

CHAPTER 2: STATE POLICIES AND LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE PRE-MODERN GUJARAT: A HISTORICAL SURVEY

Since early time in Gujarat, the state enjoyed a share of produce on lands under its control. The main source of state revenue was land revenue. It was determined and collected according to various land tenures which had prevailed in different regions of Gujarat. This in turn determined the nature of relationships between the state and its people. The chapter includes a historical survey of state policies and land management with special reference to the land tenures and landed relationships in pre-modern Gujarat. It also includes a brief discussion to the formation of British Gujarat and Baroda State.

Introduction

According to Baden Powell, various factors contributed to the genesis and growth of various land tenures in India. By passing the nomadic, pastoral and agricultural life, the races of India formed certain groups of land-holding called villages. The villages formed a nucleus of certain relations and a bond of common government.¹ Since the ancient time, the majority of the entire population of India lived in villages and subsisted upon agriculture. Hence the income of the state was derived from land revenue which was determined and collected according to various prevalent land tenures.²

Since the early time, a variety of land tenures had prevailed in Gujarat.³ The villages/lands of Gujarat can be generally divided into two major categories viz., (i) government (*khalsa*) and alienated (*barkhali*)⁴ villages/lands. The following table mentions various land tenures prevalent in government and alienated villages/lands:⁵

Tenures in Government Villages/Lands	Tenures in Alienated Villages/Lands
<i>Bhagbatai</i>	<i>Wanta and talpat</i>
<i>Holbandi</i>	<i>Girasdari</i>
<i>Kaltana</i>	<i>Mulgiras</i>
<i>Bhagdari and narwadari</i>	<i>Talukdars</i>

¹ Powell, B. H. (1899). *The Origin and Growth of Village Communities in India*. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd. 1-6

² Pancholy, K. S. (1937). *Short Notes on Land Revenue Administration and Some Connected Subjects*. Allahabad: The Empire Press. 1

³ Patel, C. B. (1920). *Mulaki Khatano Itihas*. Vadodara Rajyano. Baroda: Arya Sudharak Press. 28

⁴ *Barkhali* is derived from *bahar* and *khala* which mean outside and grain-yard respectively. It was applied to the lands which were wholly or partially free from assessment. It included lands such as *devasthan*, *pirasthan*, *dharmadaya*, *chakariat*, *jat dharmadaya*, *pasaita chakariat*, *jat pasaita*, *ranvatia* or *hadia*, *vechania*, *gharania*, *bathamania* etc. Some of these which were not paying any *kar* (tax) called as *nakari* while the rest some used to pay *mamluk hak* or *salami* which was the old customary levy on land or some other form of tax.

⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Volume VII*. Baroda. Bombay: Government Central Press. 341-366 and Patel, C. B. (1920). 28-29, Thakar, H. G. (1935). *Bandharan Ane Itihas*, Baroda: Government Printing Press. 40

<i>Ankadabandi: ekankadi or isthenorar, akankadi matadari, akankadi thakrati, farta ankadi, farta ankadi matadari, farta ankadi thakrati etc.,</i>	<i>Inam and nakri: devasthan or dharmadaya, pirasthan, wazifa, jagir, moghlai chakariat, pasaita, varshasan, adania, gherania, vechania, ranvatia, batamia, hadia, kothalisanth, kasbati, sarakati, kanyadan etc.,</i>
<i>Mehwasi</i>	<i>Maleki</i>
<i>Anghad</i>	<i>Watan</i>
<i>Tulwari</i>	<i>Salami</i>
<i>Komvari/khumwari</i>	<i>Dumla and khang</i>
<i>Senja</i>	<i>Matdari</i>
<i>Bighoti or ryotwari or survey tenure</i>	<i>Mulkagiri</i>
Miscellaneous: <i>Udhadh jamabandi, sedbhed jamabandi, mohasuli, shivay upaj, aadhbhagiya, havaladari, potavta etc.,</i>	

It is difficult to trace the exact origin of land tenures that when and where these tenures came to be fixated or came into existence for the first time in order to collect the revenue. However, roughly the origin can be traced to mostly the late ancient or early medieval period. Although any proper chronological order is difficult to be maintain due to the lack of evidences. Nevertheless, based on existing sources an attempt has been made to construct a narrative of the land tenures in the ancient, medieval and early Maratha periods respectively.

Ancient Period

Since the ancient time, the state, king or ruling authority in India was entitled to enjoy a share (*rajbhag*) of produce on cultivated land. The information gathered from the ancient documents suggest that the land revenue was levied according to the rate on the number of ploughs owned

by each cultivator as indicating the extent of land cultivated.⁶ This system was called as *autbani*⁷ (a plough rate). The assessment in lump sum levied on a village left villagers free to distribute it among themselves. The basis for the demand was a definite share of the actual crop, varying with the needs of the state and its ability to collect it.⁸ The system in which state enjoyed a share of produce on lands had continued since Dravidians and Aryans.⁹ The share of produce on land was fixed at the rate of one-sixth, one-eighth or one-twelfth but in practice a larger share was often taken.¹⁰ The system of crop-share came to be known as *bhagbatai* which had also continued to exist even in the modern period.¹¹ In this system, the produce was collected by the peasants and brought to the threshing ground. It was then divided as share between the state, cultivators and village servants. Sometimes the estimate of share of produce was made on the standing crop.¹² The *bhagbatai* system had established a direct relationship between the state and the village community. The villages were operated by the notion of *jajmani* which was a system of exchange of goods and services. In this system, bulk of the rural manufacture and services were exchanged within the village by classes of people who received a fixed share of produce. It made villages integrated, self-sufficient, non-commercial, unchanging and egalitarian.

In order to determine and collection of crops share, officials were appointed. According to 'Arthashastra' (about 300 B.C.) of Kautilya, every village was under the charge of an officer called *gopa* whose duty was to keep the detailed account of categories of lands (cultivable waste, forest etc.); loans advanced and remissions of revenue granted. Official called *pradestrs*

⁶ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). *Bombay Land Revenue System*. Ahmedabad: The Praja Bandhu Press. 1

⁷ It called *holbandi* in Baroda State.

⁸ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 2

⁹ Patel, C. B. (1920). 48

¹⁰ Dutt, R. C. (1905). *BAR, 1902-1903 and 1903-04*. Bombay: The Times Press. 118

¹¹ Patel, G. D. (1972). *Gujarat State Gazetteers, Amreli District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 410

¹² Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). *The Rulers of Baroda*. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 222

was appointed to see over the *gopas* and if needed to take corrective measures for the recovery of state revenue. *Sthanika* was in charge revenue management who looked after one-fourth part of the state. There were *adhyakshas* (superintendent) charged with duties connected with specific department of administration such as coinage, seals, passport, liquor, slaughter houses, ware houses, road tolls, ferries, building site, corporation of artisans, mines, forest etc. These department were under the head of *samaharata* (collector-general) whose duty was to supervise the collection of revenues in the state. *Samaharata* also had police and magisterial responsibilities. These functionaries were either paid in cash or land. There was always a tradition of maintaining revenue records in the ancient Indian past.¹³ The villages were divided into three types viz., good, medium and poor which was based on fertility of soils. The state demand was fixed of 1/3rd to 1/4th of the produce depending on the fertility of soil and average rainfall. The system established were such that the revenue was taken mostly from villages or lands which were categorised as government. The villages of medium and poor classes were generally exempted from revenue payment. The state used to keep a close eye on the neglected lands which were confiscated and granted to dependable cultivators.¹⁴

So far as the region of Gujarat is concerned, the exact information about the revenue administration machinery during the early ancient period is not clearly known. By and large the similar systems that were followed across the subcontinent were also followed in Gujarat. The sources for the land revenue administration can be seen in form of land records (gift deeds), eulogies of rulers or some textual information. From what is known so far, it can be concluded that some sort of hierarchical machinery had evolved in ancient Gujarat. For instance, the eulogies of Dhruvasen and Baladitya mention that the king used to levy taxes such as ‘*udrang*’ and ‘*uparikar*’. Officers such as *ayukta*, *viniyaktar*, *dhruva* etc., were appointed

¹³ Deshpande, M. K. (1954). *Revenue Department Manual. Vol. I*. Poona: The Yeravda Prison Press. 1

¹⁴ Ibid.

for revenue collection. In the Solanki period it is known that the state administration was carried out at three levels viz. provincial, city and village levels. The provinces were administrated by *shrikarna* department, while cities were run by *panchkulas* (*nagar panchayats*). At village level, there was a hierarchy of officers who took care of land and revenue management.¹⁵

It is believed that, the revenue was collected as per the *bhagbatai* system. The crops were being shared by the state and villages. Thus, established a direct relationship between the state and the village community. This did not mean that there were no intermediary classes. The state continued to depend on middle men. With time the power of intermediaries increased and there came a point where they could carry out direct negotiations with the state. Thereby establishing a different level of hierarchy almost like the feudal system of Europe. The rights of revenue collection as well as land management was handed over to these intermediaries in lieu of military services. This changed the nature of landed relationship by establishing complex networks. For instance, in the Rajput kingdom of Anhilvada, the lands of Gujarat were either held by the chiefs on condition of rendering military service or were given/rented directly to the cultivators.¹⁶

In '*Dwayashraya*', Abhayatilakgani observes that during the Solanki period the king collected land revenue from peasants in form of royal share through his officers. '*Lekh Paddhati*' describes the land revenue management of Waghelas of Gujarat. According to it, there was a system established in which revenue was collected according to the contract between the state and the individual which in some respect resembles 'new' the *ryotwari* settlement. According to '*Lekh Paddhati*' the land revenue was collected either in cash or kind at approximately 1/3 of the total produce. It was usually paid in three instalments. The first instalment was paid in

¹⁵ Chokshi, U. M., & Trivedi, M. R. (1991). *Gujarat State Gazetteer. Volume 2*. Gandhinagar: Director, Government Print., Stationery and Publications. 139

¹⁶ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). *Gujarat State Gazetteers, Vadodara District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 521

bhadrapad (August-September), the second in *kartik* (October-November), and the third on *akshyritiya* day which was and still is the annual spring time festivals. The transactions were carried out through intimation of the finance department.¹⁷

Another method of revenue collection according to '*Lekh Paddhati*' was that land revenue was determined by the state on an *ad hoc* basis. After the lump sum was so fixed, the village people were not charged with other cesses. This method was called *samkaruddh*.¹⁸ '*Lekh Paddhati*' refers to ownership of lands and states that the administration kept which included detailed records of who owned which land. If there was a land whose ownership was suspect it was auctioned. The owner of the land had to prove his ownership before the *dharmadhikaran* judicial officers by providing written documents and other witnesses.¹⁹ Under the Waghelas mostly all lands were liable to tax and only donated lands were exempted from such tax. The unit of measurement of land was used. For instance, according to '*Lekh Paddhati*', unit of measurement was called as *vishopak* which can be construed to be a *bigha*.²⁰

Medieval Period

The revenue administration during the medieval Gujarat can be categorized into three periods viz., (i) 1297-1403 (ii) 1403-1573 and (iii) 1573-1707. During the first period, the territories of Gujarat were under the sovereignty of Delhi Sultanate.²¹ In the year 1403, Gujarat came under the rule of the Sultan of Ahmedabad and finally in 1407, the Gujarat Sultanate was established. After the establishment of Gujarat Sultanate, the revenue officers were appointed for either streamlining the revenue collection or to prevent maladministration.²² The rule of

¹⁷ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). *Gujarat State Gazetteers, Mahsana District*. Ahmedabad: Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publication. 492

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 491

²⁰ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 492

²¹ Watson, J. W. (1876). *History of Gujarat*. Delhi: Cosmo Publications. 1

²² Watson, J. W. (1876). 1 and Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). *History of Land Revenue Administration in Gujarat (1407 AD to 2017 AD)*. Gujarat: Revenue Department, Government of Gujarat. 4

Gujarat Sultanate lasted till 1573 after which it was captured by Akbar, the Mughal Emperor.²³

During the period from 1573 to 1707, Gujarat was a *suba* of Mughal Empire and was administered by Mughal Viceroy.²⁴

1. Land Administration (1297-1403): In the early medieval period in Gujarat, lands were either held by the local chiefs²⁵ (mostly intermediaries) on condition of rendering military service or were given or rented. In this period, local chiefs had cultivated lands and their *haks* (share) termed *wanta* and *garas* were granted for the maintenance of younger branches.²⁶ With the fall of the Rajput Kingdom of Anhilwada Patan, many local chiefs reduced to their peripheral estates. Gradually these local chiefs developed into small principalities. The new rulers²⁷ dispossessed these local chiefs, who then took to plunder. Over the period of time, a compromise was struck between new rulers and local chiefs. Accordingly, new rulers were allotted 3/4th share of produce of each village which was called *talpat*²⁸ while the remaining 1/4th termed *wanta*²⁹ was allotted to local chiefs. The local chiefs were also asked to pay to the new rulers by way of quit-rent a rate per *bigha* of their lands (called *watan*) according to the local conditions. This ushered in period of relative peace. The new rulers eventually released the local chiefs from their obligation to do military service.³⁰ The same terms and systems which had already prevalent in the Rajput Kingdom of Anhilwada were continued even during the medieval period. In fact, these systems had continued even after the formation of British Gujarat and Baroda State as would be seen in the subsequent chapters.

²³ Watson, J. W. (1876). 1

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Literally called as Hindu or Rajput chiefs who were original holders.

²⁶ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 521

²⁷ Literally called as Muslim rulers.

²⁸ *Talpat* means a state share or portion or allotment.

²⁹ *Wanta/vanta/bant* means an alienated share or portion or allotment and *watandar* means a sharer.

³⁰ Ali, S. N., & Seddon, C. N. (Translators). (1928). *Mirat-i-Ahmadi. Supplement. (Translated from the Persian of Ali Muhammad Khan)*. Baroda: Oriental Institute. 193-194 and Robertson, E. P. (1865). *Glossary of Gujarat Revenue and Official Terms*. Bombay: The Education Society's Press, Byculla. 54

2. Land Administration (1403-1573): Under Gujarat Sultanate, Gujarat came to be administratively divided into two parts. One was administered directly by the central authority (rulers) and other administered by tribute paying chieftains. The chieftain's tribute was not based on the value of their territories but on terms granted to them by the central authority.³¹ There was no uniform mechanism of tribute collection as the payment. It was not paid regularly or even willingly but extorted by armed force.³² In their states, so far as the chiefs and their big or small estates were concerned, they in their own right became revenue collectors. Over the period of time, they became hereditary chiefs and obtained the right to share of crops mostly in kind, special cesses and trade and transit dues etc. Thereby developed a hierarchy.³³

The territories were divided into *iqta*, *shiq/sirkar*, *pargana* and *dehat* or villages.³⁴ During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the power of Gujarat Sultanate was at its height. In the time of the Sultans of Gujarat, the province of Gujarat consisted of twenty-five *sirkars*³⁵ under their jurisdiction.³⁶ [See Map No. 3] These *sirkars* were managed either by assigning to nobles in lieu of armed force or they were set apart from crown domain and managed by paid officers called *maktaa*³⁷. These officers were especially assigned the duty to maintain the law and order and to collect revenue. In order to do this, they were allowed to maintain fortified

³¹ Watson, J. W. (1876). 3

³² In the early modern period such forceful extraction of tribute came to be known as *mulkgiri* or the country-seizing. (See Vaidya, M. (2015). *Mulkgiri System in the Princely State of Baroda: Context and Concept. Global History and Cultural Review. 1*(1). pp. 59-64)

³³ Watson, J. W. (1876). 3-4

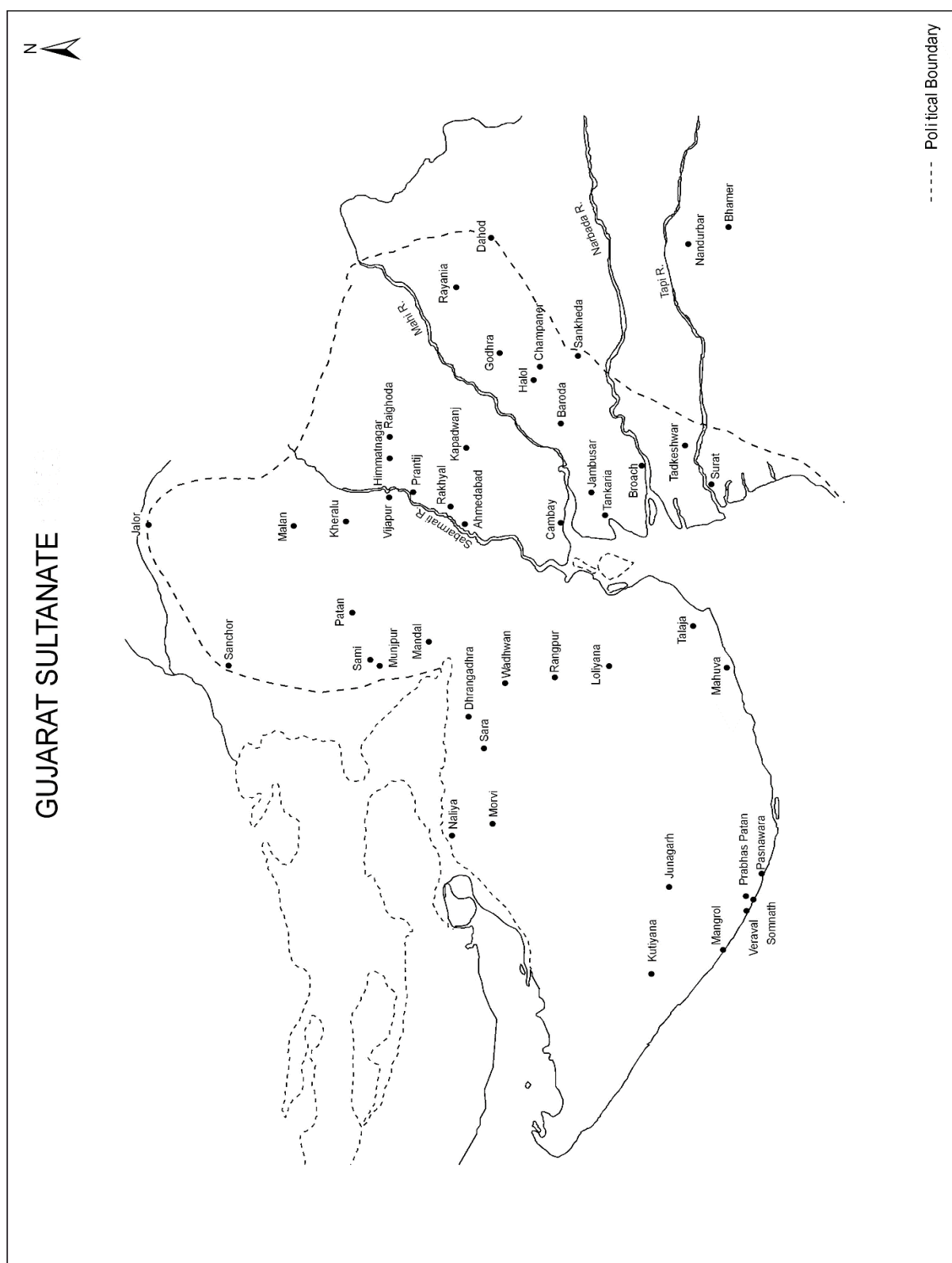
³⁴ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 4

³⁵ These were (1) Ahmedabad (2) Patan (3) Godhara (4) Chapmaner (5) Baroda (6) Bharuch (7) Nadot (Rajpipla) (8) Surat (9) Jodhpur (10) Jalor (11) Nagor (12) Sirohi (13) Durgapur (14) Banswada (15) Nandurbar (16) Mulher (Baglan) (17) Ram Nagar (Dharmpur) (18) Danda Rajapur (Jinjira) (19) Bombay (20) Bassein (21) Daman (22) Sunt/Sonth (23) Sorath (24) Nawanagar and (25) Kutch

³⁶ Ali, S. N., & Seddon, C. N. (Translators). (1928). 162 and Lokhandwala, M. F. (Translator). (1965). *Mirat-i-Ahmadi: A Persian History of Gujarat. (English Translation from Persian Original of Ali Muhammad Khan)*. Baroda: Oriental Institute. 13

³⁷ The words *maktaa* and *iktaa* (the term used for the district administered by a *maktaa*) both come from the Arabic root, *kata*, to cut off, in allusion to the public revenue diverted for the pay of those officers and their establishments.

Map No. 3



Source: Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 4A

outposts called *thana*. The *thana* was under the charge of officer called *thanedar* which later was further set up in each *sirkar*. The *sirkar* was further divided into certain number of subdivisions called *pargana* placed under the charge of a paid officer called *tehsildar*. *Tahsildars* were assigned the duty of collecting the state demand of 50% of the total produce. This was done with the help of village headmen such as *patel* or *mukaddam* (in northern Gujarat) or *desai* (in southern Gujarat). They were responsible for creating shares/divisions of revenue from the shareholders of joint villages and to simple villages and even the individual cultivators. This practice was continued during the reign of Muzafar Shah (1511-1526) and even after him.³⁸

The territories of Patan, Ahmedabad, Champaner, Baroda, Bharuch, Surat and Rajpipla (Nandod) were under the direct control of Bahadur Shah (1526-1536), then the Sultan of Gujarat.³⁹ According to '*Mirat-i-Ahmadi*', Bahadur Shah had a large army because of which the land revenue had to be farmed out. There was also an increase in the number of shareholders.⁴⁰ As a result, the system of revenue farming was introduced through contracts (*izar*) around 1536. This came to be known as *izaradari* or revenue farming system.⁴¹

As far as the assigned lands were concerned, these were assigned to nobles for maintenance of armies. The management was simple as the right of revenue collection could be transferred if another person was appointed. This worked till the central authority was strong. Care was taken to prevent the holder of the grant from charging excessive rents from the tenants. However, if the central authority was weak and on the verge of collapse, the peripheral forces such as nobles and other officers took control over land and often assumed hereditary powers.

³⁸ Watson, J. W. (1876). 4-5

³⁹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). *The Gazetteer of the Baroda State. Volume I*. Bombay: The Times Press. 427, 429

⁴⁰ Watson, J. W. (1876). 5

⁴¹ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Volume I. 427, 429

There were certain lands that were given away as awards or *inams*. These lands fell in the category of alienated tenure. The *inam* is an Arabic word which means a gift or it means that these lands were granted or transferred, wholly or partially, to the grantee. These lands came to be known as *inam* land or tenure. In this tenure, land was held on a reduced assessment.⁴² The types of the *inam* tenure granted military or civil services.⁴³ The *inami* lands also included those lands which were granted as *devasthan* or *dharmadaya* i.e., on religious ground. Lands which were presented as a free gift to *brahmins*, *bhats*, *fakirs* and other such people were purely *inami*.⁴⁴ The *inami* lands were sold, mortgaged or given away without any interference on the part of government. These were given to individuals for the upkeep of their families.⁴⁵ The owner of such lands was the *inamdar* and was entitled to enjoy the produce of land.⁴⁶ It was seen quite often that the *inami* lands were given as *jagirs* to either army personnel or even the member of royal family. They were also given maintenance grants which were called as *jiwak*, *jiwai* and *ayada*.⁴⁷

Beside the *inam* land, there were *nakri*, tax-free lands which also included the *devasthan*, *pirasthan* and *dharmadaya* lands. These lands were permanently alienated and hence were rent free/tax free lands. These lands were made for the support and maintenance of religious and charitable institutions. The *dharmadaya* lands were either *dharmadaya chakariat* or *jat dharmadaya*. The *dharmadaya chakariat* were those lands which were given to maintain the worship of idols or *pirs* or to pay for service at religious and charitable institution while the *jat*

⁴² Gordon, R. G. (1917). *The Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual. Volume I. Part I - Historical*. Bombay: The Government Central Press. 214-215

⁴³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 350

⁴⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). *The Gazetteer of the Baroda State. Volume. II*. Bombay: The Times Press. 83

⁴⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 350

⁴⁶ Patel, C. B. (1920). 34

⁴⁷ Patel, G. D. (1957). *The Land Problem of Reorganized Bombay State*. Bombay: N. M. Tripathi LTD. 199

dharmadaya lands were those *lands* which were bestowed on *brahmins*, *bhats*, *charans*, *gosains* or *ateeths*.⁴⁸

The medieval period saw emergence of multiple revenue functionaries or intermediary classes such as *girasias* (*talukdars*), *maleks*, and *mehwasi* etc., for the management of the assigned, alienated or non-government lands. The emergence of this powerful class necessitates a brief discussion on their role as managers of revenue collection. The *girasias* enjoyed a share called *giras* from peasants and system of land administration in their villages was known as *giras* tenure.⁴⁹ The word *giras* is derived from the Sanskrit word *gras* which literally means a mouthful lands held for maintenance.⁵⁰ The origin of *giras* is also found in Kathiawar Peninsula. When the Rajputs invaded the province of Kathiawar, they gave away the lands that they won to their relatives which was hereditary in nature. The enterprising *girasias* expanded their lands by defeating their neighbours when they became strong enough that they declared themselves to be independent and later called as *talukdars* or large landholder and assumed the title of *thakor*, *raval*, *rana* or *raja* etc.⁵¹

The *maleks* were the holders of *maleki* villages which were managed on the *bhagdari* system. They enjoyed half of the produce from the cultivators.⁵² The *maleki* villages were originated out of a grant of 12 villages by Sultan Mahmud Begada to nobilities known as *malekjadas* in about 1483 as a reward for military achievement in conquering Pavagadh fort.⁵³ These villages seem to have been rent-free and had continued during later period also.⁵⁴ As far as the *mehwasis*

⁴⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 349-350, Patel, C. B. (1920). 33 and Desai, G. H. & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 82-83

⁴⁹ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 47

⁵⁰ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 102

⁵¹ Watson, J. W. (1884). *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. VIII. Kathiawar*. Bombay: The Government Central Press. 1-2

⁵² Patel, G. D. (1950). *Agrarian Reforms in Bombay (The Legal and Economic Consequences of the Abolition of Land Tenures*. Bombay: Vasant Bhuwan, Gorewadi, Mongal Lane, Matunga. 54

⁵³ MSA. (1914). *SRBG. No. DXXIV.-New Series. (As Revised in 1914). Character of Land Tenures and System of Survey and Settlement in the Bombay Presidency*. Bombay: The Government Central Press. 12 and Patel, G. D. (1950). 8, 54

⁵⁴ Gordon, R. G. (1917). Vol. I. 269

were concerned, they were presumably the descendants of ancient *rajput* or *koli* settlers. They acquired certain lands and rights to revenue collection.⁵⁵ In the 15th century, the Sultans of Gujarat made an attempt to subjugate *mehwas* but failed. Hence, a compromise was made according to which *mehwas* were allowed to continue the possession of their territories or estates.⁵⁶

3. Land Administration (1573-1707): Under Mughals, the province of Gujarat was one of the most flourishing and urbanized regions of India. With Gujarat passing into the hands of Mughal in the later 16th century, there occurred certain changes in land administration. The land revenue administration of Gujarat under Mughal was more systemized and standardized. A proper land revenue system which was introduced by Sher Shah was later modified under the aegis of Akbar's finance minister Todar Mal.⁵⁷ The first change Todar Mal introduced was to carry out revenue survey. Hence the first revenue survey was carried out in Gujarat in 1575-76.⁵⁸ According to it, the lands were subject to survey assessment. They were first measured and then assessed.⁵⁹ In those crown lands, where regular survey could not be made, the old method (*bhagbatai*) was continued.⁶⁰

Like their predecessors, the Mughals also maintained diplomatic relations with the tributary chiefs of various regions of the Gujarat. All the chiefs accepted the sovereignty of the Mughals after some resistance in the initial years. Both type of grants (in cash and land) were also made to the certain favoured section of the state and society.⁶¹ For instance, there was an allowance called *moghlai*⁶² which come under the categories of alienated tenure. This grant was made

⁵⁵ Patel, G. D. (1950). 41

⁵⁶ Patel, G. D. (1954). *The Indian Land Problem and Legislation*. Bombay: N. M. Tripathi LTD. 78

⁵⁷ Mamoria, C. B., and Tripathi, B. B. (1961). *Agricultural Problems of India*, Allahabad: Kitab Mahal. 683

⁵⁸ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 3

⁵⁹ Dutt, R. C. (1905). BAR, 1902-1903 and 1903-04. 118

⁶⁰ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 493

⁶¹ Shafqat, A. (2008). *Administration of Gujarat Under the Mughals (A.D. 1572-1737)*. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis). Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University. 226-227

⁶² Belonging to the Mughal.

from the Mughal share of the revenue.⁶³ Beside *moghlai*, there was *wazifa*, the land granted to the nobles. In other words, it was pension, a stipend or a grant of land rent-free or at quit-rent to pious people.⁶⁴ Like *inam*, *jagir* and *wazifa* there were *salami* lands, generally a complimentary present to a superior. It was not a rate on the *bigha* and was irregularly assessed sometimes in a large sum, sometimes in some other way. There was no uniform rate of assessment in the *salami*.⁶⁵ It did not cover the entire village but only portion of land.⁶⁶ The *salami* was always taken on alienated lands except the lands termed as *dharmadaya* and *devasthan*.⁶⁷

The Mughals introduced various measures to improve the condition of the Gujarat province.

(i) Changes in Administrative Division: It is believed that Mughals did not introduce stark change but rather continued with the older system with certain level of modifications. Gujarat in 1573 was captured and constituted it into a province called *suba* of Mughal Empire. The *suba* was still divided in *sirkar* as it was during the time of Gujarat Sultanate.⁶⁸ The Mughals further rearranged the area of the province after which the number of *sirkars* got reduced from twenty-five to sixteen.⁶⁹ The number reduced because nine *sirkars* viz, Jodhpur, Jalor, Nagor, Mulher, Nandurbar, Bombay, Bassein, Daman and Danda Rajapur had restored to those states from which they were conquered by Gujarat Sultanate.⁷⁰ Thus, the total number of *sirkars* under Mughals became sixteen. Out of sixteen *sirkars*, nine *sirkars*⁷¹ were managed directly by imperial officers. According to Abul Fazl, these *sirkars* were Ahmedabad, Patan, Baroda,

⁶³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 182

⁶⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 83

⁶⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 341-342

⁶⁶ Patel, G. D. (1954). 141

⁶⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 341

⁶⁸ Watson, J. W. (1876). 6

⁶⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 224

⁷⁰ Watson, J. W. (1876). 17

⁷¹ These nine *sirkars* were divided into 198 *parganas*, of which 13 were ports.

Champaner, Godhra, Bharuch, Nadod, Surat and Sorath,⁷² The revenue of Surat Sirkar was separately assigned to its manger (*mutasadi*⁷³). According to ‘*Mirat-i-Ahmadi*’, Nawanagar or Islam Nagar Sirkar was also managed by imperial officers. The remaining six *sirkar* viz., Dungarpur, Banswada, Sirohi, Kutch, Sunt and Ramnagar were assigned to tributary states/chiefs.⁷⁴ [See Map No. 4]

(ii) Officers and Their Duties: The *suba* was headed by *subedar* or viceroy, the highest rank officer at provincial level. The *diwan*, second in rank only to *subedar*, was appointed to check in revenue administration. He was also the head of the civil administration of the province. In fiscal units of each district, he was assisted by *mutasadi*, *desais* and *mukadams*.⁷⁵ There were other village officials such as *patwari*, *mehta*, *mazmudar* etc. The highest officer at district level was *amin* who was akin to the later collector. The *amin* was assisted by *amil* who was referred to as *kamavisdar*, *mukhi* or *mukadam*.⁷⁶ The *amin* used to fix the assessment on lands every year after a study of the statistics of the preceding ten years, the economic condition of the peasants, their capacity to pay and the actual produce. In those villages or lands did not come under this settlement, the assessment was fixed at the time of harvesting of crops.⁷⁷

(iii) Survey and Settlement: According to Abul Fazal, Sher Shah was the originator of survey and settlement. It was further improved by Todar Mal who fixed the size of the unit of measurement (the *bigha*) and standardized the instruments of land measurement (the *gaz* or rod and the *tenab* or chain).⁷⁸ He developed this system by fixing a *bigha* as a unit of area as

⁷² Jarrett, H. S. (Translator). (1891). *The Ain-i-Akbari (Translated from the Original Persian of Abul Fazl)* Vol. II. Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press. 252-259

⁷³ Revenue clerk.

⁷⁴ Ali, S. N., & Seddon, C. N. (Translators). (1928). 190-193

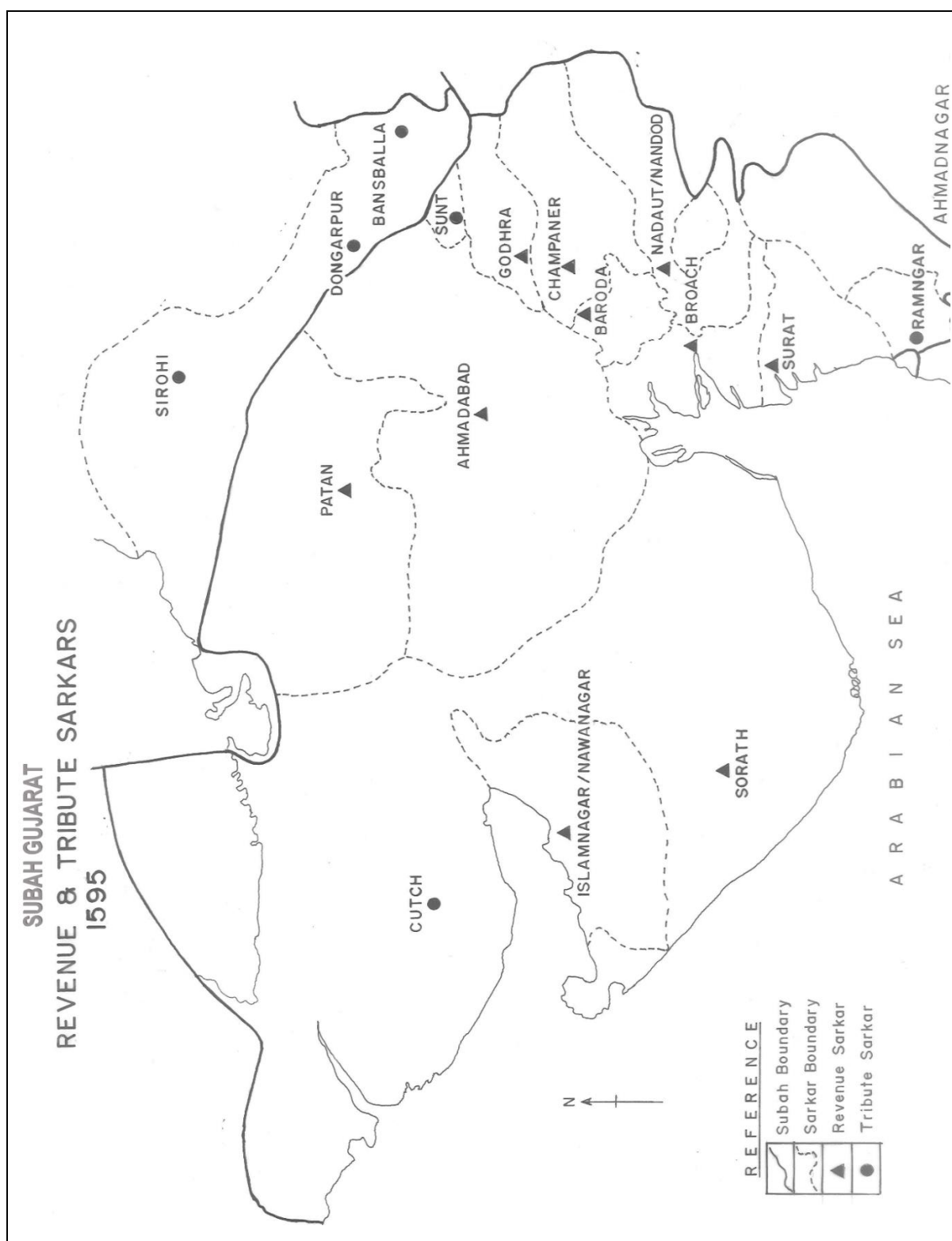
⁷⁵ Watson, J. W. (1876). 7

⁷⁶ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 522

⁷⁷ Deshpande, M. K. (1954). Vol. I. 2 (For detailed information about officers and their duties, see Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M., (2017). 22-30).

⁷⁸ Gordon, R. G. (1917). Vol. I. 10

Map No. 4



Source: Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 10A

measured by standard length.⁷⁹ A third of the estimated produce was demanded as the state revenue and payment in cash were substituted for payment in kind.⁸⁰ Accordingly, the cultivable lands of Mughal Empire were then surveyed and measured. After working out the details, next step was the settlement of the land revenue. The revenue was settled on the basis of classification of soil. The soil was divided into three classes and the average produce of each class was ascertained and then the average amounts fixed. The amount of revenue was mostly fixed at one-third of the total produce.⁸¹ Another important effect of this survey was to extend proprietary rights to cultivators in simple village which earlier was enjoyed only by the shareholders of joint villages. By this change, the power of nobility to take undue exactions from the cultivators was checked to some extent.⁸² It is also important to note that the survey operation was confined to only a small portion of the whole area of province, as out of 184 sub-divisions only 64 were surveyed. In the crown land, where the land was not measured, the old methods of determining the state share of the produce was continued.⁸³ These fields were inspected at the time of crops were ready to be cut and were assessed according to their supposed value. This system came to be known as *pahani* system. Thus, the system of *pahani* was introduced on the lands which were not taken under regular survey.⁸⁴

The aim of Todarmal's survey was to fix the state demand at 1/3rd of the crops and the assessment on individual field was fixed by dividing all land into three classes on the basis of the fertility of soil. In order to fix the revenue, the normal produce of each class of soil was estimated and was converted into cash on the basis of the average prices of previous years. The cultivators were also given the option to pay in kind 1/3rd of crop in bad seasons. The settlement

⁷⁹ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 2

⁸⁰ Dutt, R. C. (1905). BAR. 1902-1903 and 1903-04. 118

⁸¹ Gordon, R. G. (1917). Vol. I. 8-9

⁸² Watson, J. W. (1876). 20

⁸³ Watson, J. W. (1876). 19

⁸⁴ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 493

was fixed for a period of 10 years. These principles were also adopted in the territories of Vindhyan range apart from Gujarat.⁸⁵

The payment of revenue in cash came to be known as *bighoti* system which was not very commonly used. Earlier state revenue was collected chiefly in kind. But over the period of time, it was changed to fixed money payment per *bigha*. The land was measured in *bighas* and on the basis of it the revenue was collected in cash.⁸⁶ The *bighoti* was fixed not only based on the classification or fertility of soil but also its vicinity to the village, the advantages or disadvantages of its particular situation and the nearness of the village to a market etc. As the assessment became permanent for a term, the burden of risk was thrown on the cultivators.⁸⁷ The cash or *bighoti* system introduced under Mughal did not much suit the people due to fluctuating demands, therefore, both *bighoti* and *bhagbatai* system was continued.⁸⁸ The arrangement introduced by Akbar in the end of 16th century, remained in force till the death of Aurangzeb in 1707.⁸⁹ After which the decline of Mughal Empire brought another wave of changes in land administration of Gujarat.

Land Administration (1707-1800)

1. Maratha Expeditions in Gujarat: The first decade of the eighteenth century is considered as both cause and effect of the decline of the Mughal Empire coincided with Aurangzeb's death in 1707 and the emergence of a new power groups in different regions.⁹⁰ At that time, Gujarat was politically scattered among the competing rulers. For instance, Ahmedabad was governed by the representative of Mughal ruler while Surat, Bharuch and Cambay were ruled by independent *nawabs* under the tutelage of the Mughals. The different territories of Kathiawar

⁸⁵ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 2-3

⁸⁶ Patel, C. B. (1920). 29

⁸⁷ Robertson, E. P. (1865). 51

⁸⁸ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 3

⁸⁹ Watson, J. W. (1876). 7

⁹⁰ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 36

Peninsula were dominated by the several number of *rajput* and *kathi* chiefs. Marathas (Peshwa and Gaekwad) had also established their political supremacy over the certain territories of Gujarat.⁹¹

The connection of Marathas with Gujarat can be traced from 1664 when Shivaji raided Surat. After which, Maratha partly by independent action acquired considerable territorial advantages by challenging their rivals.⁹² Due to political chaos and confusion, the Marathas followed a system of successive expeditions in which tributes were collected only under the pressure of military force.⁹³ This system came to be known as *mulkgiri*⁹⁴ which was essentially not meant to acquire territorial possession but to collect tribute.⁹⁵

2. *Mulkgiri* Expeditions in Gujarat: By 1700, Khanderao Dabhade, the military officer of Rajaram, made *mulkgiri* expeditions in Gujarat and imposed tribute upon its inhabitants.⁹⁶ The first Maratha raid in Sorath took place probably around 1711 in which they faced defeat by Syed Ahmed Gilani, the *fauzdar* of Sorath.⁹⁷ In 1712, Khanderao was the first of the Marathas to be granted the rights of revenue collection from Gujarat in form of *chauth*⁹⁸ and *sardeshmukhi*⁹⁹.¹⁰⁰ In 1716, he was appointed as *Senapati* or Commander-in-Chief by the king

⁹¹ Desai, N. (1978). *Social Change in Gujarat*. Bombay: Vohra Publishers & Distributors. 2-3

⁹² Campbell, J. M. (1896). *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. I. Part I. History of Gujarat*. Bombay: The Government Central Press. 385-399

⁹³ Wallace, R. (1863). *The Guicowar, and His Relations with the British Government*. Byculla: Education Society's Press. 110-111

⁹⁴ *Mulkgiri/Mulukgiri* – Literally means 'seizure of a country' is a misnomer, applied by Maratha to the collect the annual dues from their tributaries. It is also known as 'a circuit of country', but the actual realizations were divided into a variety of heads. For instances, *nalbandi* (compensation for shoeing horses who shoes may be worn out), *ghasdana* (hay and grain), *ghanim vera* (collection by plunders i.e., Maratha), *turkvera* (a collection by Turks), *babivera* (a collection by Nawab of Junagadh of Babi family) etc., were collected. For detailed account of *mulkgiri* system, see Vaidya, M. (2015). *Mulukgiri System in the Princely State of Baroda: Context and Concept*. *Global History and Cultural Review*. 1(1). pp. 59-64

⁹⁵ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M., (2017). 41

⁹⁶ Chavda, V. K. (1960). *Gaekwads and the British; A Study of Their Problems (1875-1920)*. Delhi: University Publishers. 1

⁹⁷ Watson, J. W. (1884). Vol. VIII. 299

⁹⁸ *Chauth* - Maratha claim of revenue for protection levied at 25%.

⁹⁹ *Sardeshmukhi* - A tax of 10 percent by Maratha as a hereditary tax.

¹⁰⁰ Tait, T. S. (1908). *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Baroda*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing. 9

of Satara.¹⁰¹ About the same year, he established himself between Nandod and Rajpipla.¹⁰² He was assisted by his officer Damajirao Gaekwad I who rose in rank rapidly due to his bravery and skills. As a result, Damajirao-I was given the title of '*Shamsher Bahadur*' meaning 'illustrious swordsman'.¹⁰³ In the year 1721, both Khanderao and Damajirao-I died.¹⁰⁴ Khanderao was succeeded by his son Trimbak Rao and Damajirao-I by his nephew Pilajirao Gaekwad, the son of Zingoji Gaekwad.¹⁰⁵

The king of Satara granted Pilajirao a right to collect the tribute in Gujarat. The other two Maratha leaders named Kantaji Kadam and Udajirao Powar were also given the similar right to collect the tribute from the province of Gujarat. Hence for a time, the three leaders named Pilajirao, Kantaji and Udajirao worked together.¹⁰⁶ Pilajirao first established himself in Khandesh but as this region was claimed by Kantaji, he moved to Songadh, a hill in the east of the Navsari.¹⁰⁷ He built the fort of Songadh and made it his headquarters.¹⁰⁸ From Songadh, he proceeded to consolidate his position and led raids into surrounding territories to collect tribute.¹⁰⁹ Songadh emerged as the original seat of authority of the Gaekwads in Gujarat. Over the time, as their power increased, the Gaekwads gradually established their demand of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* upon whole of Gujarat and in fact conquered it.¹¹⁰ In 1720, Pilajirao and Kantaji made an excursion into northern Gujarat and obtained *chauth* from the *subedar* of Ahmedabad. In the *haveli* of Ahmedabad, he appointed an agent called *gumastha/gomasth*¹¹¹

¹⁰¹ Chavda, V. K. (1960). 1

¹⁰² Rice, S. (1931). *Life of Sayaji Rao III, Maharaja of Baroda. Vol. I.* London: Oxford University Press. xv

¹⁰³ Playne, S. (1921-1922). *Indian States; A Biographical, Historical, and Administrative Survey.* London: The Foreign and Colonial Compiling and Publishing Co. 9

¹⁰⁴ Gense, J. H. (1936) *The Gaekwads of Baroda, English Documents. Vol. I. Pilaji and Damaji Gaikwads (1720-1768).* Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. xi

¹⁰⁵ Tait, T. S. (1908). 9 and Elliot, F. A. H., (1934). 19

¹⁰⁶ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 9

¹⁰⁷ Rice, S. (1931). Vol. I. xvi

¹⁰⁸ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 9

¹⁰⁹ Rice, S. (1931). Vol. I. xvi

¹¹⁰ Pandya, G. B. (1958). *Gaekwads of Baroda. Maharaja Sayajirao II. A.D. 1821 to A.D. 1830 (SBRR).* Baroda: Department of History, Faculty of Arts, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. 1

¹¹¹ *Gumastha/gomasth* refers to Maratha agent employed in the management of fiscal unit.

who was assigned the management of administration. The city of Baroda was also made to pay *chauth* at the same time when Ahmedabad was made to pay.¹¹² In 1723, Pilajirao marched on Surat and defeated Momin Khan, the newly appointed governor of Surat after which he levied the tribute in Surat *Aththavisi*¹¹³ regularly.¹¹⁴ After capturing the Surat *Aththavisi*, he began to levy tribute regularly in Gujarat.¹¹⁵ Thus, definite and regular Maratha demand of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* of Gujarat was defined for the first time in year 1723.¹¹⁶

The Maratha ranks were overridden with internal as well as open conflicts. They often ended up facing each other in the battles. In 1725, Pilajirao made an alliance with General Rustam Ali Khan in a battle against the forces of Nizam to whom Kantaji had attached.¹¹⁷ In the same year, a settlement was made through the mediation of Mughal governor. The Nizam's deputy Hamid Khan endeavoured to grant Pilajirao, the right to levy the tribute from the territories to the south of Mahi river (namely Baroda, Nandod, Champaner, Bharuch and Surat) while Kantaji to the north of Mahi.¹¹⁸ Thus, by 1725, Pilajirao had not only thrown out the local Mughal authority in Baroda but also secured the right to exact tribute up to the Mahi river and beyond.¹¹⁹ Mughal rule came to an end in 1732, when Pilajirao intensified the Maratha campaigns in Southern Gujarat and carved out a kingdom for his lineage. In 1732, the city of Baroda was taken into possession by the Gaekwad.¹²⁰ By this time, Pilajirao had secured the right to collect the tribute from the territories of Baroda, Nandod, Champaner, Bharuch and

¹¹² Pandya, G. B. (1958). 1

¹¹³ *Attavishi* means 28 subdivisions.

¹¹⁴ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 22

¹¹⁵ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 9

¹¹⁶ Campbell, J. M. (1896). Vol. I. Part I. 390

¹¹⁷ Rice, S. (1931). Vol. I. xvi

¹¹⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 170

¹¹⁹ Gaekwad, F. (1989). 7

¹²⁰ Pandya, G. B. (1958). 1

Surat.¹²¹ Pilajirao became the first Gaekwad to establish the control over Baroda and much of Gujarat. Therefore, he is considered as the founder of Baroda State.¹²²

In the year 1732, Pilajirao was assassinated by the agent of Abhay Singh at Dakor.¹²³ In a letter dated 14-4-1732 from Raja Shahu, the king of Satara, offered condolence to Damajirao Gaekwad II for the sad assassination of Pilajirao at the hands of Dhogadsing and appointed him as the successor of his father.¹²⁴ It was the time when Abhay Singh captured the city and fort of Baroda which compelled Damajirao-II to take shelter in Dabhoi. In order to avenge the death of his father, Damajirao-II led an expedition against Abhay Singh. He defeated the Mughal armies and recaptured Baroda in 1734. Since that time, Baroda passed into the hands of Gaekwads.¹²⁵ Damajirao-II consolidated his power and Abhay Singh was compelled to leave Gujarat in 1737.¹²⁶ In the same year, Momin Khan was appointed as the new viceroy of Gujarat. As per considering the difficulties in maintaining his position in Gujarat, Momin Khan formed an alliance with Damajirao-II and captured the city of Ahmedabad from Ratansi Bhandari with the help of Rangaji (*diwan* of Damajirao-II). After which, the revenue of Ahmedabad was divided equally between the Mughal and the Gaekwad.¹²⁷

The collection of tribute was not an easy task for Damajirao-II as many of bigger and smaller regional states/estates were located in western part of Gujarat. Hence, he resorted to carry out frequent *mulkgiri* expeditions.¹²⁸ In this process, more territories in Gujarat were gradually captured.¹²⁹ He established his hold in Kadi after negotiations with local chiefs. Simultaneously

¹²¹ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 9

¹²² Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 167-168 and Tait, T. S. (1908). 9

¹²³ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 10

¹²⁴ BSA. (1934). *HSBSR. Volume. I. 1724-1768. Pilaji and Damaji II*. Baroda: Baroda State Press. 15

¹²⁵ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 10 and Rice, S. (1931). Vol. I. xviii

¹²⁶ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 10

¹²⁷ BSA. (1934). *HSBSR. Volume. I*. 19

¹²⁸ Watson, J. W. (1884). Vol. VIII. 299

¹²⁹ Rogers, A. (1892). *The Land Revenue of Bombay: A History of its Administration, Rise and Progress, Vol. I*. London: W H Allen and Co. 15

he was able to wrest half of the revenues from Ahmedabad and Viramgam Taluka. The revenues of northern and central Gujarat and annual revenue from Kathiawad were soon collected by Gaekwads.¹³⁰ The *taluka* of Amreli, for instance, was acquired partly from *kathis* and partly from the *nawab* of Junagadh around 1730-1742.¹³¹ The Chital was obtained from Sarvaiyas in 1735.¹³² Damajirao-II imposed tribute on all of them and established *thana* (military outpost) at Amreli and Lathi in 1742-1743.¹³³ He also formed matrimonial alliance when he married daughter of the *gohil* chief of Lathi (a small estate), and obtained villages in Damnagar in dowry. He secured his position in Amreli and made expeditions regularly to collect the tribute from Kathiawar.¹³⁴

3. Partition Treaty: In 1749, Raja Shahu died after which the real power of Marathas passed into the hands of Peshwa.¹³⁵ This was not acceptable by Damajirao-II and consequently he fought series of battles against the Peshwa after 1750.¹³⁶ Unfortunately Damajirao-II met with defeat and agreed to cede to the Peshwa half of revenues of Gujarat.¹³⁷ Peshwa thus forced Gaekwad into a treaty which is known as Partition Treaty of 1751. According to the treaty, the territories and revenues of Gujarat were divided between Peshwa and Gaekwad. The northern area of the Mahi River went into the hands of Peshwa and southern area of Mahi River to the Gaekwad.¹³⁸ Territories were divided between Gaekwad and the Peshwa in the following manner:¹³⁹

¹³⁰ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 2-3

¹³¹ Patel, G. D. (1972). 2

¹³² Oza, K. C. (1946). *Reconstruction of Life and Polity in Kathiawar States*. Rajkot: Kevalram C. Oza. 11

¹³³ Patel, G. D. (1972). 2

¹³⁴ Dosabhai, E. (1894). *A History of Gujarat from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*. Ahmadabad: The United Printing and General Agency Company's Press. 198

¹³⁵ Playne, S. (1921-1922). 10

¹³⁶ For detailed account, see extract from Purandare's diary containing a chronological account of the fights between Nansaheb Peshwa and Damaji (source - BSA (1934). HSBSR. Volume. I. 40-42)

¹³⁷ Chavda, V. K. (1960). 2

¹³⁸ Thakar, H. G. (1935). 2-3

¹³⁹ Patel, C. B. (1920). 3

Gaekwad Territories	Vasravi, Mandvi, Tadakeshwar, Kamrej, Chorasi, Bulsar, Karod, Timbi, Teladi, Maroli, Dhada, Navsari, Gandevi, Bisanpur, Mahuva, Anawal, Khandol, Panchmahals, Ahmednagar, Vidur, Mahasrara, Rajpipla, Vadodara, Bharuch, Koralbandar, Vaghra, Sankheda, Daskroi Prangad and Ahmedabad <i>haveli tapo</i> (excepting half city), half Petlad, Dholka, Matar, Nadiad, Mahudha, half Surat, half Ahmedabad, Kapadvanj, Bahiyal, Dharasana, Chala, Kadi.
Peshwa Territories	Hansota, Ankleshwar, Olpad, Sarbhan, Supa, Parchol, Bhutveer, Vesma, Bardoli, Dabhoi, Jambusar, Amod, half Daskroi, Bonbarsad, Dhandhuka, Dhamde, Mehamdabad, Viramgam, share in <i>jakat</i> of Khambat, Parnera, Buhari, Valsad, Deshbora, Savli, Bahadurpur.
The rights of <i>mulukgiri</i> in Kathiawad	Revenue collected by Gaekwad on behalf of Peshwa

The Gaekwad entered into an alliance with the Peshwa and accepted his sovereignty.¹⁴⁰ The article 8 of the *Yadi* dated 1752 regarding the agreement between Nanasaheb Peshwa and Maharani Tarabai mention that half the province of Gujarat had been given to Damajirao-II and he had pay to government half of what was paid by Dabhade.¹⁴¹ In 1753, Damajirao-II aided by the Peshwa's army captured Ahmedabad. The Mughal control thus formally came to end in Gujarat.¹⁴² After the Maratha's possession of Ahmedabad in 1753, the Kathiawar Peninsula had become subject to a regular tribute.¹⁴³ According to an abstract, the amount of

¹⁴⁰ Chavda, V. K. (1960). 2

¹⁴¹ BSA. (1934). HSBSR. Volume. I. 51

¹⁴² Playne, S. (1921-1922). 10

¹⁴³ Watson, J. W. (1884). Vol. VIII. 304

income for the years 1752, 1753 and 1754 of the territories under Damajirao-II was Rs. 1,08,92,080.¹⁴⁴

4. Settlement of Land Tenures: By 1760, Maratha had become the dominant power in Gujarat which marked the end of Mughal sovereignty in Gujarat.¹⁴⁵ In order to collect revenue, they followed the *jamabandi* system of Mughal. The Marathas continued and modified the existing land tenure systems as mentioned below.¹⁴⁶

(i) *Wanta* Tenure: Under Maratha, the *wanta* came to be known as *chauth wanta* or *chauth*. But the early *wanta* was distinct from the late *chauth wanta* in consideration to provision of providing protection by Maratha.¹⁴⁷ Earlier the supreme authority enjoyed third-fourth but now it was one-fourth of the total produce.¹⁴⁸

(ii) *Izaradari* Tenure: The Marathas had reverted and modified the *izaradari* or revenue farming system that had been abolished by Akbar at a time.¹⁴⁹ The collection of state revenue was farmed out to revenue functionaries/farmers who collected what they could from village communities and paid the stipulated sum to the state.¹⁵⁰ The *izardars* managed revenue collection through the *patels*, thus leaving the peasants to the *patel's* discretion.¹⁵¹ The practice of *izara* gave rise to the *manotidari*, sub-farming of revenues. *Manoti* meant financial surety and was given offered in two forms. One, it was offered to *izaradar* and two, to the *ryots*.¹⁵² Although *izaradars* and other such intermediaries had acquired supreme authority over the

¹⁴⁴ BSA. (1934). HSBSR. Volume. I. 71

¹⁴⁵ Campbell, J. M. (1896). Vol. I. Part I. 385

¹⁴⁶ Sharma, G. D. (1981). Land Revenue and Early British Experiments in South Gujarat During the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century: A Case Study of the Pargana of Broach, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 42, pp. 377-388

¹⁴⁷ Rajyagor, S. B., & Tripathy, S. (1979). 521

¹⁴⁸ Kharod, N. G. (1957). A77

¹⁴⁹ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 236

¹⁵⁰ Desai, G. H. (1918). *A Statistical Atlas of the Baroda State*. Bombay: The Times Press. 9

¹⁵¹ Patel, G. D. (1969). *The Land Revenue Settlements and The British Rule in India*, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University Press. 23

¹⁵² Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 44

territories under their jurisdiction, the internal management and administration of fiscal units was still into the hands of local revenue functionaries i.e., *amin*, *manotidar*, *desai*, *majumdar*, *patel* etc.¹⁵³ Under Marathas the land revenue was fixed annually and was based on the yield of the preceding year and the possibilities of the current year. It was a matter of negotiation between the *mamlatdar* and the village community headed by the *patel*. It is difficult to assess the rate of assessment because of the lack of sufficient evidence. Since the state demand was a matter for negotiation between *mamlatdar* and village community, the demand from individual cultivators was decided by village *patel*. The *patel* was the most important official in the village and held his office by grant from the state and had existed since the time of the Mughals.¹⁵⁴

The office under the Maratha had become hereditary and saleable with the approval of state. Thus, *patel* became the agent of the state and representative of the cultivators. He was assisted by *kulkarni* who kept all village records in return for fees allotted to him by state.¹⁵⁵ The *patel* had also judicial powers as he settled the local disputes either independently or refers it to the *panchayat*. The land revenue collected was about 2/5th of the total produce (*jamabandi*) fixed annually after consulting with the villagers.¹⁵⁶ There were numerous village servants with specific duties connected with village administration.¹⁵⁷ For their service to the village, they were given the rent-free lands such as *pasaita* and *chakariat*. The *pasaita* was a rent-free land granted to the various village servants¹⁵⁸ in Gujarat. It was also at times assigned to religious and charitable institutions.¹⁵⁹ The *chakariat* lands were also given away by the state for specific

¹⁵³ Srinivas, K., Awasthi, A., & Vaidya, M. (2017). 237

¹⁵⁴ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 5-6

¹⁵⁵ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 6

¹⁵⁶ Deshpande, M. K. (1954). Vol. I. 5

¹⁵⁷ Punjabi, K. L. (n. a.). 6

¹⁵⁸ According to Monier William, these village servants included carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, tailors, barbers, shoemakers, tanners, washer men, watchmen, peons, *burthaneas*, *dheds*, *bhangis* etc. He mentioned that *passaita* land was government land enjoyed entirely revenue free by village artisans and servants in return for services rendered to the public. It was resembled and transferable by government at pleasure and belonged rather to offices and situations than to persons.

¹⁵⁹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 350

village or personal. It was assigned to the state or village servants in lieu of cash payments or salaries. The occupants of these lands were not authorised to sell, mortgage or part with it. However, the mortgages have been effected without the knowledge of state.¹⁶⁰

(iii) *Giras Tenure*: With the Maratha depredation in Gujarat in the early 18th century, there existed a number of peripheral powers alongside the subsistence of many intermediary revenue functionaries. For instance, the *girasias* expanded their lands and extended their powers. From paying tribute to Mughals, they became now the tributaries of Marathas.¹⁶¹ Taking advantage of the situation, they began to demand revenue from random parties. For instance, *girasias* began to levied *toda garas*¹⁶², *vol*, *rakhopa* or *pal* which were generally a demand in cash.¹⁶³ They enjoyed the different kinds of rights viz., (i) land held, either rent-free or subjected to a quit-rent to government in which every type of rent was to be paid by the tenant, (ii) cash allowances, (iii) grain allowances, (iv) small share of miscellaneous agricultural or dairy products, (v) claims on the manufacturing industry of the villages, (vi) claims on manual labour of villages and (vii) free food and lodging for *girassias* and a fixed number of their retainers and horses.¹⁶⁴ It is important to note that before and after the early Maratha invasions, *girasias* became powerful and independent.¹⁶⁵ Besides, there developed a hereditary *giras*, the holder of which was called as *girasia* or *watandar* or *zamindar*.¹⁶⁶

The *girasias* were settled mainly near the Mahi and Narmada rivers. On the Mahi River, beside the *rajputs*, there were a large number of *koli* tribes such as *barias*, *pagis* and *kotvals*. In the Sankheda *mehwas* on the Narmada River, the *girasias* were purely *rajputs* such as *rathod*,

¹⁶⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 349

¹⁶¹ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 342

¹⁶² According to Elphinstone, *toda garas* was the sum paid to a powerful neighbor or turbulent inhabitant of the village as the price of forbearance, protection or assistance.

¹⁶³ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 102

¹⁶⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 104

¹⁶⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 341

¹⁶⁶ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 101

chauhan and *parmar*. They were both Hindus and Muslims.¹⁶⁷ In the initial period of eighteenth century, the Sankheda chiefs had expanded their power and reached till Baroda. The Maratha, however defeated them and converted them into tribute paying states.¹⁶⁸

(iv) Bhagbatai Tenure: There were number of tenures that continued since the Mughal times. The most used form of tenure was the *bhagbatai* system. The administrator historians in their accounts write about the follies of the revenue farming system. However, it seems preposterous as the kind of excessive exploitation that was carried after the implementation of British rule and regulation was unprecedented. The Maratha in fact did not bring about much changes in the pre-existing systems of tenancy as well as revenue officials. For instance, the *patels* or *matadars* of villages (considered as *manotidars*) were continued to be given the right to collect the revenues of entire villages. The *bohras* in Bharuch also became revenue-farmers and perhaps they stood security for the villages.¹⁶⁹

(v) Bhagdari and Narwadari Tenure: The *bhagdari* and *narwadari* tenure was joint village system in which revenue was paid by the village shareholders. The *narwadari*¹⁷⁰ system had developed by Kanbi Patidar in Ahmedabad, Kheda and Surat as early as 18th century. Initially this system had served as a communal form of protection and resistance against exploitative modes of governance against individual peasant. The Kanbi had controlled agricultural lands of Charotar tract and had shared payment of land revenue with a coparcenary system of land tenure known as *narwadari*.¹⁷¹ The *narwadars* of a village were collectively responsible for the payment of assessment.¹⁷² They divided the lands among themselves according to the local

¹⁶⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 342

¹⁶⁸ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 336

¹⁶⁹ Patel, G. D. (1950). 26

¹⁷⁰ *Narwadari* is derived either from the Sanskrit word '*nirwah*' (maintenance) or Persian word '*narawan*' or '*narawa*' (not current) (Rustamji, K. (1898). *Jamabandi Settlement Report of the Petlad Taluka of the Baroda Division*. Baroda: The Government Press. 30)

¹⁷¹ Chaturvedi, V. (2005). 308

¹⁷² Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 29

traditions.¹⁷³ Once they settled, they hired cultivators to cultivate their lands in exchange of goods and services.¹⁷⁴ These cultivators called were only tenants-at-will. Like the *bhagdari* system, there was no state interference between the *narwadars* and cultivators regarding revenue assessments.¹⁷⁵ These revenue functionaries paid whatever amount nominal or large to whosoever the sovereign power was.¹⁷⁶ If there were several *narwadars* in one village, each paid their share of lump sum due to the state accordance with the original division of the share when the village was found.¹⁷⁷ If one *narwadar* failed to pay the state due to circumstances, other *moksha narwadars* covered for them.¹⁷⁸

(vi) Ankadia Tenure; In the eighteenth century, the state needed a person who could manage villages administration and provide revenue.¹⁷⁹ This led to the emergence of *ankdedars* who were given the responsibility of villages management. They had to pay a lump sum called *ankada* to the state.¹⁸⁰ The state did not interfere with the internal fiscal management of the *ankadia* villages. It merely fixed the lumpsum to be paid either once a year or at short interval.¹⁸¹

(vii) Maleki Tenure: In *maleki* villages, Marathas imposed a fixed tribute called *udhad jamabandhi* or a lump tribute. By 1769, the Gaekwad's *mulkagiri* army levied an additional tribute called '*ghasdana*'.¹⁸² In order to meet the Maratha tribute (*udhad jamabandi*), *maleks* imposed a poll-tax (*karam vero*) and a tax in kind (*waje*) on their cultivators or tenants. This tax was amounted to one-third of the produce of the land.¹⁸³

¹⁷³ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 231

¹⁷⁴ Desai, G. H., & Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 29-30

¹⁷⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 231

¹⁷⁶ Desai, G. H., and Clarke, A. B. (1923). Vol. II. 29-30

¹⁷⁷ Elliot, F. A. H. (1934). 231

¹⁷⁸ Patel, C. B. (1920). 30

¹⁷⁹ Patel, G. D. (1954). 80

¹⁸⁰ Mitter, B. L. (1947). *BAR. 1945-46*. Baroda: The Baroda State Press. 24-25

¹⁸¹ Rajyagor, S. B. (1975). 500

¹⁸² Gordon, R. G. (1917). Vol. I. 269

¹⁸³ MSA. (1914). SRBG. No. DXXIV.-New Series. 12 and Gordon, R. G. (1917). Vol. I. 269

(viii) **Mehwasi Tenure:** As far as the *mehwasis* chiefs were concerned, they also continued to subsist and became tribute paying chieftains. They also paid revenue called *ankda* to state. .¹⁸⁴

5. Formation of British Gujarat and Baroda State: The English East India Company had become considerably powerful after obtaining *diwani right* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa after the battle of Buxar (1764).¹⁸⁵ The territorial acquisition of Company dated back to the seventeenth century. In 1613, British settled at Surat in order to establish the network of trade and commerce. The first actual possession was the island of Bombay ceded by Portugal to Charles II, the king of England, as part of the marriage dowry of the Infanta in 1661. The Island of Bombay was granted to East India Company in 1669.¹⁸⁶ In Gujrat, British acquired Surat, Bharuch and Kheda partly from the Nawab of Surat in 1800 and partly from Gaekwad of Baroda between 1802 to 1805.¹⁸⁷ Further they acquired Ahmedabad from Gaekwad between 1802 and 1817.¹⁸⁸

British took advantage of internal feuds between Peshwa and Gaekwad and pitted one against the other which gave them an opportunity to increase their sway in Gujarat in the late 18th or early 19th centuries.¹⁸⁹ In 1802, the British supported the cause of Maharaja Anandrao Gaekwad against his brother. British negotiated an intricate but powerful Subsidiary Alliance Treaty with the Gaekwad in the same year. Through this treaty, British obtained considerable territories and rights of internal interference in the politics of Gujarat. From this time, the authority of the British Resident at Baroda was paramount. In alliance with Gaekwads, British managed to secure an important treaty with Peshwa - Treaty of Bassein (1802). This enabled the formation

¹⁸⁴ Patel, G. D. (1954). 78

¹⁸⁵ Keith, A. B. (1922). *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy; 1750-1921. Vol. I.* London: Oxford University Press. 20

¹⁸⁶ Powell, B. H. (1882). *A Manual of the Land Revenue Systems and Land Tenures of British India.* Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing. 4

¹⁸⁷ Powell, B. H. (1892). *The Land-Systems of British India. Vol. I.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 41

¹⁸⁸ Powell, B. H. (1892). Vol. I. 41

¹⁸⁹ Joshi, P. M. (1955). *HSBR (New Series). Volume. I. 1826-1835.* Baroda: Government Press. i

of British Gujarat and Baroda State.¹⁹⁰ The Gaekwad agreed to share the revenue of Dholka and Ahmedabad Paraganas to British.¹⁹¹ Panchmahals was the last district which British acquired from Scindia in 1861.¹⁹²

6. Walker Settlement: It is important to mention that *mulkagiri* expeditions were continued even during the beginning of nineteenth century. For instance, Babaji Apaji conducted three great *mulkagiri* expeditions between 1803 and 1807.¹⁹³ The '*Tarikh-i-Sorath*' admits that from the time of Babaji Apaji, the tribute of Kathiawar was trebled.¹⁹⁴ It is also important to note that the *mulkagiri* expeditions were not only confined to the Maratha alone. It was also practiced by the nawab of Junagadh, chieftains of Bhavnagar, Wadhwan and Navanagar.¹⁹⁵ Thus, conflicts between a spirit of encroachment and resistance perpetuated the hostility in almost every *taluka* of Kathiawar.¹⁹⁶ In 1803, some chiefs of Chital, Jetpur, Kundla, Mendarda, Joria, Morvi etc. who had suffered from exaction of the chiefs of Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Nawanagar as well as Gaekwad and Peshwa, applied to Col. Walker (the Resident of Baroda State) for interference and protection by offering to cede the sovereignty of their estates to the British on condition that certain rights and privileges were to be preserved to chiefs and their families.¹⁹⁷ This became the first opportunity for British to directly intervene in the local polity of Kathiawar.¹⁹⁸ In 1807, Col. Walker proceeded in Kathiawar with objective to abolish the *mulkagiri* system and to introduce a permanent settlement of tribute.¹⁹⁹ A settlement was carried out, also known as Walker Settlement. In this settlement, the relations of the tributaries

¹⁹⁰ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Vol. VII. 202, 206, 210

¹⁹¹ Wallace, R. (1863). 98

¹⁹² Powell, B. H. (1892). Vol. I. 61

¹⁹³ Patel, G. D. (1972). 67

¹⁹⁴ Watson, J. W. (1884). 52

¹⁹⁵ Elliot, F. A. H. (1883). Volume VII. 202 and Campbell, J. M. (1896). Vol. I. Part I. 385, 412

¹⁹⁶ Gense, J. H. (1942). 501

¹⁹⁷ *Proceedings Adopted in the Years 1804 and 1807* by Col. Walker. 64-65, 264 and Patel, G. D. (1972). 67-68

¹⁹⁸ Hamilton, W. (1820). *A Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of Hindostan and the Adjacent Countries. Vol. I.* London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. 641

¹⁹⁹ Dosabhai, E. (1894). 231-232

to their paramount power were drafted in a matter of contract which was signed by local rulers/chiefs.²⁰⁰ The amount of tribute among the chiefs fixed which were to be paid to Gaekwad. The boundaries were also fixed once for all and British guaranteed the chiefs security from external encroachment.²⁰¹ Col. Walker also decided the proprietor rights of the *girasias* and recognised some of them who had freed themselves from the control of the state as independent ruler known as *talukdars*. Thus, the position of *girasias* and other landlords continued to be the same.²⁰² In the virtue of position as arbiter, the British government in 1807 became virtually paramount power in Kathiawar. However, the control remained marginalised and authority was not formally conceded until the year 1820.²⁰³

Overall, the eighteenth century was a period of full of dynamism and changes of great consequence for the political economy. Scholars have produced diverse and even contradictory views and interpretations about these changes. A major concern of scholars in many studies on political economy of pre-colonial India has been determined the potentialities of growth in the economy. The assumption underlying such enquiries is that colonial intervention in the mid-eighteenth century interrupted and strangled economic growth. Most of these studies use the ‘potentialities’ model and by extension subscribe either to the ‘change’ (idea of Aligarh School²⁰⁴) or to the ‘continuity’ (idea of Cambridge School²⁰⁵).²⁰⁶

²⁰⁰ Campbell, J. M. (1896). Vol. I. Part I. 423

²⁰¹ Mishra, R. R. (1961). *Effects of Land Reforms in Saurashtra*. Bombay: Vora & Co., Publishers Private Limited. 2-3

²⁰² Mishra, R. R. (1961). 3, 5

²⁰³ MSA. (1874). *GRABP for the Year 1872-73*. Bombay: The Government Central Press. 19

²⁰⁴ For the ‘change’ view of this period, see Habib, I. (1995, 2005); Alavi, S. (2002); Ali, M. A. (2005); Gupta, A. D. (1979); Chaudhury, S. (1995); Chaudhuri, K. N. (1985).

²⁰⁵ For the ‘continuity’ view (revisionist) of this period, see Barnett, R. B. (1980); Bayly, C. A. (1983); Alam, M. (1986); Washbrook, D. A. (1988); Parthasarathi, P. (2001).

²⁰⁶ Nadri, G. A. (2009). *Eighteenth-Century Gujarat: The Dynamics of Its Political Economy, 1750-1800*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV. 1