions then remained were police and magisterial character. The police department was headed by *huzur fauzdari*, followed by *sadr fauzdari*, *vahivatdar*, *thanedar* and at the bottom came *patel* or *mukhi*. This arrangement continued till 1868-69, after which the two departments were again merged.
- iv. Infrastructural Changes: Khanderao's rule also can be said to be the age of railways and telegraph in Baroda. Although, these were the ventures of the British, yet, some attempts were made by Baroda state, to bring them to the state. Taking into consideration the incentives provided by the BB&CI lines, Maharaja Khanderao decided to construct a railway on the narrow gauge of two feet and six inches,

⁹⁷ Bajpai G, (1979), *Baroda in Transition 1860-1884*, Vol-I (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis), The M. S. University Baroda, 38

⁹⁸ Gokhle, 114

⁹⁹ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 85

between Miyagam (Karjan) a station on the BB&CI Railway and Dabhoi, an important centre of trade in the Baroda district¹⁰⁰ and thereby beginning the process of connecting villages with the towns of the Baroda State on the Grand Trunk route. The Gaekwad's Baroda State Railway (GBSR) began as a bullock driven light tramway in 1863 on the above route from Miyagam to Dabhoi, a distance of 20 miles (32.18 Kms.).¹⁰¹



‘INDIAN TRAMWAY CONSTRUCTED BY HIS HIGHNESS THE GAICOWAR OF BARODA’

Bridges were also built for laying the rail line during his reign. With the introduction of railways there appeared the need of building more state rest-houses for the officers and *dharamshalas* for people; many of which were constructed under the orders of Khanderao Gaekwad. He also gave the permission to establish system of postal runner on the highways. He even gave land to build post offices in the important centers of Gujarat when the Bombay post office developed its organization in Gujarat in 1863-64.¹⁰² And to avoid the mail robberies he provided the necessary guards for the protection of mail.

Khanderao Gaekwad's attempt at modernization although was a first of its kind, were half hearted and left many more things still to be done. Although, his Resident,

¹⁰⁰Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 364

¹⁰¹For photographic details see Michael Satow and Ray Desmond, *Railways of the Raj*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980; and Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 365

¹⁰² Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 364

Colonel Barr held the Maharaja in great esteem and opined that 'Khanderao's was the time of progress and permanent reforms'. Most of the reforms of Khanderao, did not meet with success. For instance, the construction, of Miyagam-Dabhoi branch railway although a novel feature, was not of permanent nature. The construction of a waterway from Narmada to Baroda and thence made the supply of water easy to the people of Baroda was never completed. He is credited with the construction of the beautiful, Makarpura palace, but this was done at a great expense.¹⁰³ He was keen on physical exercise, games and hunting and hence he for his recreation built the Makarpura palace. But as ruler he did not made his subjects to realize the importance of physical exercise and of being healthy and fit.¹⁰⁴

3.4 Controversies and Malharrao Gaekwad

Khanderao Gaekwad died on 28th November, 1870 without leaving any heir to claim the *gadi*. Therefore the only claimant remained was Malharrao, the brother of the deceased Maharaja. However, Jamnabai, the widow of Khanderao was pregnant. On 5th July 1871, Jamnabai gave birth to a girl child and Malharrao was invested to the throne.¹⁰⁵ Malharrao Gaekwad although ascended as the ruler of the state, his acceptance by the people of Baroda was far from elation. His rule (1870-75), was marked with constant tension between the people and the ruler; and the British and the ruler. In spite of the reasonable efforts of Malharrao to bring about administrative changes, the people refused to accept and follow him. For instance, in the field of public health Malharrao made mark with the establishment of Malharrao Dispensary at Amreli Kathiawad. In 1871 a High staff of the School was established at Baroda. Alongside four primary schools, two Gujarati and two Marathi were also established. Gradually, the number increased to seventeen. The salaries of the High staff school amounted to Rs. 1,800 a year. There were 822 children who attended these schools. In 1873 Malharrao Maharaja instituted four *vedshalas*, for the encouragement of religious knowledge, together with the schools for the study of *vyakrana*, grammar, and *nyaya*, logic.¹⁰⁶ In the same year a High School at Petlad was

¹⁰³ Elliot F A H, 182

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 189

¹⁰⁵ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol- I, 598

¹⁰⁶ Elliot F A H, 208

established which was an Anglo vernacular school.¹⁰⁷ However, the Maharaja came in conflict with the British over numerous issues.

At the outset of his reign, Malharrao appeared to be amiable to the British. He, to make them assure of his good office, decided to appoint Gopalrao Mairal as a Dewan, who was in good terms with the British. However things started reverting with the advent of Col. Phayre as a Resident at Baroda in 1873. With his arrival took up the case wherein few men were publicly flogged for they were suspected of poisoning one of Malharrao's servants; and as a result of this malicious punishment many died. One more case from the Thakors of Vijapur was reported wherein Malharrao had demanded unreasonable accession *nazarana* from them. Owing to many more such cases Col. Phayre engaged all his energies to expose the unruly rule of Malharrao. This drew forth severe rebuke for the Resident from supreme Government for his injudicious proceeding.¹⁰⁸ Still on the request of Col. Phayre a commission was made of five members to look into the matter but the commission initially concluded in favour of Malharrao; later found that the charges made against the Maharaja were true and warned him to carry reforms of permanent nature. The charges against him were- wholesale reduction of the adherents of the late Maharaja was blamed; the accession *nazarana* was declared to be injudicious; the subjects had been over taxed to a notorious degree; the state and other bankers, Khanderao's relatives and followers, and a great number of inam-holders had been treated in arbitrary fashion.¹⁰⁹

There is generally a gradual approach to the catastrophe, but often as the end comes nearer the downward rush is terribly rapid, and a sort of madness drives the criminal now, as it were, the victim of fate, on to headlong destruction.¹¹⁰ This fits in the case of Malharrao to, who continued to deal in the same gaffing manner as if all his previous blunders were not enough to bring his doom. Things got worse for him when it came out that women were forced to be mistresses and household slaves. Being completely ignorant of the consequences of his injudiciousness, he kept on adding to his felony. His reply on these charges further annoyed the British Government where he argued that interference was not permitted in the internal affairs of

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 183

¹⁰⁸ Chavda V K, *Gaekwad and British Relations*, 24

¹⁰⁹ Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 599-600

¹¹⁰ Elliot F A H, 242

the State by the British.¹¹¹ He was warned again by the commission and asked him to abide by the promise to carry out reforms of permanent nature in the state and thus ascertain his good government. He was also advised to dismiss his nefarious officials including his minister and that minister would be appointed only after British approval. He fell short to meet the expectations of the Bombay Government. He rather instead of dismissing his minister Nanasaheb Khanvelkar gave him still higher post of *pratinidhi* who after much hue and cry was sacked.

His strife with Resident Col. Phayre made him so incensed that he connived to poison Col. Phayre. The charges were proved true against him and the commission formed to investigate into the case decided to depose him. However it was stated in the proclamation of 19th of April 1875 that Maharaja was deposed not because the British Government had assumed that the result of the inquiry was to prove the truth of the imputation against him, but, because, having regard to all the circumstances relating to the affairs of the Baroda from the accession of Malharrao, his notorious misconduct, his gross misgovernment of the state and his evident incapacity to carry into effect necessary reforms, the step was imperatively called for.¹¹² Malharrao was sent to Madras and was kept under surveillance, where he died on 26th July 1882.

The next chapter deals extensively with the Regency of T Madhavrao during the minority of Sayajirao III. This phase was the foundation laying period, or in other words a period of transition from the pre-modern to the early modern. It deals with the administrative systematization of Baroda State and other reforms introduced by the Dewan. It also talks about the circumstances and influences that led Sayajirao-III to be a 'modern' ruler.

¹¹¹ Chavda V K , *Gaekwad and British Relations*, 26

¹¹² Clark A C & Desai G H, Vol-I, 603