

THE KALAMBANDHI AND SURVEY RECORDS OF RADHVANAJI: The Survey of 1816 and Its Records

One of the first things Barnewall did after the appointment of village accountants was the initiation of a survey of villages in Nadiad pargana. He reported to the Collector soon after the survey: "..... an individual and separate settlement with each cultivator became necessary, to ascertain the true amount of his enjoyments and the rent he was equitable bound to contribute. The rental of the ryot being ascertained and completed, the next step was to attain a correct account of the lands actually in his possession. For the purpose a survey was undertaken, each field numbered, its name, with that of its confines, the quantity of land it was rated at, or estimated to contain, together with the name of its proprietor or cultivator, were all recorded."⁽¹⁾ The area of land was not measured but estimated. It was, as Barnewall stated, 'survey inspection' of land and not 'survey measurement.'⁽²⁾ The villagers tried to oppose and interrupt the survey, but "from the influences of European agency on the spot, such a spirit as well as the imprudent exercise of the power by the natives employed, was gradually and temporarily overcome and restrained, and in the course of six months the inspection of the lands in the pergunah was completed."⁽³⁾

The land registers prepared by the village accountants under Barnewall's supervision were each called Talati-no Namoono. I have however not yet found a single land register in the record offices I have so far visited.

Barnewall also tried to establish the grounds on which a peasant was partially or fully exempted from paying revenue. Each peasant was asked either to furnish a deed or to execute a penalty bond to prove his rights. Barnewall wrote in his report to the Collector, "From the extent of the alienated lands in this district, the patient examination and entry of the deeds, requisite to establish the title to the enjoyment of the produce of such tenures in the Tullatee's dufter, is a work of considerable labour to accomplish. Every practicable attention is, however, being given to this object, and the register is in a very forward state, and by due diligence will be completed in the whole of the ensuing year."⁽⁴⁾ I have not yet found any register mentioned in this statement.

II: Kalambandhi Records

Another record, which perhaps began to be prepared during Barnewall's survey, was called Kalambandhi. It was a record, under different heads, of the details of social organization in particular (kalam = pen, article, clause, item, head, heading). While the other two records were records of land, revenue and tenure, the Kalambandhi was a record of rules, regulations, customs and usages.

The Kalambandhi books were revised from time to time, sometimes at an interval of one year and sometimes more than one year. In a revised book, a few new kalams would be added, a few would be dropped, and in the case of a few others there would be changes in the details recorded under the same kalam. In any one year, however, the Kalambandhi

books of all the villages were supposed to be written according to the same general pattern. Actually I have found a manual containing instructions to be followed in preparing a Kalam-bandhi book. This does not however mean that the Kalambandhi of each village included all the kalams mentioned in the manual. Unfortunately the earliest Kalambandhis seem to have been lost. Among the Kalambandhis found in the record offices in Kaira District at the present time, the earliest series belongs to the year 1819-20.

I have not been able to find the earliest Kalambandhi of Radhvanaj. Its earliest available Kalambandhi is dated Samvat 1879, A.D. 1823-24. It starts with Kalam No. 5 and ends with Kalam No. 23. The nineteen Kalams are as follows:

Kalam 5: A table showing, for the current and the previous year, the total area of cultivated and uncultivated land under each tenure, the total amount of revenue assessed, realised and lost from land under each tenure, the total amount of income to the Government from other sources, the differences between the two years, and the reasons for the differences.

Kalam 6: A table showing the names of various village officials and servants, and their emoluments in cash and kind.

Kalam 7: A statement about the gross and net amounts of revenue realised from the village in the current and the previous year, the name of the revenue contractor, and other details about the contract.

Kalam 8: Revenue rates for each tenure of land and for each caste.

Kalam 9: Rules governing Wanta and Talpad tenures and their sub-tenures.

Kalam 10: A statement about the history, area, cultivation,

etc. of the Wanta lands in the village, and the names of leading Wanta-holders.

Kalam 11: A table showing the area of cultivated and uncultivated land of each soil-type and tenure, and the assessed, realised and lost revenue from lands of each category.

Kalam 12: Rules governing services provided by important artisan and servicing castes in the village.

Kalam 13: Names of receivers of giras allowances, names of their native villages, and the amount of giras allowance received by each.

Kalam 14: A Table showing, for the current and the previous year, the expenses incurred by the Government for the village community, and a statement explaining the reasons for the differences between the two years.

Kalam 15: A table of population census showing, for each caste, the total number of households, the total population, the number of men and women of four age-groups, and the total number of ploughs kept by the members of the caste.

Kalam 16: A statement regarding unauthorized occupants of land.

Kalam 17: The name and the conditions of work of the village Pagi, the tracker of foot prints of thieves.

Kalam 18: A sketch map of the village-site, showing wards and streets, and a statement of its boundaries.

Kalam 19: A brief statement concerning bride-price, dowry, expenses at wedding and mortuary ceremonies, remarriage of widows and divorced women, rules of inheritance, etc. for each caste in the village.

Kalam 20: Accounts and vouchers. (This is only the heading of the Kalam. The accounts and vouchers were not a part of the Kalambahdhi book).

Kalam 21: Names of persons holding land under Wanta tenures, the area of land held by each, and the amount of assessed,

realised and lost revenue from each's land.

Kalam 22: Names of receivers of religious allownaces, names of their native places, and the amount of each's allowance.

Kalam 23 : Names of receivers of kothali-santh allowances, names of their native places, and the amount of each's allowance.

It is noteworthy that seferal Kalams in this Kalambandhi book provided data about two years, 1822-23 and 1823-24. The next available Kalambandhi book of Radhvanaj is dated Samvat 1882, A.D.1825-26. It begins with Kalam 8, ends with Kalam 22, and excludes Kalams 16 and 21. Out of the thirteen Kalams, the Kalams 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 18 correspond very closely to the Kalams 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17 respectively of the Kalambandhi of 1824, but the information given under the former is less detailed than the information given under the latter. Among the remaining four Kalams, the Kalams 20 and 22 did not apply to Radhvanaj, and therefore only the headings were mentioned. The Kalam 12 was concerned with the area of land of various physical types and with the crops grown in the village, and the Kalam 19 with the boundaries of the administrative village.

Besides the Kalambandhi books for every individual village, we also find books based on the classification of Kalambandhi books of all the villages in a pargana. Each book of this kind contains the transcription of information recorded under a single kalam in the Kalambandhi books of all the villages in a pargana in a single year. Each of these books provides a comparative view of a single aspect of village life for all the villages in a pargana in a single

year. We get, for instance, the information about the artisan and servicing castes in all the villages of a pargana collected in a single book. Similarly we get the censuses of all the villages tabulated in a single book. For any one year there are as many books as there are kalams recorded in the Kalambandhi books of that year. If the Kalambandhi book of an individual village is missing, one can easily reconstruct it on the basis of these classified books.

Although I have not found the Kalambandhi book of Radhvanaj for 1826-27, I have found the transcriptions of Kalams 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 18, in the classified books of that year. Out of the nine Kalams, the Kalams 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 & 18 correspond very closely to the Kalams 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 & 17 respectively of the book of 1823-24, and the Kalam 12 corresponds very closely to the Kalam 12 of the book of 1825-26. The information given under the Kalams of this year is more detailed than the information given under the corresponding Kalams of the previous years. The Kalam 15, new for the book of 1826-27, deals with the revenue history of the village from the time of the Gaekwad rule to the year of the book.

III: The Survey of 1825 and Its Records

Barnewall's survey, as already mentioned, estimated and not measured the area of land. A more accurate survey was therefore initiated in Kaira District in 1820. It was a part of what was called Revenue and Topographical Survey of Gujarat, carried out under the general superintendence of Captain Cruikshank, with his headquarters at Broach. The Nadiad

pargana was surveyed in 1825 by Captain Ovens, assisted by Lieutenant Keys. They surveyed Radhvanaj in May 1825 with the help of several Gujarati assistants.

The results of the survey were written down in Gujarati in bulky books called Jarif-no Chopdo (= Survey Book), and such a book for Radhvanaj is found in the record office in Matar. The major part of this book, as that of the Survey Book of any other village, is what I will call the Land Register. The survey data about each field is tabulated in eleven columns as follows: (1) number of the field, (2) number of the field in Talati-no Namoono, (3) area of the field according to the survey, (4) area according to Talati-no Namoono, (5) name of the field and the numbers or names of the fields on its boundaries, (6) type of soil and the area of the field in round number, (7) name of the owner, (8) whether cultivated by the owner himself or by a tenant, and the tenant's name, if cultivated by a tenant, (9) whether cultivated or not during the survey year, and if cultivated, the crops grown and the yield of each crop, (10) trees on the field, (11) remarks about irrigation, the usual yield of crops, ownership disputes, etc.

The second major part of the Survey Book is what I will call the Census Register. The census data about each household is tabulated in fifteen columns with the following heads: (1) serial number of the household, (2) name of the head of the household, (3) houses and huts, (4) men, (5) women, (6) servants and slaves, (7) total number of persons, (8) bullocks and male calves, (9) cows and female calves, (10) female buffaloes and calves, (11) horses and colts, (12) goats and sheeps, (13) carts

and carriages, (14) ploughs, (15) pukka wells in good condition. The names of the heads of households are listed according to caste and religious group, and a table at the end of the Register shows the totals of the various columns for each caste and religious group, and another table shows the classification of houses and huts according to building materials.

In addition to the Land Register and the Census Register, there are the following eleven statements and tables very similar to the Kalams of the Kalambandhi books:

- (1) A table showing the number of births, deaths and marriages during five years preceding the survey year.
- (2) A list of wells, showing for each well, the name of the owner, whether the well was built with bricks and whether equipped with irrigation devices, an estimate of the amount of water in the well, and an estimate of the cost of repair and/or constructing irrigation devices.
- (3) A table showing the total area of cultivated and uncultivated land of each soil-type, the total area of cultivated and uncultivated land under each tenure, the amount of assessed, realised and lost revenue from each category of land, and the amount of income from taxes and cesses other than land revenue.
- (4) A statement of rules, including the rates of revenue, for different land tenures.
- (5) A statement of the rates of taxes and cesses other than land tax, and of hereditary dues and fines.
- (6) A statement of the sources of miscellaneous income to the government, such as income from trees and manure, and from licences for selling opium.
- (7) A balance-sheet of village accounts.

- (8) A table of current prices of various grains.
- (9) A brief account of the revenue administration of the village, year by year, from the date the village came under British administration to the survey year.
- (10) A statement regarding the boundary disputes between villages settled by the surveyors.
- (11) Statements about the survey itself, such as, the names of the members of the survey staff, their wages, other expenses of the survey, and the method of land measurement.

In addition to preparing the Survey Book in Gujarati, the surveyors also wrote remarks in English about every village. I saw two bulky volumes of such remarks among the archives in the Bombay Secretariat Record Office.⁽⁵⁾ The remarks refer to the general economic condition of the village, the general nature of agriculture, the condition of wells, bunds and canals, a history of the village, immigration and emigration, boundary disputes between villages, headmanship disputes, and the character and social status of the headman, big landlords and other village leaders. I did not however find the volume containing remarks about Radhvanaj.

Captain Cruikshank wrote general reports on the different parganas of the District on the basis of the above-mentioned remarks on villages. The reports on a few parganas are published in two volumes, Selections from the Records of the Government of Bombay, No.X and XI. The unpublished reports are found among the archives in the Bombay Secretariat Record Office.⁽⁶⁾

Cruikshank mentions in his reports that the surveyors prepared a map of each village, and of each pargana on the

basis of village maps. Bishop Heber, who visited Gujarat while the survey was going on, had seen these maps and commented on their accuracy.⁽⁷⁾ Governor Malcolm also thought highly of them.⁽⁸⁾ I have, however, not yet been able to locate these maps in any record office. I have therefore reconstructed a map of Radhvanaj (see Map —) by collating the 1825 Land Register with the later land registers and maps. I have given an idea of the later records in my general paper "Early Nineteenth Century Village Records in Gujarat."⁽⁹⁾

iv: To Recapitulate

I have the Census and the Land Registers of 1825, the Kalambandhi books of 1823-24, 1825-26 and 1826-27, and statements and tables for 1824-25 comparable to the Kalams of the Kalambandhi books. As the Kalambandhi of 1823-24 provides considerable data about the preceding year, I have an atmost unbroken series of data about Radhvanaj for five years from 1822-23 to 1826-27. In addition, these records provide some data about the previous years going back to 1802-03.