

## CHAPTER 5

### AN ENQUIRY INTO ART PATRONAGE: A CRITICAL SURVEY

This chapter enquires into the next major dimension of the study, which is the involvement of the Court, Merchants, and English Officers in the development of art and learning in this region. An investigation into what led to the influence and inspiration in society from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. As art is unfortunately not a basic necessity or rather is a luxury, we can see that even in Kutch it is flourish in times when the land is on its path to wisdom and necessity could be brought up by wealthy art lovers.

#### **The Rise of Court Patronage:**

##### Rao Desal I-

As observed in the previous chapter we are certain that the tradition of painting miniatures developed in the Royal courts, during Rao Desal-I's period. The frequent appearance of Rao Desal in portraits and durbar paintings are clear evidence to support the statement. As noted, earlier Maharaja Abhai Singh of Jodhpur was appointed the Subahdar of Gujarat from the year 1730- 1737, and he stayed in Gujarat till 1733. The same period a matrimonial alliance of prince Ramsingh of Jodhpur with the daughter of Rao Desal indicates two factors: 1) that Abhai Singh had visited the Kutch court during his visit to Gujarat, and 2) both the rulers saw a political and social benefit in the marriage. So, we may assume that this cultural assimilation must have had an impact on court paintings. While discussing art patronage yet another aspect that needs to be noted about Rao Desal's contribution is that he had amassed great revenue from the trifling trade at the ports of - Anjar, Kora, Miyan, Rapar, and Mundra.<sup>54</sup> With this fund he could further improve the governance of the state. He commissioned the building of the fort walls at Bhuj city, and also secured the walls of Anjar, Mundra, and Rapar from invasion from the west. Troops were stationed at all these forts and a regular army was posted at the borders to protect the

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<sup>54</sup> Patel G.D., 1971, *Op.cit*

state from further invaders. With Rao Desal's reign, it is apparent that the welfare of the people and the political scenario got better, hence art also seems to penetrate in the court from then.

#### Rao Lakhpat- The Art Connoisseur and Patron

Mirza Maharao Lakhpat- is considered to be one of the greatest patrons to promote art in Kutch, a status no ruler is set to have achieved. The city of Bhuj in the nineteenth century was acknowledged as a place where more than thousands of artists and artisans resided, whose ancestors were credited to have settled during the reign of Rao Lakhpat. Trade was in full-fledged motion during his time and the revenue recovery was progressing, more than any other ruler of his dynasty could collect. At the age of thirty-five, Lakhpat imprisons his father Rao Desal and ceased the wealth of 1 Cr. Rupees which were in his treasury<sup>55</sup>. This wealth facilitated him to become the greatest patron of art in the history of Kutch.

As we all know, having great wealth and spending them on art does not make one a great patron. Great patrons need to be even greater connoisseurs, to get acknowledged as a patron of art, and be remembered in history. Two such personalities who made Rao an art benefactor was, 1) Ramsingh Malam- the navigator, architect, and craftsman, and 2) Jain Yati Kanaka Kaushalji who helped him to set up the Braj bhasha institute in Bhuj.

Ramsingh Malam's service under Rao Lakhpat is proved to be one of the finest decisions in the field of Kutch arts. Ramsingh was a Gujarati navigator from the Saurashtra region, who at a very young age got wrecked on a sea voyage. He was then rescued by a Dutch ship which took him to Holland. In Holland, he served at many factories and learned several European arts and crafts, the knowledge which he carried back to his hometown. But unfortunately, his creative ideas to set up such workshops in India were not considered in his hometown. At the same time, Kutch Rao took great interest in his ideas and absorbed him into the court of Kutch.

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Pp 85

Rao gave him a workshop in the palace and founded a school of enamel work. This school summoned the best goldsmiths and silversmiths to teach and improve their art of enameling, which Ramsingh learned at Holland. This art was a court luxury that remained popular for more than a century but declined in later years due to the lack of patronage. Ramsingh was also sent to Europe twice, to perfect his knowledge of glass making and iron foundry. During his second visit, he also took with him several Kutchi apprentices for higher instructions in Europe. They returned enhanced with many skills, which helped in setting up a tile and glass factory near Mandvi. Watches and clocks on European models were also made in Kutch. Gun casting and iron foundry were established which turned in excellent production of cannons and Ramsingh supervised all these activities.

Apart from founding and setting up all these factories he also contributed to Kutch architecture. The finest of his contribution is the Aaina Mehal- hall of mirrors, designed and executed by Ramsingh around 1750. This structure is part of the earlier dated palace complex, which is built using stones like the traditional Indian palace, but its interiors were decorated in an Indo-European taste, and its walls are of white marble covered with mirrors supported by gilded ornaments. The floors are laid using delftware tiles, which were popular among royal and wealthy European residences during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The hall was illuminated by elaborate pendant candelabra, and shades of Venetian glasses. Most of which were brought to Bhuj by Ramsingh himself. The building reflects the genius of design, art, and decoration, with a love for meticulous craftsmanship. Apart from this, even the Chhattardi (funerary monument) of Rao Desai and the successor ruler Rao Lakha, was designed by Ramsingh. He also decorated Rao Raydhan's Chhattardi and Aaina Mehal with Delft blue tiles. It appears Ramsingh continued to serve at the palace during Rao Godh's reign. This increases the possibility that the copies of European prints (referred as 'nachgemalt'<sup>56</sup>) made in Kutch must have been of Rao Godh and Ramsingh's interest.

While Ramsingh was establishing and engaging fine arts and artists in the courts of Kutch, Jain Yati Kanaka Kaushalji, a scholar par excellence was associated with the development of learning in the court of Bhuj. He was a scholar from the Kishangarh Rajasthan (some reference says Marwar-Jodhpur region) and was installed as Bhattaraka, to head the institute of Braj Bhasha at the court of Bhuj. He was a genius in Pingal

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<sup>56</sup> Goswamy B.N, and Dallapiccola A.L, 1983, *Opcit*, Pp.52.

composition. Along with the growing interest of Rao Lakhpai, Shree Kanaks Kaushal carried out the most significant work of setting up the Braj Bhasha Institute at Bhuj. Here the bards and charans could perfect their study of poetry.<sup>57</sup> And such a literary activity was unique in Western India that students from a distant land would come to learn Braj bhasha in the court of Bhuj. As Lakhpai was himself a great poet, he often organized open recitals on poetry at the court, where the best composers were awarded prizes and allowed to study and develop their skills further at the court. This institution was so popular and well-established that it survived and continued to mentor students even after Rao Lakhpai's reign, some references state till when Indian gets integrated with the Union of India.

Kavi Kuvar Khushal and Kavi Kalyan Khuashal are a few of the popular names of students who got trained under Kanaka Khushalji. Kavi Kuvar Khuashal continues to work at the court during the later reign whose popular compositions continue to appear between the years 1764-1821. Some of the popular titles are Pingalsharstra (S.V.1761), Pingal-hamir (S. 1765), Lakhpai-pingal (SV.1807, Patan archives), Godh-pingal (SV. 1821, Patan archives). *Lakhpaiji manjri nammala* (Jaipur archives) is a text with 202 verses, of which 102 verses describe the history of the Jadeja clan and the following verses narrate Rao Lakhpai. This text was composed in two versions, one by the teacher and the second version by the student. *Parsaat namahmaala* (Jaipur archives) is a similar composition in the Farsi language by Kuvar Khushalji. *Lakhpaiji jas Sindhu, lakhpai swarga prapth samay, maharao lakhpai duvabedh, and maato no chand* (in dingal language) are a few other compositions of this school. Rao Lakhpai himself is credited with five major Braj Bhasha works, among them some are in a technical style such as Suratatarangini and Rasa-sringara, and some in Hari bhakti vilasa, in addition to short poems in the Kutchi language. He owed this talent to his master and friend, the Rajakavi Hamirdan Ratnu of Jodhpur.<sup>58</sup> For years to come it seems the Kavya-shala were placed within the palace complex, and a list from the time of Jivan Khushal (1876) records around 1100 manuscripts.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Mallison Francoise, *The Teaching of Braj, Gujarati, and Bradic Poetry at the court of Kutch, The Bhuj Brajbhasha Pathshala (1749-1948)*, Ed. Pollock Sheldon, The Forms of Knowledge in Early Modern Asia, Duke University Press, 2011, Pp.172.

<sup>59</sup> K.C. Simha, Kaviraja Gopakrta Kavya Prabhakara, Pp.52.

There are many such grandh which were composed since then for many generations to come. Kavi Nanalal Dalpatram, a nineteenth-century Gujarati poet quotes, '*bhujio e kachna maharao no singhasan che, ane Brajbhasha pathshala eno kirit mukut che*', (Bhuj is the throne of Maharaos and Braj Bhasha school it's crown). Some references come across in various poetry compositions from Rao Prithviraj's period, who reigned the court for two generations after Rao Lakhpatri. There are references that this school of Braj pathshala continued to train students till Rao Pragmal II's reign, and about an average of fifty students from Kutch, Saurashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Maharashtra would join to get trained. Rao Lakhpatri's great interest in the outside world, and his love for art, literature, and music, are reflected greatly in his Durbar.

The article published by Franscoise Mallison, gives the essential information that the financing of this important institute was governed by the revenue produced by the Jagir of Roha. The amount yielded was Rupees 3000 a year, which was enough to cover the running of the institute and the expenses of the students. Sometimes even the neighboring rulers from Rajasthan agreed to pay the fees of the Bardic students sent by them.<sup>60</sup> This information is gathered by Mallison from two sources: 1) '*Kaccha ki brajbhasha pathashala*' by Nirmala Asani who could list 325 works composed by students or teachers of the institute, and 2) *Bhuja ki kavyasala* by Govardhan Sharma who lists 381 works in his article. This particular article also gives information on the dispersion of this collection after the proclamation of Indian Independence. That when the Maharaja was not able to assure the upkeep of the institute, which at that time attracted only four students the school was liquidated. The dispersion of its archive was unavoidable. Some manuscripts went to the Acharya who at that time was a Gadhvi from the bardic community and some to the attendants of the rulers of the kingdom. Some survived in the archives of the Aaina Mehal museum at Bhuj and at the library of the Department of Gujarati at the University of Rajkot.<sup>61</sup> A young charan poet Praveenbhai Madhuda is doing a great contribution today by saving, preserving, and collecting the works produced by this Bhuj Kavyashala. A list prepared by him of around 300 grandha is attached below to understand the voluminous documentation this institute was engaged with:

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, Pp 173.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*.

<b>Sr No</b>	<b>Name of Text</b>	<b>Composer</b>
1	Anyokti Vilas	Shyamji Jaya Singh Barot
2	Anami grantha	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
3	Pingal virah	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
4	Anam grantha	Kanadas Mehadu
5	Abhamal yashobhushan	Pruthvidan Khetadan Mahiya
6	Abhojas gatha	Bajibhai Prabhatasianha Bati
7	Amar asha	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
8	Amar kavya	Kalap Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
9	Ambashtak shankaradan	Jethibhai Detha
10	Araj patrika	Jivan Kushal
11	Arjan vilas	Dalapataram
12	Alankaranidhi bhairavadan	Khetaji Lalas
13	Avadhan mal	Udayaram Barahattha
14	Ahir pachchisi	Bhimaji Bharamalla Raval
15	ai khodiyar ra chhanda	Kanadas Mehadu
16	atmabodh	Ladhaji Khadhiya
17	adi Khengarr charitra chandrika	Devidan Verabhai
18	adhyatma kirtanamala	Mastar Ratanasianha Pande
19	atho hothal	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
20	amod rajavansha ka grantha	Kanadas Mehadu
21	ala khacharana kumarano vivah	Khodhabhai Sianhadhayech
22	ishvar stuti	Unnadhji Jadeja
23	Upadesh bavani	Shyamaji Jayasianha Brahmabhat
24	Unnad bavani	Unnadhji Jadeja
25	Upadesh mala	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
26	Upadesh chintamani	Brahmananda
27	Upadesh ratna dipak zulana	Brahmananda
28	Ekadashi mahatma	Laangidas Mehadu
29	Okhaharan	Laangidas
30	Audarya bavani	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
31	Kṛushna kubja rasik battisi	Mulubhai Mehadu
32	Shrikṛushna bal lila sangrah	Nathuram Sundaraji
33	Kṛushnaram jugal svaruparo chhanda	Hammiraji Ratanu
34	Karma pachchisi	Shankaradan Detha
35	Karma bavani	Unnadhji Jadeja
36	Kavigun prabhakar	Haradan Jasabhai
37	Kavi kul bodh	Udayaram Barahattha
38	Kavipriya ki tika	Kanak Kushal
39	Kachchha garabavali	Dalapataram
40	Kakana kundaliya	Unnadhji Jadeja
41	Kavit ane kundaliya	Pratapahari Junaji

42	Kavyakusumakar	Hammiraji Khadhiya
43	Kavya kaladhara, kachchha ni (rasadhara)lok varta, kachchha bhupati ni	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
44	Kavya prabhakar	Gopal Jagadev Bhat
45	Kavya chaturi	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
46	Kavya vinod athava vakhat vilas	Ladharam Vishram
47	Kashi vishvanathana chhanda	Kanadas Mehadu
48	Kirti vatika	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
49	Kirtana, muktavali	Jayasianha Brahmabhat
50	Keshav kalyan	Kavi Keshav Rajagor
51	Koteshtar kirtanamala	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
52	Khushbu kumari	Unnadhji Jadeja
53	Khengarr udvahananda	Piyush Pranajivan Moraraji Tripathi
54	Khengarr khamma bavani	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
55	Khengarr gun ratnakar bavani	Kanaraj Verabhai Ziba
56	Khengarr yashamalika	Devidan Khadhiya
57	Gr̥uhasthashram dharma gun prakash	Yashakaran Achaladan Ratanu
58	Gayana taranga	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
59	Git chaubis jatara	Hammiraji Giradhar Ji Ratanu
60	Gura-chit ullol	Hammiraji Ratanu
61	Gorakshan vichar	Haradan Becharadan Detha
62	Gun babiro	Laangidas Mehadu
63	Gun shri zulana thakar lakhaji	Dhanaraj Kalahatta
64	Guna-Pingala-prakash	Hammiraji Ratanu
65	Guru mahima	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
66	Godh Pingal	Kuvar Kushal
67	Godh ratnakar	Kavi Lal
68	Ghanashyam janma charitra prakash	Jivanalal Dosabhai Ziba
69	Chahaman sudhakar	Navaladan Ashiya
70	Chanakya niti	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
71	Charan dharma aur jagruti	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
72	Charani ramayan	Bhoja Gadhavi
73	Chhanda muktavali	Jivanalal Dosabhai Ziba
74	Chhanda ratnavali	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
75	Chhanda vidhigat chandrika	Bhairavadan Khetaji Lalas
76	Chhanda ratnavalinuan bhashantar	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
77	Shri jvalamukhi devini stuti	Shankaradan Jethidan Detha
78	Jyotish jadhav	Hammiraji Ratanu
79	Jagatavinod ki tika	Jivabhai Visabhai Shamal
80	Jaduvansha vanshawali	Hammiraji Ratanu
81	Jasavanta virah bavani	Jivabhai Shamal 'Masta Kavi'
82	Jasavanta suyash bavani	Haradan Detha
83	Jasuram kr̥ut rajaniti ki tika	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
84	Jadeja Khengarraro chhanda	Ladhaji Khadhiya

85	Jam lakhajini nishani	Hammiraji Ratanu
86	Jalamasianha vaghelana barahamasa	Kanadas Mehadu
87	Jethaji virah	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata, Bhalu Bapaji
88	Shri jogamayaro chhanda	Hammiraji Ratanu
89	Zandu virah	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
90	Takhta yash sangit suman	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
91	Tatvatma bodh	Gopal Jagadev Bhat
92	Takhta virah bavani	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
93	Takhta yash trivenika	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
94	Darayai pirana chhanda	Kanadas Mehadu
95	Dalapat satasai	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
96	Datta biradavali	Prabhudan Revadan Laanga
97	Datar dipavali	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
98	Dadabhai stotra	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
99	Damodar shatak	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
100	Dinata shatak	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
101	Devapuri prabodh prakashika	Jaitamal Govindaji Bati
102	Deva virah varidhi	Jadeja Pratapahari Junaji
103	Deva pir vilas	Natha Varasadha
104	Deva vilas	Devidan Kayaanbhai Detha
105	Devanubhav divakar	Pratapahari Junaji
106	Devi mahima bavani	Shivadan Dosabhai
107	Devi mogalani stuti	Kavi Khengarr
108	Devi sukti	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
109	Devi stuti	Raviraj Hamalabhai Sianhadhayech
110	Deshal vachanika	Hammiraji Ratanu
111	Deshonnati prakashika	Bhalubhai Bapaji
112	Dhanesh dharma bavani	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
113	Dharmavanda vansha prakash	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
114	Dharma siddhanta	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
115	Dhairya bavani	Madhav Purushottam Brahmabhat
116	Natavar gunamal bavani	Ramadan Kesarabhai Tapariya
117	Narmada stavan	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
118	Narbada lahari	Raviraj Hamalabhai Sianhadhayech
119	Narbadashtak	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
120	Narbadalahari ki tika	Jaitamal Govindaji Bati
121	Nṛsianhavatar	Raviraj Hamalabhai Sianhadhayech
122	Nṛutya sudharas manjari	Fakirachanda
123	Nṛsianhavatar ki tika	Hammiradan Lakhaji Motisar
124	Nalakhyan	Jivabhai Visabhai Shamal
125	Nagadaman	Bajibhai Prabhatasianha Bati
126	Nagadaman ki tika	Hammiradan Lakhaji Motisar
127	Narasianha putrara marasiya	Kanadas Mehadu
128	Shri narayan gita	Brahmananda



129	Nirvan prabodhini	Navaladan Shaktidan Ashiya
130	Niti maryada	Unnadhji Jadeja
131	Niti ratnavali	Navaladan Ashiya
132	Niti prakash	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
133	Pratap pratiksha	Nathuram Sundaraji
134	Pratap sagar	Kanadas Mehadu
135	Pravin sagar	Maheraman Jadeja (Tin Charan Kavi (1 Jaisa Laanga, 2 Jain Muni Jivanadana, 3 Durlabh Das Varasadha))
136	Pruthviraj raso ki tika	Bhoja Gadhavi
137	Pruthviraj vivah	Lakshmi Kushal
138	Prabhanathane kavya kusumaanjali	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
139	Prabhupadalaya	Pratapahari Junaji
140	Pramod patrika	Hammiraji Lakhaji Motisar
141	Prem panchotari	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
142	Pativrata charitra	Dhanadas Tulasidas
143	Patit premada pokal	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
144	Pandav yashendu chandrika ki tika	Khetasianha Dolaji Misan Evan Jivabhai 'Hansaraja' (Mehadu)
145	Parasat namamala	Kuvar Kushal
146	Purnendu yash prakash	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
147	Puranaram bavani	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
148	Purushottam charitra	Dalapataram
149	Prabhu prarthana pachchisi	Shankaradan Jethidan Detha
150	Purnaram janma charitra	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
151	Fatehasianha virah bavani	Natha Varasadha
152	Fateh sagar	Kavi Keshav
153	Farabas virah	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
154	Farabas vilas	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
155	Brahma chhattisi	Unnadhji Jadeja
156	Brahma vilas	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
157	Brahmananda kavya	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
158	Brahmananda puran	Hammiraji Ratanu
159	Balabodh	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
160	Balak bodh	Navaladan Shaktidan Ashiya
161	Bihari satasai ki tika	Maharav Lakhapati
162	Buddhivilas	Panchanaji Raval
163	Bhagavataprasad virah	Dalapataram
164	Bhagavat gita	Kanaraj Verabhai Ziba
165	Bhavan jashabharan	Navaladan Ashiya
166	Bhaijino jas	Lakshmi Kushal
167	Bhagavat darpan	Hammiraji Ratanu
168	Bhagavat Pingal	Unnadhji Jadeja
169	Bhagavat Pingal	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor

170	Bhagavat gita	Unnadhji Jadeja
171	Bhav ashirvachan kavya	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
172	Bhav virah bavani	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
173	Bhav suyash vatika	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
174	Bhim bhashkar	Pratapahari Junaji
175	Bhuj bhuyanga varnan	Kanak Kushal
176	Bhaveshashtak	Prabhudas Mavabhai Boksha
177	Mṛudanga mohara	Maharav Lakhapati
178	Mangal sahitya	Matinain
179	Mangal prakash	Gugali Purushotam
180	Manahar lagna mahotsav	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
181	Maharav fatehasianhana chhanda	Kanadas Mehadu
182	Man bodhak Jyan mala	Jivabhai Mehadu 'Hansaraja'
183	Maniyash malika	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
184	Mahamana chhanda	Unnadhji Jadeja
185	Maangalik gitavali	Dalapataram
186	Madhavananda kavyamṛut	Haradan Detha
187	Maharana shri daulatasianha ne smarananjali	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
188	Maharav lakhapati duvavait	Kuvar Kushal
189	Maharav shri takhta virajya tinaro jas	Kanak Kushal
190	Matano chhanda	Kuvar Kushal
191	Mata khodiyarana chhanda	Kanadas Kesaradan Mehadu
192	Mata-pita ki bhakti	Raviraj Sianhadhayech
193	Man sujas man ane najaraj jas vidhan bavani	Pruthviraj Khetadan Mahiya
194	Manek raso	Bhoja Gadhavi
195	Milinda shatak	Gopal Jagadev Bhat
196	Mekaran charitra	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
197	Meghadambar	Unnadhji Jadeja
198	Mevadh kesari yane hindavo surya	Gopal Viramaji Gadhavi
199	Mohan mahotsav	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
200	Mohan mala	Kanaraj Verabhai Ziba
201	Mojadin mehatab	Udayaram Barahattha
202	Yaduvansha charitra athava Khengarr suyash	Lakhadhir Khadhiya
203	Ranajit virah vedana mavalaji	Jivabhai Mehadu
204	Rasik priya ki tika	Kanak Kushal
205	Shri ravechi ro chhanda	Hammiraji Ratanu
206	Rasal manjari gopal	Jagadev Bhat
207	Rao Deshalajira chhanda	Panchan Raval
208	Rao an Lakhapatini nishani	Kanak Kushal
209	Rao Desal-Rao Lakhapati	Ajaji Bhimaji Varasadha
210	Ragamala	Kuvar Kushal
211	Ragasagar	Maharav Lakhapati

212	Raghavalila	Danaji Brahmabhatta
213	Rajaniti pachchisi	Shankaradan Jethibhai Detha
214	Raj ratnakar	Haradan Becharadan Detha
215	Rajasuchan chhatrisi	Haradan Becharadan Detha
216	Rajaratna malika l	Pratapahari Junaji
217	Rav lakhapatina marasiya	Amarasianha Barot
218	Rav deshalana marashiya	Halu Barot
219	Rav deshal ra git	Panchanaji Raval
	Rav deshal ra zulana	Ranavir Surataniya
220	Rashtradhvaj vandana, kachchha darshana, shri hari suyash bavani	Shanbhudan Ayachi
221	Riddhanath rahasya yane balapantha batrisi	Gopal Dhanaraj Khadhiya
222	Ras vilas	Maharav Lakhapati
223	Lakhapati gun Pingal	Hammiraji Ratanu
224	Lakhapati jasasiandhu	Kuvar Kushal
225	Lakhapati bhakti vilas	Maharav Lakhapati
226	Lakhapati manjari nam mala	Kanak Kushal
227	Lakhapati man manjari	Maharav Lakhapati
228	Lakhapati Pingal	Hammiraji Ratanu
229	Lakhapati Pingal	Kuvar Kushal
230	Lakhapati shr̥ruangar	Maharav Lakhapati
231	Lakhati svarga prapti samaya	Kuvar Kushal
232	Lakshmanana chhanda	Hammiraji Khadhiya
233	Lilava lagna mahotsav	Aidan Pathabhai Shamal
234	Vyasan nishath	Kanaraj Verabhai Ziba
235	Vakhat vilas	Ramadan Kesarabhai Tapariya
236	Vartaman vivek	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
237	Varah ashtak	Gopal Jagadev Bhat
238	Vartaman vinod	Haradan Becharadan Detha
239	Vansha prabha	Hammiraji Jadeja
240	Vasanta bavani	Vasantaram Kṛṣṇnaram Shubhajnyate
241	Vanusatina chhanda	Gopal Dhanaraj Khadhiya
242	Ved zarukho	Pratapahari Junaji
243	Vivek bindu	Pratapahari Junaji
244	Vivah varnan	Udayaram Rajavir Rohadhiya
245	Varta vinod	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
246	Vigyani yanya	Jadeja Kavi Hammiraji
247	Vijaya prakash kosh	Vajamal Mehadu
248	Vijairaj manjari namamala	Lakshmi Kushal
249	Vijayadasami	Bhalubhai Bapaji
250	Vidur niti	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
251	Vibha vilas	Vajamal Parvataji Mehadu

252	Vivek chintamani	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
253	Vir batrisi	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
254	Vir bhadra virah shadarutu	Mulubhai Mehadu
255	Vir vinod ki tika	Mavalaji Jivabhai Mehadu
256	Vedanta vichar	Ladhaji Khadhiya
257	Vairagyopadesh bavani	Khetadan Dolaji
258	Vairagya shatak	Shyamaji Jayasianha Brahmabhat
259	Vijaya prakash kosh ki tika	Jabaradan Mehadu
260	Shrṅguar saroj	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
261	Shrimanta dharma	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
262	Shravanakhyan	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
263	Shankar mahatma bavani	Kalabhai Dajibhai
264	Shankar yash malika	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
265	Shankar mala stotra	Shankaradan Jethidan Detha
266	Shabda vibhushan	Keshav Harashur Ayachi
267	Shalihotra shastra kianva ashva pariksha	Narayanadan Baliya
268	Sharada lahari	Navaladan Ashiya
269	Shiv pachchisi	Bhim - Khodhabhai Sianhadhayech (Putra-Pita)
270	Shiv vivah	Maharav Lakhapati
271	Shiv stavan	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
272	Shiv stavan	Kanadas Mehadu
273	Shiv nam smaran stotra	Shankaradan Jethidan Detha
274	Shihor ka itihās	Navaladan Ashiya
275	Shiksha patri	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
276	Shobha sagar	Kanadas Mehadu
277	Shaurya bavani	Hammiraji Khadhiya
278	Stuti hulas	Navaladan Shaktidan Ashiya
279	Svadesh hunnar kala uttejan prabodh bavani	Jayasianha Brahmabhat
280	Svadharmā nishthadarsha bavani	Devidan Narayanadan Shamal
281	Sṛushti saundarya vatika	Jivabhai Visabhai Shamal 'Masta Kavi'
282	Svarodaya siddhanta	Navaladan Ashiya
283	Sati gita	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
284	Samazan bavani	Jivanalal Dosabhai Ziba
285	Saradar suyash sindhu	Bhagavan Ranamalla Surataniya
286	Sarasvat lahari jayasianha	Dayaram Brahmabhat
287	Samudrik shastra	Kavi Visaji
288	Sita svayanvar	Ranachhodhdas Ratanu
289	Sukavya sanjivani	Shankaradan Jethabhai Detha
290	Sujash shrṅguar	Ladhaji Khadhiya
291	Sudama charitra	Panchanaji Raval
292	Sundar shrṅguar ki tika	Maharav Lakhapati

293	Sundar shr̥ruangar ki tika	Kanak Kushal
294	Subodh chandrika anekarthi namamala	Fakirachanda
295	Subodh bavani	Devidan Kayaanbhai Detha
296	Sumati prakash	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
297	Sur tarangini	Maharav Lakhapati
298	Sur sudhakar	Gaurishankar Govindaji Mehata
299	Saundarya lahari	Vajamal Mehadu
300	Sat smaran	Laangidas Mehadu
301	Sampradaya pradip	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
302	Sat prashansa	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
303	Siddha charitra	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
304	Saradara chhabbisi	Haradan Becharadan Detha
305	Sarasvati shr̥ruangar (patrika)	Jivaram Ajaramar Gor
306	Santa subhashit kundaliya	Pratapahari Junaji
307	Sangit takhta vinod	Nathuram Sundaraji Shukla
308	Haradan prabodh prakash	Haradan Becharadan Detha
309	Hamir sar bavani	Gopal Jagadev Bhat
310	Harijas namamala	Hammiraji Ratanu
311	Harijas Pingal	Hammiraji Ratanu
312	Hariharani stuti	Gajabhai Samantabhai
313	Harijas (sampadita)	Megharaj Hammiraji Vithu
314	Hari shanbhu smaran mala	Ramadan Tapariya
315	Hari lilamṛut ka bhashantar	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
316	Hari bhakti vilas	Maharav Lakhapati
317	Hanumanana chhanda	Kanadas Mehadu
318	Hanuman stuti	Shankaradan Jethidan Detha
319	Kshatraninuan kshatratva athava dampatya prem	Sampadaka: Ramadan Tapariya
320	Kshatriya shaurya bavani	Hammiraji Khadhiya
321	Tribhuvan virah shatak	Nathuram Sundaraji
322	Shri trikamaraya jash bavani	Takhadan Mishan
323	Shriji virah barahamasa	Ladudan Asiya Brahmananda
324	Jyan chaturi	Dalapataram Dahyabhai
325	Jyan chandrika	Jivanalal Dosabhai Ziba

Although Lakhpatji's contribution and patronage of Braj Pathshala went elaborate in this section, it was important to realize the uncompromised patronage support this institute received even after Lakhpat's reign, and even in time of political distress. If not for this institute even painters of Kutch could not have survived for a long time in Kutch.

Talking about Maharao Lakhpat's patronage of miniature painting there is a strong possibility that he must have invited a Jodhpur artist to visit Kutch to make his portraits.

And the very same artist must have conducted workshops at the court to trainee the local artist who gave the requisite knowledge of miniature painting to the native artist. Every such reference brings us one step closer to realizing that Rao Desal had a very close association with the courts of Jodhpur and it is this connection that brought the art of miniature painting to Kutch.

### **The Sustenance of Art Patronage and the increased demand for Fresco's paintings**

#### Rao Godh-

Rao Godh though not acknowledged as a patron of art in general history, the no of paintings of him indicates that he too must have continued the tradition of painting by employing artists in court, like his father. Rao Godh's time was more challenging as the royal treasury got exhausted, and he had to re-generate the revenue. In his early years, Rao Godh took interest in improving the situation by building ports and working towards public welfare but eventually wasted all revenue for his entertainment. However, during Rao Godh's time, agriculture was still flourishing in certain areas, and merchants and traders were still able to undertake their business successfully. This situation gave an advantage to the wealthy merchants in the society to support art.

Three generations after Rao Godh- that is Rao Raydhanji, Rao Bharmalji, and Prithviiji are marked in the history of Kutch, as a phase of downfall. A decline in political conditions lined by inefficient rulers and debauched administrators. It was then in 1819 when the British started signing treaties with the regency council, that the rise of the modern phase appeared in the administration. Bharmalji's infant son Rao Desalji – II was designated to reign.

During Rao Desal II's reign administration improved in every sphere. Taxes were collected systematically and revenue was utilized for the prosperity of the state. In every sphere of administration such as police, judiciary, revenue, social reforms, education, public peace, reduction of dacoit and plundering raids, and safeguarding of the frontiers, particularly that with Sindh-Kutch had taken the first step. As a result, peace and prosperity returned to Kutch. The arts and crafts industries were well developed. Iron and Zinc were smelted in Kutch and many objects were made. Excellent cotton was grown and even

exported after the local means were met. The Kutch maritime trade had been well established for a long time, and the Kutchies had a monopoly on trade with Zanzibar. All this received a fillip during Rao Desal II's rule. Schools, hospitals, and several temples were built during his period. As Rao Desal II's focus was mainly on social reforms and the betterment of the region.

Like Rao Lakhpat, even Rao Desalji was interested in developing the art of paintings in Kutch. But this time the tutors were the English Guests who occasionally visited Kutch and taught the local artist to study a model. From the conversation between Rao Desal and Mrs. Marianne Postan, as documented in her travelogue, we are certain that Rao was interested in training the local artist in the art of Drawing. But like Braj Bhasha learning this art learning served as skill development for the painters who could sell their works to other English guests.

#### Rao Pragmal

Rao Desal-II had two sons Pragmal and Hamir, out of the two Pragmal was designated to take the throne. They both were artistically inclined and proved to be patrons in their ways. Rao Pragmal was a builder, he commissioned the PragMehal in 1865, which was designed by Colon Wilkins and constructed by British architects and Kutchi builders. He deepened and improved many tanks and built the great Pragsagar Lake in the Chavda hills. He constructed a causeway in the Hamirsagar lake at Bhuj. He also constructed the harbor work at Mandvi and introduced state education in Kutch. Existing institutions of ancient learning like bardic poetry in Bhuj and Sanskrit College at Mandvi to train young Kutchies continued. He also started high schools for girls. Grands were given to promising students to go outside of Kutch for studies. Assistance and encouragement were given for starting libraries for Bhuj, Mandvi, and Mundra.<sup>62</sup>

Hamir fondly known as Gaguba was the second son of Rao Desal II, who was installed as a ruler of Tera-Jagir. He too was a patron of art and literature. He has a great contribution to the mural tradition of Kutch as he commissioned the narrative of the epic Ramayana on the walls of Tera Castle, which were painted by the native artist.

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<sup>62</sup> Patel G.D., 1971, *Op.cit*, Pp.106.

### Rao Khengar III

Rao Khengar III came to the throne in 1876 at the age of 10 succeeding Rao Pragmal. He was popular and at the same time an honored ruler of Kutch and abroad. A great sportsman, naturalist, and Ornithologist, he deeply took interest in animals and the behavior of fauna. During his reign, he encouraged the documentation of Kutch's ornithological study by inviting British scholars, doctors, army officials, and illustrators to document the Bird life in Kutch. As a result, Mrs. D.V. Cowen, stayed in Kutch to sketch the Birds in color plumage in Kutch. In the year 1887 to improve the social conditions of Kutch, he extensively toured across Kutch to acquaint himself with first-hand information. He contributed greatly to the social welfare of the state. Set-up a hospital at Bhuj and also sent medical relief to many parts of the state. He also improved the water storage facility. Vast lands were reclaimed for ploughing. He was a progressive ruler who believed in the right to education for girls as much as for boys. He extended both primary and secondary education facilities in Kutch and endowed many scholarships which encouraged study abroad. Fully aware of the importance of technical education he opened the 'School of Art' for encouraging ancient handicrafts and industries. Kutch museum at Bhuj was initially part of the School of Art by Khengarji III in 1877. Today it is acknowledged as the very first museum in Gujarat. At the time of Rao Khengarji's marriage in February 1884, an exhibition of Kutch art and craft was organized in which 5898 items of the craft were exhibited. At the termination of this exhibition Rs. 3300 of worth exhibits were given to the Museum. On 14<sup>th</sup> November 1884, the foundation stone was laid by the governor of Bombay Sir James Fergusson. The building was designed by state engineer Mac Lennand and constructed at the cost of Rs 32000. The purpose of this exhibition was to encourage the artisans and craftsmen of Kutch. An old newspaper cutting about this exhibition gives some additional information which is noted below:

The exhibition organizing committee comprised Mr. Maneklal Sakarchand Desai (a well-known litterateur of yesteryears) and Mr. J.D. Esperance, principal of the local school of art. In all 5897 objects purchased for a cost of Rs. 90,000/- categorized under 20 different heads were displayed. Objects included even gold and silver ornaments, models, toys, etc. The objects were procured from all over the 9 talukas of Kutch. People connected with Royalty also send their objects with great enthusiasm. Parsi Pastonji for instance gave 204 objects. Prizes were awarded for the first three numbers in each of the categories. The prize for Silver work went to Soni Shamji Makanji (who has built a spacious Dharamshala in Bhuj). Other winners were Suthar Harji Ratansi, Kansara



Devkaran Kunvarji etc. Of the items displayed the Florette jug, the lathe, and the rehand model received special attention from the visitors.

The fact that Kutch also contributed to the Annual International Exhibition held in London, the historic reminiscence must have inspired Rao Khengar to create a platform to support and encourage the local artist and artisans of Kutch. These are the last of the royal patronage that we see.

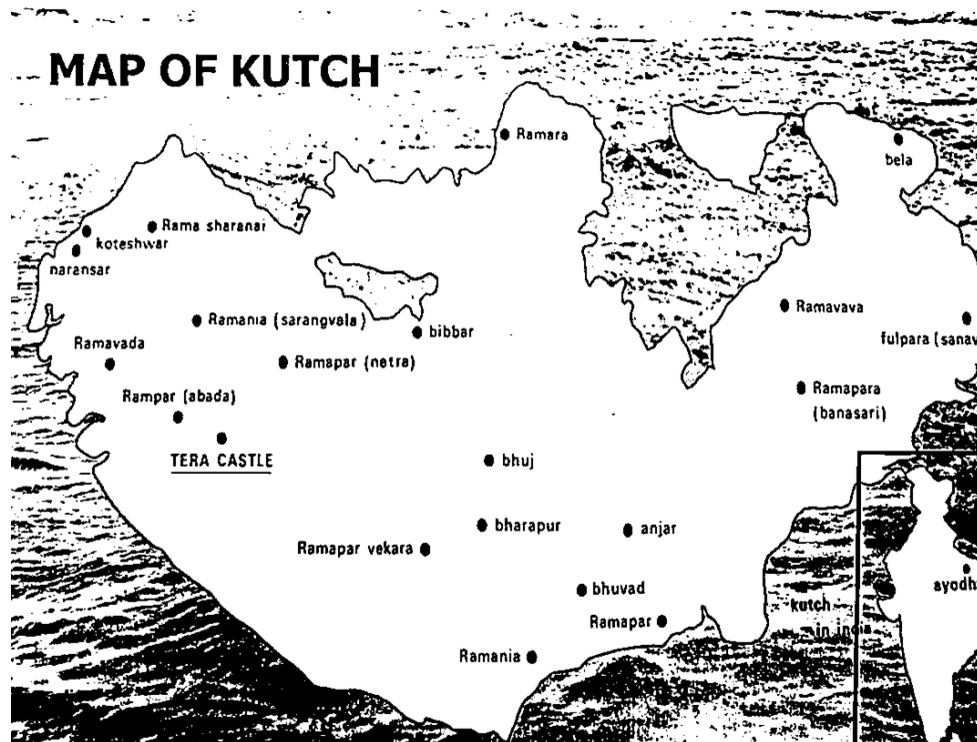
### **Merchants and Wealthy Businessmen as Patrons of Art**

The land of Kutch witnessed a sudden shift in the art trends during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries along with its flourishing trade, as the abundant wealth was immediately reflected in the cultural and social setup of the society. Apart from noblemen now even merchants and wealthy families took interest in endorsing the local artist and began to construct a social position of high prestige in society. But unlike the courtly styles of producing miniature paintings and portrait figures, the merchants were highly influenced by the trends they saw in their inland trade with their profitable neighboring states of Rajasthan. The vibrant frescos that adorned the Havelis and residential buildings, of the Merchants in Rajasthan must have inspired the affluent businessmen in Kutch who preferred their residences to be painted with vibrant frescoes.

By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the walls of residences of many influential people started to fill with paintings of various themes, mostly depicting religious scenes if not decorative motifs inspired by nature. Of which scenes of lord Rama and lord Krishna are frequently painted. With the advent of the British or due to the frequent visit of traders to important port cities for business purposes, modern subjects are also seen depicted in many of the port cities, especially at Mundra. The map<sup>63</sup> below highlights some of the thriving port cities, towns, and villages, residences of which were once decorated with colorful frescos commissioned by local artist.

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<sup>63</sup> Map prepared by Mr Pradeep Zaveri, who has extensively documented the frescos of Kutch.



This visual trend not only gauges the aesthetic appeal of the towns but also reveals the improved economic status of the merchant communities that started establishing the structural hierarchy in the society. Interesting to note here is along with their main profession of trade and commerce, these merchants were engaged in the disbursement of finances- as in they played a pivotal role in meeting the financial requirements of local inhabitants. In fact merchants of means received deposits and advanced money to the Garasias and estate holders against the society of their Giras. There are instances when even the Raos of Kutch have borrowed money from *sahukars* in times of distress.<sup>64</sup> The land of Kutch had produced many such reputed *sahukars* among whom the name of Sheth Sundarji Shivji Sodagar, is known. He had helped the rulers of Kutch and Saurashtra in their critical times and also played a prominent role in decision-making for the state. In towns, the chief money lenders among Hindus were Vantias, Bhatiyas, Atits, Brahmans, and Lohanas, and among Muslims were Memans and Khojas.<sup>65</sup> Old Gazetteer also mentions Bhatiyas who kept a large number of Siddi slaves.

Although this is not the first time that Kutch Merchant exhibits its amazing strength of wealth and position. The earliest known significant act of patronage can be attributed to

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

the fondly known “merchant prince” Jagadusha who donated a vast amount of wealth during the famine in the 13th Century to commoners by distributing food and clothing to famine-struck people, not only to Kutch but to people of Saurashtra and distant lands. He also built large number of Dharamshalas, wells, and temples for the people affected. But the trend of merchants patronizing frescos, by and large, could have been a trend that swept in during the late 18th century or early 19th Century. Bhadravati port in Kutch was a very famous ancient port that was built by Jagadusha, and its shipping and international trade was extensively in use that he amassed such capacity.

Recognizing the importance of Kutch ports, even Kutch rulers invested in strengthening its ports. The first Rao who attain stable rule over the whole of Kutch is Khengar I who encouraged trade and commerce by bringing pirates under control. He invited Topan Sheth of Nagar Thatta, Sindh, and built **Mandvi** port in the 16th century. Rao Bharmal built the **Mundra** port. They had therefore evolved some system of collection of customs duties on the goods imported or exported through these ports. Though exact details are not available as to when the customs duties were first introduced, it can certainly be said that they were collected from very early times at all these ports. It is possible during the reign of Rao Desal I, his minister Devakaran Sheth might have imposed these duties to meet the expenses of the state administration. Rao Godji was a great patron of traders and greatly encouraged the shipbuilding industry. He built a palace at **Mandvi** for personal supervision and spent a large amount of money on port development. Even during the political anarchy in the times of Rao Raydhan and Bharmal, the trade of the Mandvi port remained uninterrupted and a large amount of customs revenue was collected. Till the time of Rao Desal II, the customs administration was unsystematic and it was Rao Desal who systematizes the collection of customs revenue by fixing rates on customs duty in consultation with the leading citizens of Kutch. In fact it is also been one of the major sources of stable income for the state. After the intervention of the East India Company with Raos of Kutch, Kandla was developed as a major port in 1955.

By the end of the 19th century, many of the port cities and residences of families involved in trade and commerce were decorated with frescos paintings. And in the twentieth century, the trend become so profuse that it was very common to see temples, schools, and private residences painted. They became an integral part of the cultural exhibition that the citizens started considering the form of art as an auspicious element and a matter of pride,

on occasions like marriages and festivities. The exact reason why such a trend died out is uncertain, but one of the direct relations could be the changing geographical conditions of the land. One, the prosperity of Mandvi port declined due to siltation, and second, the frequent plate tectonic tremors largely affected the population density of the merchant class in Kutch as they encounter great loss of property.

### **British Patrons:**

We have discussed in Chapter 1 that the Treaty of Alliance was signed between East India Company and Kutch, in the nineteenth century, to assist minor Rao Desai II, and they took charge of parts of administration in the state. This involvement had a great impact on the painting tradition of Kutch which we shall collate in this section. So far, from the number of works discovered in various collections, we are certain that a large number of the local artists were involved in the making of Ethnographic and bird studies in Kutch. But we don't have direct information about such training on old records. So, all that one could look into are the possibility. As in among the British Agents who visited Kutch who all had a flair for Painting. Listed are a few names of Political Agents and Assistant Political Agents, we come across on historic records: Lieutenant Colonel Walker, S.A Greenwood, James Mac Murdo, Charles Norris, Hendry Pottinger, W. Bentinck, E. Barnes, C.T. Metcalfe, A Ross, A Burnes, G. Harding, G.J. Wilson, J. Williams, H. W. Trevelyan, G.L. Jacob, S.N Rakies and H. W. Trevelyan. Amongst listed we know for certain that Captain James MacMurdo and S.N. Rakies were fascinated by the local traditions. A brief about them is sketched below.

### Captain James Mac Murdo (1785-1820, Resident from 1816-1820):

Popularly known in Kutch as Bhuriyababa<sup>66</sup>, was the first Political Agent sent to Kutch, under General Oliver Nicolson, Commander in Chief (Bombay). Although he entered Kutch in disguise as a Ramanandi Swami, to study the people of Kutch and their language. He was officially appointed in the year 1816 to put to control the growing bandits and pirates on the Kutch-Saurashtra coast. For the first two years he was stationed at Bhuj. And the following year 1818, he moved to Anjar as a Collector, where he built a residence after the pattern of his bungalow in Scotland.

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<sup>66</sup> White-skinned baba as he stayed in Kutch, disguise as a Sadhu, before joining as a Political Agent. During this time he took shelter at the Madhavrai temple at Anjar, and learned to speak the local language.

His office at this residence was beautifully painted with frescos, of themes relevant to native's interest. The upper-half of the wall was covered with Hindu religious subjects, like the divine couple Siva - Parvati, Ramayana episodes, and scenes from Krishna-lila. The wall facing west had procession scenes of Raos, and the one facing east had decorative motifs like the tree of life. The lower half of the space was meticulously filled with creeper designs and birds as if inspired by the enamel art of Anjar. All these elements were of close interest to the society, where he was serving as a Collector. And is interesting to note how by depicting Vaishnav and Royals subjects he can engage with his audience's interest.

A detailed account (dated, June 25th, 1818) left by Mac Murdo describes his observation of the state. In this account, he comments on the various aspects of the site like-land, topography, agriculture, animal husbandry, weather, trade, towns, and its rulers. But one particular reference of our interest is his comment on Bhuj city having 20,000 indigenous artists, skilled in gold and silver work.<sup>67</sup> As this count outnumbers beyond the requirement of a small province, it is quite possible that these artists could have participated in similar skilled works like painting on paper and walls. If not all murals somehow the walls of Mac Murdo's residence seem to have some involvement of an artist with jewelry orientation.

Here we don't have a reference to Mac Murdo as a painter, who could have trained the local artist and enhanced their skill. Rather he is acting as a patron of art who is supporting and encouraging the local artist like an affluent Kutchie. Fascinating to note is for the British in India eighteenth-century was a vogue for picturesque and sublime art as a take-away, but on the contrary here we have an English man who thinks like an Indian, getting his residence painted, which he could never carry back to his hometown. Unfortunately, he dies suddenly suffering from Cholera, in the year 1820.

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<sup>67</sup> Campbell James, 1880, Op.Cit, Pp. 147

### Stanley Napier Rakies (1824-1891, Resident from 1850-1854)

Stanley Napier Rakies served Kutch state under the Bombay army from 1850-1854. In Kutch, he worked effectively to abolish the ill practice of Sati across the state during his tenure. Today we know of him, as the one who compiled the book on, 'Miscellaneous information connected with the Province of Kutch', published by the Bombay Government. The text compiled notes by Rakies and contributors like Captain C Walter, Arthur Malet, Mr. J G Lumsden, Mr. Ogilvy, and Lieutenant Leech. Of interest to us, the publication has one portrait study of Rao Desal II, which is a Lithoprint (refer to page 59).

Stanley Rakies as an art-collector, is known to us from an album now in the Tapi collection.<sup>68</sup> This album has twenty-six paintings, miscellaneous poems, and extracts that suggest his lyrical-artistic interest rather than the political affairs that he took into consideration. A selected thirteen painting of ethnographic subjects from the same album is published in the book, 'Indian Life and People in the nineteenth Century' by J.P Losty. Like many other Army officers sent to India, he too must have taken the requisite knowledge of drawing during their military training for map-making and survey work, which he put to use in his publication. But there is no references to him as a painter of life sciences. Hence works in his album must be works collected by him from the local artist.

A point that needs to be noted here is from the list of Political Agents who is known to have worked in Kutch, none seems to have trained the local artist, and rather they were supporting and encouraging the local artist by commissioning their works. Fortunately, there are few references of English guests who were skilled to document ethnographic subjects.

### English Guests:

It is a pleasant surprise to come to realize that English guests of Rao, and bureaucrats who visited Kutch, were artistically inclined. And it is their interest in the studies of natural history, races of man, costumes, and market scenes which encouraged the local enthusiasts to change their perspective of painting. Such visitors must have greatly engaged with the natives, and a strong impact of it fell on the local artist to adapt to change and look at their

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<sup>68</sup> Losty J P, 2018, *Op.Cit*, Pp.140.

surroundings as picturesque. Below are brief notes on these personalities who seem to have led the way into Kutch.

**Mr. & Mrs. Postans:** Thomas Postan (1818-1846) entered the Bombay Native Infantry in 1829. He was posted to Surat, Baroda, and Poona from 1834 to 1839, and later was appointed line adjutant at Bhuj in Kutch. He was known to be a keen amateur archaeologist and his wife Marianne Postan an acknowledged linguist- knowing Hindi, Gujarati, and Persian.<sup>69</sup> He read various papers to the Bombay branches of the Royal Asiatic Society, and his wife is an author of many books. ‘Cutch, or Random Sketches of Western India’, is a very important reference to understand the local legends and traditions of 19<sup>th</sup> century Kutch from a British perspective. Throughout their career, both husband and wife showed a naïve enthusiasm, which was met with little encouragement from the court of Directors. He asked for help to publish his sketches of the scenery of India, but the court regretted that it could do nothing and in 1844 he was paid 50 pounds by the company for his collection of drawings.<sup>70</sup> There are 212 drawings and 11 lithographs, depicting costumes, occupations, scenery, and buildings of Sind, Cutch, and Bombay, produced between 1830 and 1845.

It is from the writings of Marianne Postan that we may gather that Postans were influencers of art in Kutch. And they could be one of the early Britishers to introduce company-style painting to the native artists, which influenced the later trends in the province. The published travelogue by Marianne Postans on the couple’s brief stay at Kutch covers illustrative engravings of sketches by the artist herself. In her writings, she weaves her contents with a remark on the native lifestyles based on general acquaintances. A few relevant and curious observations she notes, on the level of knowledge the native artist possess of fine arts is noteworthy.

‘...The Rao is particularly anxious that his people should improve in the art of drawing: and I think they might soon acquire the requisite degree of cultivation. The practice of art must of course be confined to Hindu artists, as the tenets of the Koran (Quran) strictly forbid any representation of the creator’s works. The Mahomedans have a more exuberant fancy than the Hindus and are better calculated for poets, but the Hindus have the greater delicacy of touch, greater accuracy in imitation, and are very superior to them in

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<sup>69</sup> Calendar cut-out, from the Archive of Art History and Aesthetics, M.S. University of Baroda

<sup>70</sup> Online resource

perseverance. Not deficient in apprehension, they seem most adapted to receive instruction.'

This dialogue indicates two things for certain: 1) that Rao Desai was interested that Mrs. Postan should trainee some of the local artists in the art of Drawing. 2) She carries an impression that Hindu artists are better adapted to receive instructions and that Mahomedans are better calculated as poets.

**Hendry Pittman:** In 1846, Hendry Pitman<sup>71</sup> a surgeon to the 10th Native Infantry was deployed to Bhuj for a year from 1847 to 1848. As an amateur ornithologist, Hendry Pitman began recording the birds he saw in Kutch, in June 1847, at the onset of the South-west Monsoon. Although we do not know of Hendry Pittman as a patron of art in his earlier or later part of life, in Bhuj he seems to have taken advantage of the large group of artists who were in-apprehensive to cater to the taste of their British patron.

Birds of Kutch had not been surveyed until Pittman's time, through many of the specimens he saw were known thought important studies of birds in many parts of India. Out of the 108 drawings of bird specimens sketched at Bhuj, about 44 are described with inscriptions. The date and location inscribed confirm that the illustrations were prepared in Kutch. Pittman's collection of birds represents a very unique record of bird life in a particular place, they are his memory of the birds that he saw or encountered in Kutch and carried with them a sense of the wonder, not just in its bird life but also in the delicate artistic skill of the artist he employed.

Apart from cataloging birds, Pittman seems to have collected paintings from the artist as collectibles. An album of one hundred and fifty-seven Company period portraits and scenes: chiefs, musicians, religious mendicants, tradesman occupation, caste, tribesmen, and other local characters of Bhuj, are depicted. Few folios were published in Stuart Cary Welch's publication, *Room for Wonder*.<sup>72</sup>

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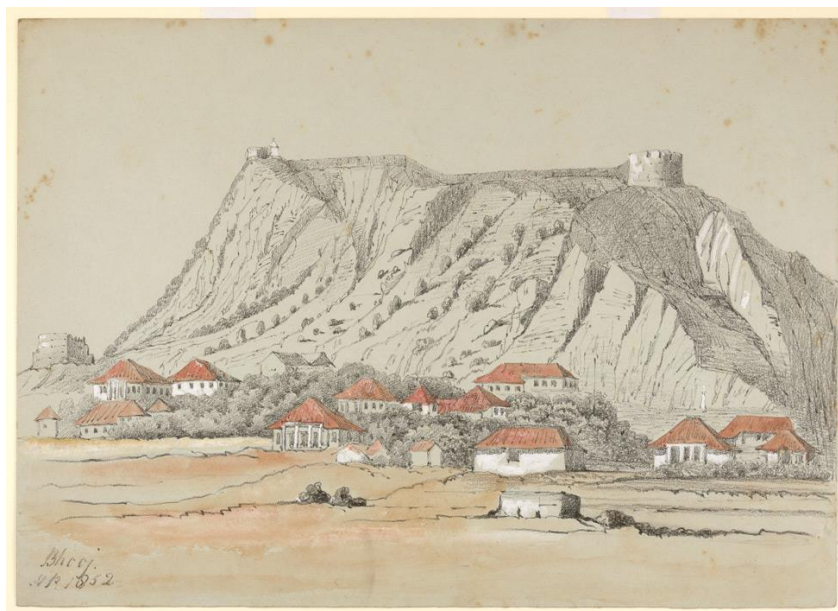
<sup>71</sup> Hendry Pitman (1818-1882) was a second-generation British born in India at Allahabad, Bengal, into a military family. He passed the East India Company examination, 29 November 1843 and at 26 he was accepted for the East India Company's service as an Assistant Surgeon. He arrived in Bombay, 17 January 1844.

<sup>72</sup> Welch Stuart Cary, 1978, *Op.Cit.*



**Mr. and Mrs. Parr:** Thomas Chase Parr (1802- 1883) joined the East India Company's 4<sup>th</sup> Bombay Native Infantry and was probably in Bombay by August 1819.<sup>73</sup> From 1854 to 1856 he was Commandant at Karachi, his most prominent appointment. Thomas Chase Parr was 44 when he married Harriet Pott at Bromley, Kent in May 1846, and arrived in India in November 1849. Parr was stationed at Bhuj for a brief period on his return from Furlough. Among the couple Harriet Parr seems to have taken a keen interest in painting, commissioning work from native artists, and also painting herself.

The painting by an unknown artist now in India Office Library, is a watercolor of the couple's residence at Bhuj, dated 1851. Scribed in ink by Harriet Parr: *Our House Bhooj, 1851*. The bungalow in this drawing has a two-storied addition with an elaborately decorated balcony on one side. Hollyhocks and sunflowers thrive in the garden. Another painting that signs in herself seems to be her work, with her signature and date at the bottom, *Bhooj H.P: 1852*. She has used a combination of pencil and watercolor to execute her painting, with the use of white patches on cantonments and bungalows. This old Cantonment and European residences at the foothill was an area held by the British. The town was damaged in an earthquake twice once in 1819, and second time in 2001.



1856-India office

<sup>73</sup> Durham Light Infantry: The United Red and White Rose Thomas Chase Parr was nearly eaten by a tiger in 1825 but survived. He rose to the rank of Major in 1839 and to Lieutenant-Colonel in 1846. He was transferred to 28th Bombay Native Infantry, 1846, to 1st European Regiment, 1846, to 10th Native Infantry, 1847, to 7th Native Infantry 1849, to 2nd Native Infantry, 1849, to 2nd Native Infantry, 1850, and to 6th Native Infantry 1853.

Yet another set of paintings found are of **Robert Melville Grindlay** (1786- 1877) mostly on aquatint medium. Grindlay was a self-taught amateur artist, who visited India in 1803, at the young age of 17. He served with the East India Company's military from 1804-1820 and during this period made a large number of sketches and drawings recording the life and landscapes of India. Some of these collection covers scene from the port of this region which give us a reference that they did visit Kutch. But these works are not of relevance to our current concern.

Here we may conclude that the first half of the nineteenth century, since Rao Desal III's reign, was a period of excitement for the native artist, as a large number of English officers were getting appointed to Kutch state and their love for collecting art and documenting their surroundings opened new prospects to the artist. Although many of these officers were themselves trained armature artists making watercolors and drawings of what they saw around them, commissioning art or purchasing ready folios would have been much more convenient, esp. in Kutch.

For the rest of the country, during this time, Company artists were restricted almost entirely to Madras and the Bengal Presidencies, as they were the most flourishing centres of British trade and activity. Bombay on the other hand was the least important of the three Presidencies. Infact British took interest in the west much later when the Pindari plunder raids were put to control and the Marathas withdrew. Hence Company School painting what we may understand as a European understanding of studying a model also reaches very late in Western Indian.