ZAMINDARS
IN THE MUGHAL SUBAH OF GUJARAT
DURING
THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
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DECLARATION

Certified that the thesis entitled *Zamindars in the Mughal Subah of Gujarat During the First half of the Eighteenth Century* submitted by Sh. Shaukat Ullah Khan for the Ph.D degree has not been previously submitted either in part or in full for any other degree or diploma in this or in any other University.

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CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CHAPTER - I (1) | The Superior Zamindars  
On the eve of the eighteenth Century | 50    |
| CHAPTER - I (2) | The Superior Zamindars  
On the eve of the eighteenth century | 116   |
| CHAPTER - II | The Superior Zamindars  
(1700 - 50) | 177   |
| CHAPTER - III | Intermediary Zamindars  
On the eve of the eighteenth century | 242   |
| CHAPTER - IV | Intermediary Zamindars  
(1700 - 50) | 296   |
| CHAPTER - V  | The Primary Zamindars  
On the eve of the eighteenth century | 350   |
| CHAPTER - VI | Primary Zamindars  
(1700-50) | 428   |
| CHAPTER-VII | New Zamindaris - Some case studies | 486   |
|             | Conclusions                                                                 | 556   |
|             | Bibliography                                                               | 576   |
INTRODUCTION

The Mughal ruling class was primarily concerned with the expansion of the empire and consolidation of the gains of conquest during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries - the days of relative political and military stability. The landed aristocracy, or as it was known, the zamindars in spite of persisting contradictions with the higher echelons of the Mughal ruling class, had rendered valuable service to the empire during the period. Some scholars 1 have examined the position and working of the institution of zamindari during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries - the period that witnessed the empire at the zenith of territorial expansion - in some detail. These studies have, however, been confined to the broad features of the institution and, in view of nature and scope of the works, inter-regional and intra-regional variations have not been examined in adequate details. The vastness of the empire with all the local variations require a closer examination of the position and role of zamindars at regional level.

In contrast to their role during the days of 'cohesion' and 'stability' the question as to what kind of role did the zamindars...

dars play during the ensuing period of 'instability and conflict' though interesting subject of study, has so far not been studied in adequate detail. In his work, *The Land Revenue Administration Under The Mughals. 1700-1750*, N.A. Siddiqi has discussed their role during the said period but only as part of Mughal revenue administrative machinery. The study has also 'excluded from its purview' the 'provincial and regional variations'.\(^1\) The author, moreover, has not made any deliberate attempt to correlate the changes in the position of zamindars with the over all changes taking place at various levels during the period of study.

The present work, essentially a preliminary attempt in the direction, seeks to trace the pattern, process and drift of possible changes in the position and role of the zamindars during the first half of the eighteenth century. The study proceeds with the task of identifying variously designated constituents of the class, delineating each section or category, and tracing the sources and mode of variations between them. Attempt has also been made to ascertain the elements of continuity and change vis a vis the Mughal State, the peasantry and the zamindars themselves. It has also been attempted to answer the question: could the state enforce and retain uniform pattern of relationship with the zamindars? Did it make any tangible efforts to arrest the process of declining imperial hold over them? and did the zamindars play such a role which had bearing on the fortunes of the Mughals in the *subah*? The study also proposes to ascertain the nature, extent and magnitude of imperial control and, incidentally, clarify if the imperial control over the zamindars was only superficial, or else the state could erode their power base and

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1. N.A. Siddiqi, *op.cit.* p 2
weaken them at the grass-root level. Finally, the study may also incidentally suggest whether the process of change and, or its impact, strengthened or else eroded the Mughal's authority. Above all, the study may indicate the final outcome of the possible changes in the position and role of zamindars. The discussion, it may be seen, is mainly focussed on the changes in the state-zamindar relationship and incidentally on their relationship among themselves, a limitation imposed by the nature of available evidence.

It is a well known fact that the zamindari right represented a range of variously designated superior claims. The 'generic' term 'zamindar' which, as Irfan Habib notes, gained currency during the Mughal period, in essence implied a superior right in land or its usufruct. In spite of the fact that the zamindars were designated as malik (owner) and their possessions as milkiyat the zamindari right does not signify an absolute proprietary right over land in the modern sense of the term: the right co-existed with other rights and claims on the produce of the soil. The right represented a range of variously designated superior claims, the one "other than and standing above the peasantry" in land or its usufruct. The right was basically associated with land and its holder enjoyed a share in the produce even without

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2. For a detailed view, Ibid pp 139-40, 154; S Nurul Hassan, 'Zamindars Under The Mughals' pp 17-8; BR Grover, 'Nature of Land Rights in Mughal India' pp 1-23;

directly engaging in the actual process of economic production.  

Since the term 'zamindar' implies a range of superior claims, modern scholars have sought to delineate clearly the levels which constitute the class of zamindars. Irfan Habib categorized them into the 'chieftains' and the zamindars under direct administration whom he also terms 'ordinary zamindars'. In BR Grover's categorization, Irfan Habib's zamindars under direct administration are termed 'petty zamindars' the other ones have been designated the same way. Although NA Siddiqi also regards the nature of state-zamindar relations as the criterion of differentiation he prefers to designate the 'chieftains' as the peshkashl and the other ones as the 'land revenue paying' zamindars. These scholars have either wholly excluded the holders of intermediary positions, such as chaudharis, muqaddams etc, or counted them in the category of revenue officials treating them merely as the leading members of the village community.

1. For a detailed exposition of the views, see Ibid, pp 141, 144-7, 154-7; NA Siddiqi; Land Revenue Administration, pp 21-2 30-2, BR Grover, 'Nature of Land Rights in Mughal India' pp 1-23.

2. Earlier, "the generally accepted view" observes Irfan Habib, seems to have been "that the zamindar in Mughal times really meant a vassal chief and could not exist in the directly administered territories". Agrarian System. p 136; For an exposition of the earlier view, WH Moreland, Agrarian System of Moslim India, Allahabad, 1929, pp 122, 279; P Saran, The Provincial government of the Mughals (1526-1658), Allahabad (reprint) p 111 & n.


4. BR Grover 'Nature of Land Rights in Mughal India' pp 16-23; by the same author, Nature of dehat-1 taalluqa... IESHR, II no 4 pp 166-72; Ibid II no 3 259-65.

5. NA Siddiqi, Land Revenue Administration, pp 21-2, 28,38,139, 151.
On the other hand, Professor S. Nurul Hasan takes the forms of zamindari rights as the main basis of differentiation and neatly divides the class into three categories, viz, Chieftains, Intermediary and the Primary zamindars. In view of its comprehensiveness we propose to follow S Nurul Hasan's categorization, though with some qualifications.

The use of the term 'Chieftain' has been avoided. This term connotes an autonomous native ruler who followed the rule of primogeniture in the matter of succession under the suzerainty of the Mughal empire. Their position as autonomous ruler of their patrimony was accepted by the Mughal Emperors and as such had 'legal' sanction. But we come across a considerable number of zamindars (Chapter 1 (1) and (2) below) who hardly enjoyed autonomy or enjoyed it in a limited sense of the term, did not follow rule of primogeniture, were not rulers of any standing and a large number of them happened to be ordinary members of a dismembered ruling family, still enjoying a status distinctly superior to the members of the other categories. Secondly, during the period there emerged a number of zamindars who were autonomous rulers but had no legal sanction behind their position as zamindars. During this period, such zamindaris were carved out of the Mughal empire rather than incorporated into it as was the case with native rulers who were absorbed into the empire at the time of conquest. In order to avoid any ambiguity and in view of certain features peculiar to the zamindars of Gujarat the use of the term 'Chieftain' has been avoided and the 'Superior zamindar' is used instead.

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1. S. Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars Under the Mughals" pp. 17-31
Though we shall be using the term 'Primary zamindar' we propose to exclude the 'peasant-proprietors' from the category, though Professor Nurul Hasan's term includes them. The right of a peasant-proprietor may not be equated with that of a Primary zamindar, the latter's right being the one other than, distinct from and superior to that of the former. No doubt, the peasants like the zamindars were 'often designated as malik. But all right over land designated as milkiyat were not zamindari rights. The two rights i.e. zamindari and the peasant's could exist, as they did, independently of each other and be enjoyed by different persons over the same piece of land; still the two rights were not necessarily exclusive of each other and could simultaneously be possessed by the same person.

The position of the above mentioned three categories constituting the class of zamindars vis a vis provincial authorities & between the zamindars themselves is sought to be determined on the basis of their sources of power, extent and location of their territorial possessions, productivity and manageability, identity of the boundaries of zamindari with the administrative unit (village/pargana/sarkar), position of zamindar in the ruling hierarchy i.e. whether the zamindar enjoyed a mansab or any administrative position, the degree of autonomy enjoyed in the internal affairs as against the nature, magnitude and continuity of administrative pressure exerted, or sought to be exerted by the authorities, mode and method of calculating and levying imperial share and proportion thereof, nature of service obligation, rule of inheritance and other relevant things which the evidence may suggest. Their role vis a vis the Mughal state has

1. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp 113-4, 140-1, 175.
2. Ibid; please see also Chapter V below.
been examined on the basis of the extent of their actual performance of their obligations. These factors are also given weightage for ascertaining continuity and change in the position of zamindars vis a vis Mughal state, the peasantry and each other.

Since we propose to trace the possible changes in the position and role of zamindars during the period of political turmoil and administrative instability which is to be discussed a little later, it seems pertinent to determine the position and examine their role for the period when the state machinery operated at the peak of efficiency. Its necessity arises more because of the fact that the studies so far conducted are more a survey for the whole of empire rather than a detailed study of the class with particular reference to the regional and intra-regional variations in adequate depth. More so these studies so far the zamindars of Mughal subah of Gujarat are concerned, are based almost exclusively on the well known Persian chronicles. We have, therefore, also sought to determine the position and analyse their role during the seventeenth century. It may also be seen that some of changes which occurred particularly during the later half of the century acquired momentum and unmanageable dimensions during the period of present study.

1. A R Khan (Chieftains in the Mughal empire during the reign of Akbar) has discussed at length the political relations between the empire and the chieftains, as established or sought to be established under Akbar. But the author does not cast sufficient light on the administrative aspects and the actual working of the arrangements, as also on the varying positions held by various chiefs. Moreover, the part of his work which relates to the zamindars of Gujarat, is based exclusively on the Persian chronicles and has not been enriched by utilising other sources of information. Also the author's identification of the Chieftains is not free of defects. See Chapter I (1) & (2) below.
In view of above, each category of the zamindars is discussed in two different Chapters, viz, every Chapter discussing their position and role during the first half of the eighteenth century is preceded by a Chapter wherein the given category's position and role are discussed during the preceding period.

In the first (Chapters I (1&2), III and V) of each of the two Chapters devoted to each category, we have examined the position of Superior (Chapter I (1) & (2)), Intermediary (Chapter III) and the Primary zamindars (Chapter V) vis-a-vis Mughal state, peasantry and the zamindars themselves as it finally emerged during the seventeenth century. Simultaneously, effort has been made to bring into focus the levels of stratification that existed between the zamindars, inter-category as well as intra-category. Particular attempt has been made to highlight the fluctuations and changes in the zamindars' position emerging in consequence of the interaction between two forces working in diametrically opposite directions, viz, the state attempting to acquire greater controlling position over the zamindaris and enter into direct communications with the riaya, and the zamindars' endeavours to resist it and throw away, or at least minimize the degree of imperial hold already acquired over them. The study takes due note of the emerging pattern and its direction along with the sub-regional variations. Despite all this, it represents relatively harmonious relationship between the zamindars and the state, recognized and on the whole arduously maintained by the latter during the heyday of the Mughal rule in the subah. The keynote of the relationship was the careful and vigilant control exercised by the centre over the province and by the provincial authorities over the zamindars.

The next three Chapters (II, IV & VI) which come in succession to the above-mentioned ones, open with the onset of the
eighteenth century. In these Chapters we have analyzed the position of the Superior (Chapter II), Intermediary (Chapter IV) and the Primary zamindars (Chapter VI) as it emerged during the first half of the eighteenth century. In these Chapters we seek to study the emerging pattern of relationship between the provincial authorities and the zamindars during the period of turmoil. What was from the point of view of the empire a deteriorating state of affair between the two, constitutes the focus of discussion in these Chapters. As far as evidence helps us to do, light is also thrown upon the inter-zamindar relations beside highlighting the emerging pattern of state-zamindar-riaya relationship. The state of affair was marked by the loosening grip of the empire reflected in the increasing disregard for administrative

1. First few years of the eighteenth century constitute an important phase in the history of Mughal Gujarat. Shujat Khan, the subedar (1685-1701), died in office in 1701. In the wake of his death leading zamindars of the subah withdrew their troops (1701) and ceased to serve for good. Other zamindars followed in their footsteps. (For details please see Chapter II below.) The next subedar Prince Mohammad Azam who had only reluctantly accepted the office (1701) observed laxity. He not only failed to take remedial steps but also did not undertake the military expeditions into the subah as was required of a nazim as a matter of routine administrative norm. He preferred to stay at the provincial capital instead. Ali Mohammad Khan, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I (Persian text), Baroda 1928, pp 345-6; and Chapter II below. The prince was allowed to leave the subah (November 1704), long before the arrival of the next incumbent. (Mirat-i Ahmadi) I p 360). His withdrawal was followed by Maratha attack inflicting a crushing defeat on the Mughal forces. As a result Mughal officials were demoralised and the zamindars stood in revolt (March 1705). The Marathas attacked the subah again in the wake of Aurangzeb's death (1707). The attack demoralised the Mughals further. Such a state of affairs followed by the provincial authorities' submission before the Marathas further weakened the administrative pressure, making the empire more vincible. The damage done to imperial interest in 1701-7 could not be repaired in the subsequent years. (For details please see discussion below.) These events left their imprint on the subsequent developments.
norms, rising degree of recalcitrance and successful defiance of authority on the part of zamindars. Playing an active role in the ongoing process of the downward devolution of power, the zamindars replaced the state authority at village level. In these Chapters we have emphasized the new position and role that the zamindars were assuming vis-à-vis the Mughal administrative authority and the other constituents of the agrarian community.

The last Chapter (No. VII) deals with the changing composition of the class of zamindars. In the Chapter, we examine the changing modes of the emergence of zamindaris during the period. The zamindaris were carved out of the Mughal empire by the use of force and manoeuvre instead of being created in accordance with the established rule. We have not attempted to discuss the emergence of all the zamindaris, instead a few of them i.e. Palanpur, Junagadh, Radhanpur, Idar, Surat, Bharuch and Khambat have been examined, each a typical case of one mode of the emergence of a zamindari.

Sources of Study: --The present work is based mainly on original Persian works. In addition to the well known Persian sources we have also consulted a large number of documents which were either authored, prepared or compiled in the Subah.

The sources whether authored at the imperial centre or in the region itself, are of great value. A slight difference lies in the fact that some of the (imperial) terms like 'zamindar' and (the regional one like) giras and girasia find a more definitive and unambiguous usage in the regional works in contrast to their 'generic' and ambiguous usage as found in the works which happened to be authored at the centre.

Beside the chronicles, we have also consulted the farmans, hasb-ul-hukms, nishans, parwanas, chaknamas, khasra-i mazruat papers, Yad-dashts of various description, tamassuks, destur-ul
amals, ragbabandi documents, mawazna-i dehsala mawazna-i dehat, nuskha-i zamindaran, nuskha-i peshkash, some documents about jama-o kharj and jagirs and many other documents of different description of the empire, subah-sarkar-parganas -village and jagir level throwing light on the composition, inter-relation of and differentiation between the zamindars and actual working of the institution of zamindari, particularly in its relationship with the Mughal state.

In order to identify the zamindars and trace the changes, along with the pattern, in the position and role during the seventeenth century it is found necessary to make a study of the well known works written during the late sixteenth and the seventeenth century. The relevant evidence contained in these sources has been utilized and correlated with the other contemporary and near-contemporary works.

Evidence contained in the Mirat-i Sikandri, a useful regional source of information about the period of Gujarati sultans, has also been utilized.

'Chronologically exact' description of events in Mirat-i Ahmadi and statistical account based on the revenue records of the diwani office in the Supplement by Ali Muhammad Khan, the last diwan of the subah, so far known the best work on Gujarat constitutes our one of the most important sources of study. The Mirat-i Ahmadi which for its richness has been compared to the Ain-i Akbari of Abul Fazl needs no introduction. However, its author who looks at the historical events mainly from the seat of provincial power, has also made casual comments and at times does not bother to give relevant details to substantiate the comments. Indeed by comparison with the details given elsewhere in the

1. J.N. Sarkar, 'Introduction to the Mirat-i Ahmadi, (Tr) Baroda, 1927,
Hirat itself a few of his general comments stand contradicted, it may also be kept in mind that Ali Muhammad Khan attributes the origin of every major development affecting the Mughal's position adversely in the subah to the post - Aurangzeb period, particularly to the year of the emperor's death (1707), though it was not invariably the case. We have, therefore, tried to check the statements against the quantitative data contained in the same and other works of the period.

No less important is the Diwan's Book of Account, a treasure of valuable information about the revenues and related matters in respect of zamindars and other constituents of revenue paying society of Mughal Gujarat. The work contains important details about the (Superior) 'zamindaran' who have been duly identified, listed and categorized. The document furnishes information about the various form of zamindaris, obligations and rights of zamindars and details of land-survey on different points of time; the hasil and peshkash figures are also provided along with the dasturs, norms, provisions and working of the administration. Its comments on the emerging change are of great value.

The work referred to above is entered as diwanu khatanu pustak (MS No 227) in the Apparao Bholanath collection, Ahmadabad. It is neither entitled nor carries the name of its author. But in all probability the work was compiled by Ali Muhammad Khan, the last diwan and author of the Mirat. The Mirat mentions one Mithal Kayasth, a hereditary subah-nawis who had 'aided and assisted' Ali Muhammad Khan in obtaining information from the villages, cities and parganas and 'compiled together in the form of a book all the documents in one volume'. Ali Muhammad Khan had made use of this information in the preparation of the Supplement.
to the Mirat-i Ahmadi. ¹ On a closer view of the two works it becomes evident that the Supplement contains the summarised version of the informations available in the Book of Account. Secondly, Ali Muhammad Bahadur was favoured with the issuance of a farman (dt. 10th Shoban, 1167 AH) on the coronation of Alamgir II. The addressee who refers to himself as fidwi (the devoted servant) gave effect to its contents after seeking permission of the then Maratha Governor, Sripatrao, details of which are given in the Mirat-i Ahmadi. ² The Book of Account cites the same farman as addressed to the same person (Ali Muhammad Khan Bahadur). The addressee then, seeks Sripatrao's permission stating that a farman has been issued in his name (banam-i fidwi) and he wanted to give effect to its contents. The addressee-receipient of the farman is Ali Muhammad Khan who, in both the works, refers to himself as fidwi ³, an expression used by one for himself. Evidently the two works were authored by the same person, i.e. Ali Muhammad Khan.

Mention may also be made of the Pune documents which though lying unindexed are categorised as Farsi Daftar. These documents which seem to have been collected by Maratha Sardars from various parts of the empire are available in the form of loose sheets, bundled together in Roomals, 71 in all. The documents relating to Mughal Gujarat are spread in various Roomals in a haphazard manner. The Roomals contain documents for the entire Mughal-period of administration in Gujarat from the level of the subah down to that of villages on the matters and persons related with the

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3. (Ali Muhammad Khan Bahadur) MS No 227 Diwanu Khatanu Pustak, Apparao Bholanath collection (hereafter Account) f 103b read with Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 435-6
revenues. These documents cited as Pune preceded by the Roomal number (R N), constitute a rich source of information and have, therefore, been extensively utilized in the present study.

In addition to consulting the various kind of documents preserved at the district record offices of Surat (fort), Palanpur, Junagadh, Bhaonagar and Bharuch and Baroda and Rajkot archives we have also been able to utilize various sources preserved by a number of individuals and private establishments. Thus M/S S H Desai, last secretary of the extinct Junagadh state, Sardar Saiyid Haider Inamdar, a descendent of emperor Jahangir's physical Hakim Nooruddin Bharuchi, the present Jadeja descendent of the ex-ruling house of Bhuj (Rao of Kutch), Kale Khan Pathan, a personal friend of the present descendent of the ex-ruling family of Radhanpur; the imam of Jama Masjid (Shehr qazi) Palanpur, Jama Masjid Bombay Library, Pir Muhammad Shah Library (Ahmadabad), Cama Oriental Institute and Forbes institute of Bombay and some other individual and private or semi-private agencies are in possession of good deal of sources relevant to our study. The same have been utilized with due care.

During his extensive tour of Gujarat, the present researcher could also procure some documents in original. Most of these were purchased at a nominal cost from a junk trader (Sidhpur) who had purchased the same by way of junk from the ex ruling houses of Palanpur and Radhanpur. These documents which are quite identical to those of Pune, are referred to as Personal collection (P.C) in the present study. These two sets of documents coupled with the Diwan's Account are of immense value as they provide us with an insight into the process and pattern of change concerning some important aspects of the institution of zamindari in Gujarat.

In addition to above, some published sources, the farmans, chithis and kharitas etc. reproduced in the modern works and the
Bikaner collection of *akhbarat* have also been used in the course of the study.

The three works of local history *Tarikh-i Soreth* (Junagadh Manuscript), *Mirat-i Mustafabad* and *Tarikh-i Palanpur* need a word of explanation. The two former works were written by two *diwans* of the *nawabs* of Junagadh during the early nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Since the author of the *Mirat-i Mustafabad*, Sheikh Ghulam Muhammad, did not hold Diwan Ranchhodji, the author of *Tarikh-i Soreth* in high esteem, he looked at the work with skepticism and also tried to contest the authenticity of Ranchhodji's statements. The description of the events in the three works is, among other, based on the family records of the Babi and Jalori families and the documents and *farmans* available in the *diwani* offices. As such the works in spite of being of much later date bear considerable significance. Likewise some British works have also been used. However, these works have not been used to yield primary information.

*The Milieu of Study*

The first half of the eighteenth century constitutes an important landmark in the history of Mughal Gujarat. Having passed through an era of relative peace and stability for more than a century, the *subah* entered into a phase which was marked with administrative instability and political chaos. As the imperial Mughal control began to recede in the first half of the eighteenth century, a new scenario of local level tensions and subsequent realignment of authority and power began to emerge. With the recession of Mughal imperial control over Gujarat, authority devolved downward at all levels and the devolution seems to have stopped at the level of zamindar. The loss of Ahmadabad to the Marathas in 1753 merely signified the culmina-
tion of a process which had increasingly excluded Gujarat from amongst imperial concern.

At the outset of our period, the subah of Gujarat occupied a significant space in the imperial scheme. The region formed a bridge between the empire's northern and southern territorial units. Political developments in the bordering provinces of the Deccan and Ajmer had their direct impact on Gujarat. That the subah of Gujarat comprised an important link in the commercial life of Mughal India, is too well known to be discussed in any detail.

Administratively the subah was regarded as a sensitive region, a problem province. The author of the Mirat who surveyed the landscape from the view point of a revenue official, found the subah 'a mine of mischievous persons', 'abode of disturbing


3. Emperor Aurangzeb described Gujarat as a 'refractory' region (Gujarat... zortalab ast). S.M. Azizuddin Husain, (ed) Kalimat-i Ta'iybat by Inayatullah Khan Kashmiri, Delhi, 1982 p 114; please see also ibid pp 84-5. In one of his letters addressed to prince Mohammad Azam, then subedar of Gujarat (1701-4), the emperor advised him to follow the foot prints of Shujat Khan (noted for his continual and effective administrative control), "otherwise this is the province of Gujarat, may God forbid, there will be disorder and confusion". J H Billimoria (ed), Ruqaat-i Alamgiri, Delhi, 1872, letter no XIX, pp 24-6.
rebels' who were forever possessed by the 'wind of revolt and passion of rebellion'. The Mirat further points out that the Rajputs and Kolis (i.e. the zamindars) "always created disturbance when they noticed a slight weakness in the control of nazims". Also, the mischief mongers attacked and plundered many places finding the place without a faujdar or a thanedar i.e. as and when an office was not occupied. The restiveness and quick response to a favourable situation is evident from the fact that the time between the arrival and the departure of the incoming and outgoing nazims and dependent officials transferred with them, was capitalized by the Rajputs and Kolis much to their advantage.

The above mentioned factors seem to have compelled the authorities to make necessary administrative arrangements. Thus, only a mansabdar who enjoyed high rank was appointed subedar of Gujarat. He was also assisted by 900 mansabdars with a total

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, l pp 174, 178, 210-11, 255-6. For the identification of zamindars with the Kolis and Rajputs, please see Chapters I & V below.

2. Ibid. l pp 173-4


4. Thus, subedar Shahabuddin Ahmad Khan "had established nearly 80 (additional) thanas. The moment his men (faujdars and thanedars) left the thanas" (after the subedar had been recalled) the Rajputs and Kolis "laid most of the fortresses (the thanas and faujdars' strongholds) waste and raised head in revolt". Ibid l pp 143-4. Further, any untoward development in and around the subah significant enough to detract provincial authorities' attention was, likewise, followed by disturbances and revolts. For instance, please see Ibid l pp 245, 251-2, 255-6, 294-5, 357-61, 370, 394.

sawar rank of 26030 posted permanently in the subah. Then, there was established a thana in the centre of few villages, but in locales where the populace was perceived to be more turbulent, there was a thana in each village. In its efforts to intensify administrative pressure, or else meet the challenge of increasing recalcitrance, the Mughal state raised the strength of major and minor stations (makans) of faujdars and the thanas from 252 under Akbar to 414 by the close of the seventeenth century. According to the Mirat these were the real nerve centre through which the Nazims succeeded in exercising effective administrative control over the subah. The Nazim was assisted by the faujdars and the thanedars who, at the time of need, had to furnish half of the troops maintained by them against their conditional (mashrut) and unconditional mansabs for serving directly under the Nazim's command. Finally, the troops furnished by the zamindars also served under the command of the Nazims and the faujdars in addition to policing the areas of their respective possessions.


2. Account, ff 78a-9b, 425a-7a, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement; pp 168-223, pargana haveli Ahmadabad which consisted of 193 villages, was divided into 12 groups, called taraf. Each taraf had a head village and a faujdar/Thanedar who was subordinate to the faujdar-i gird (faujdar of the environ) of the capital. Ibid, pp.169-83;.


5. Account of 76a; Mirat-i Ahmadi 1 p 26; Ibid, Supplement, p 169.

6. For details, please see Chapters I (1), (2) and V below.
In order to maintain continual administrative pressure the empire took preventive steps to keep the office always occupied. It was provided that the outgoing subedar should leave the office after the arrival of the next incumbent. Emperor Aurangzeb also ordered that the incoming and outgoing nazims, and implicitly, the officials associated with them, must perform the ceremony of arrival and departure in a single meeting on the same place, instead of separately as it was done previously.

With a view to bringing to bear extra administrative pressure and ensure effectiveness of the existing one, preventive military expeditions were undertaken into the region, special task force was deputed from the centre, incapable officials were replaced by more competent ones, new fortresses erected and thanas were established, or the strength of the existing one was raised on the trouble-spots, complaints of the riaya were entertained and necessary redress was provided to remove the immediate cause of discontent.

The provincial administration was divided into two mutually independent halves - the nizamat and the diwani each being answerable to the sovereign. The purpose of the 'ingenious administrative device was to create a most potent and reliable

2. Ibid I p 372. In case of an official's death in office, the establishment of the deceased was retained until the alternative arrangement had been made. Ibid I pp 302, 306-7, 326, 345-6, 389.
4. For details, please see, P Saran, op cit pp 157-164, 169-80, 193, 196-97;
check on the highest officials of the province. The administrative system of 'checks and balances' and division of functions designed as a safeguard against the abuse of power and authority, had generally 'narrowed down the opportunity of revolts' by officers. Its keynote was the 'careful and vigilant control exercised by the imperial centre'. Just how much respect the centre could enforce for the system of checks and balances, depended on its strength. Obviously it was liable to be upset by severe struggle for power at the centre and disaffection in the nobility. Such a struggle and disaffection emerged at the centre during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, gradually breaking down the administrative arrangements which had been so meticulously evolved and enforced with relative tenacity during the preceding century.

**Changing Milieu**:

The Imperial scene

There seems to have started a downward process of devolution of power from, if not earlier than, the reign of Bahadur Shah. To begin with, the Mughal emperors lost their commanding position over the state apparatus, particularly the nobility. The power and authority of the emperor came to be grabbed by one or the other group of nobles that exercised it for subserving the factional interests and regardless of the emperor's authority. The imperial power and authority virtually came to be vested with


the dominant faction of nobles at the court.¹

Despite the fact that the nobles successfully grabbed the emperor's authority and made him dependent upon them, they failed to provide effective leadership to the empire.² Scramble for fertile and easily manageable jagirs and the conflict and confrontation for wizarat widened the rift between sections of the nobility. The recurrent strife of rival factions tore the ruling class apart. The power shifted repeatedly hence no single noble (or group of nobles) could enjoy the power continuously. Also in order to retain and acquire power, the group of nobles had to enter into bargains and make compromises which affected cohesion and effectiveness adversely. Consequently, the nobility and, for that matter, the imperial centre lacked cohesion and uniformity, much less consistency in approach. So everything there was in confusion.³ In the process the strength of the centre declined consistently; thus it found increasingly beyond its capacity to enforce respect for the administrative norms which were thrown to the winds. Continued friction disorganized and even paralyzed administration at all levels.⁴

*The Provincial Scene:*

The kind of struggle that had started at the imperial cen-

treaty, had its direct bearing on the affairs of the province of Gujarat. The process of devolution of power and authority seems to have gone further downward. The nazims gradually grabbed the authority of imperial centre and, due to erosion of the imperial vigil, the power and position of such others who were directly and exclusively dependent upon it. In their turn, the nazims too could not retain control over their subordinates and develop a power base in the face of opposition of the locally strong nobles, the zamindars and the Mrathas. The process of downward devolution of power went on and seems to have stopped at the level of zamindar.

The Nazims:

A definite change in the position and role of nazims is discernable from the available evidence.

Appointments of nazims came to be made not so much in recognition of efficiency, merit or loyalty as much for narrow and immediate factional considerations. 1 Ghazi-ud-din Khan Ferozjang who was considered unfit to render any useful service in battle was, at the instance of Khan-i Dawran Momin Khan, appointed Governor of Gujarat (September 1708) where military operations were the call of the hour. 2 Similarly Saiyid brothers managed appointment of Daood Khan Panni (1713) for "some state reasons", even though he was 'a poor and careless' administrator. 3 Maharaja Ajeet Singh (1715), a 'careless' administrator who was not even trusted by the emperor, was likewise granted subedar on

1. For earlier period, P Saran op cit, pp 159, 167.
2. Satish Chandra op cit pp 33-4; Zahiruddin Malik; op cit, pp 27; Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 382-3, 385, 388.
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 401, 403, 412; The tenure of his predecessor, Shahamat Khan, lasted only three months. Satish Chandra, op cit, p 100.
extra-administrative considerations i.e. the Saiyid brothers had entered into a secret understanding to which the king was not a party. The next incumbent, Muiz-ud dawla Haider Quli Khan got the subedari in recognition of the effective role he had played in the fall of Saiyids. Nizam-ul-mulk's claim for the subedari was, for the emperor, too difficult to resist. Similarly, Mubarak-ul-mulk Sarbuland Khan whose record of service in Kabul had been 'most unsatisfactory', and Maharaja Abhay Singh got the office on extra-administrative considerations.

The strong nobles desire to procure administrative positions in the province and not to move away from the court, gave rise to the practice of governing the subah through naibs, gradually extended to the province of Gujarat. Thus, Asaf Khan acquired the subedari of Gujarat (March 1712), decided to stay at

1. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II p 3, Satish Chandra, *op cit* pp 92, 102, 110 and n. The Maharaja got a second tenure (1719) in recognition of the valued support he had provided to the Saiyid brothers against emperor Farrukhsiyar even though his first governorship had evoked numerous complaints. *Ibid* p 179; *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 11-21.


5. The 'practice of plurality' (i.e. one person holding several appointments simultaneously) also arose as the strongmen at the court came to hold other administrative arrangement in the province *Reign of Muhammad Shah*, 12, 15, 18, 21, 33, 206–7; Satish Chandra, *op cit* pp 24, 40, 80, 120–1, 206–7. Please see also discussion in the following pages.
the court and govern the subah through deputies. Similarly, Khan-i dawran (1717-19), Maharaja Ajit Singh (second tenure - 1719-21) and Maharaja Bakht Singh (1744) did not even visit the subah. Impact of running the subah with the help of deputies, presumably enjoying low ranks and the indifferent administrators, is not difficult to perceive.

Effective performance of the assigned duties could hardly be expected from the subedars who were appointed on extra-administrative considerations. Thus Daood Khan Panni (1713-5) did not look after the Governor's establishment well. He did not bother to ensure enforcement of imperial orders concerning transfer of faujdar, take the required sureties from the rebellious element whose raids became a 'regular' feature from the period of his

1. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, pp 396-7. During his tenure which lasted little less than an year, the subedar appointed Mohd Beg Khan, Iftekhar Khan and Sarbuland Khan in succession as deputies. The last of them appointed as the naib's naib and left the province soon after Jahandar Shah's dethronement. *Ibid*, I p. 397.

2. *Ibid* II pp 12-3, 21, 25-6, 26, 31, 34, 36, 48; Balmukand Mehta, *Balmukand Nama*, ed., Satish Chandra, Asia, 1972, pp 11-2, 36-7, 49-50. Similarly Nizam-ul-mulk governed the subah through a deputy. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 34, 36, 48. Moreover, Haider Quli Khan (April 1721 - October 1722) took more than an year to reach (June, 1722) the subah only under great pressure *Reign of Muhammad Shah* pp 172-3). Sarbuland Khan too (May 1724-Oct 1730) reached the subah (December, 1725) after more than a year of his appointment. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II pp 54, 79-80. On the other hand some of the subedars left the subah without seeking prior approval and long before the arrival and appointment of the next incumbent. *Ibid* II pp. 11, 20-1.

3. During the years 1700-43 the centre appointed 15 subedars. The nazims ruled the subah in person for 27 years. During the remaining period it was governed by deputies, interim-governors, or naib-i subah whose number comes to 26. Then no subedar was appointed during September 1707 to September 1708 and November 1710 to March 1712. Please see the Appendix.
administration. From the time of his subedar, the Governors virtually abandoned the policy of defending the subah against the Marathas on the frontier, leaving the officials to fight against them single handed. Also the local officials who indulged in infighting were not brought to book.

The subedars committed illegalities which had damaging effects on the administrative arrangement itself. Thus Ferozjhang (1708-10) extorted Rs. one lakh out of the revenues of jagirs of some eminent nobles, occupied mahals of khalsa and paibaqi and appropriated revenues for himself. Shahamat Khan (1711-2) followed in his footsteps. Muizaddawla (1721-2) occupied khalsa and paibaqi lands, and the jagirs of the mansabbars posted in and outside the subah. He defied the centre with boldness and 'raised the banner of absolute authority.' Muizuddawla's 'this innovation remained as his memento and a deed of boldness on the

2. For details, please see discussion in the following pages.
5. Ibid, I pp 401-2, 408-9. At this time Shahamat Khan held the subah independently as no governor was appointed. Likewise Asad Khan's naib (1712) and later on Shahamat Khan (1713) appropriated revenues which were disproportionate to their claims. Again, the provincial treasury had to bear the burden. Ibid I pp 401-2, 409.
6. Ibid II p 40.
part of other Nazims'.

Nizam-ul-mulk's naib Hamid Khan also occupied the Khalsa, paibaqi and jagir lands and ceased office records, relieved diwani officials of their duties, leaving the diwan with no duties to discharge. His successors retained the diwani establishment under their control. Hamid Khan and his successors also occupied sair mahals, bait-ul mal and the mint, thus allowing the diwan to exist but in name. As such the provision of 'checks and balancers' as done away with. The Nazim thus emerged as the sole authority at the level of province. In consequence of the seizure of jagirs the mansabdars posted in the subah lost their means of livelihood and 'spent their lives in starvation. The development rendered the office of the provincial bakhshi meaningless and deprived the nazims of their own base of power in the province.

Behaving almost as sovereigns the Nazims from the time of Firozjung levied illegal exactions, particularly from the relatively vulnerable section of populace.

Firozjung imposed a 'slight duty' on the items of trade which were brought from the rural areas to the markets in Ahmadabad. Maharaja Ajit Singh's naibs 'extorted many taxes' from the

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II p 45.
5. The Mirat particularly mentions that the matter was brought to the notice of imperial centre. But the centre could not make even an enquiry. Ibid, I p 8.
6. Ibid II pp 64, 78, 99-100, 118; Account f 16a.
The populace of *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad during both the tenures of his governorship\(^1\). Since the *nagar seth*, Kapur Chand, resisted levying of illegal taxes, the *naib-subedar* had him done away with\(^2\). Similarly, other *subedars* levied illegal exactions from the populace of Ahmadabad and came into clash with the *nagar seths* as also faced the ire of the people on different occasions\(^3\).

Likewise, Hamid Khan "extorted a fixed amount with force from all sections of people" of Ahmadabad by way of *bewra*, a tax which the author of the *Mirat* had not even heard of earlier\(^4\). Subsequently all the *Nazims*, without exception, imposed the unpleasant tax and other cesses on various pretexts.\(^5\) The *naib* of Maharaja Abhay Singh mixed copper with silver and gold coins as a result of which the Ahmadabad mint lost its credibility.\(^6\)

Daood Khan Panni imposed a new levy, called *chhattaman* (release) from the holders of the *madad-i ma'sh* lands\(^7\). Similarly, Maharaja Abhay Singh's *naib* levied a separate cess on them

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1. *Ibid* II p 34.


3. For instance, please see *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 36 136-9, 170-2. Sarbuland Khan imprisoned the *seth* but the one during Maharaja Abhay Singh's *subedar* fled the town. *Ibid* II pp 136-9, 170-2.


and appointed separate amils and tehsildars for the purpose. 1

As such the Subedars from the time of emperor Bahadur Shah onward encroached upon all the sources of revenue and levied new taxes and revived the prohibited ones. The Governors thus encroached upon the emperor's prerogatives, jagirdars' rights, and the provincial departments which had virtually been rendered ineffective and defunct.

The nazims seem to have, particularly from 1722, refused to share revenues with the imperial centre. Prior to 1722 the Mirat mentions the remittance of revenues to the emperors and the imperial court. 2 But during the post 1722 years the only reference appears in 1734 when the court commanded then naib-subedar Ratan Singh Bhandari to remit the revenues. The naib remitted Rs. 1,23,000 out of which Rs 75000/- were contributed by the mutasadddi of Khanbat only. 3 The remaining claim on jagirs (i.e. of the mansabdars posted at the imperial centre) was "never complied with". 4 At a later date (1747) the emperor ordered the subedar and the port officer of Bharuch, each to remit a meagre sum of Rs 10,000 but neither of the two obeyed. 5

It has already been discussed that every subedar from Ibrahim Khan (1705) onward resorted to such activities as under normal circumstances would have invited imperial wrath leading to punishment of varying magnitude. But now the only sword of pun-

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1. Ibid II pp 141-2; for similar references, Ibid I p 364; Ibid II pp 40, 45, 64, 78, 99-100, 118, 136-7, 256-7.
3. Ibid II pp 162, 167.
4. Ibid II p 167.
5. Ibid II pp 380-1.
ishment the imperial centre wielded was dismissal and even the burden of ousting him from office came to lay with the noble appointed to replace him.

Some of the subedars, during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, left the subah without having been served with the transfer orders. Ibrahim Khan (1705 - Sept 1707) left the subah after resigning the post on his own accord 'for leading retired life' without prior permission. Sarbuland Khan, the naib of subedar (wazir) Asad Khan, (May 1712-13), nominated his naib and left (Feb, 1713) 'due to exigency of time', which seems to be the fall of wazir with the rise of Farrukhsiyar to power in January 1713. Likewise Shahamat Khan (May 1713-July 1713), Daood Khan Panni (Aug. 1713-July 1717) and Shams ud-dawla Khan-i dawaran's (May 1717-18) naib Haider Quli Khan appointed their respective naibs on their own accord and entrusting the charge to them left the subah well before the transfer orders were served on them. It was in violation of the long established norm govern-

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1. ibid, I p 381. It seems that the Khan found it inconvenient to serve under the new regime. The Reign of Muhammad Shah, p. 5.
4. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I pp 401, 413, ibid, II p. 20. It may be pointed out that Shahamat Khan (as naib) was transferred for accommodating Mohammad Beg Khan, an old associate of Asad Khan who enjoyed supreme position at the court. ibid, I p 395. As subedar he was transferred at Kokaltash's instance (Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics p 32, 70n). Daood Khan Panni and Shamsuddawlah were transferred to accommodate Maharaja Ajit Singh for subserving factional interests. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 11, 21 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics pp. 97, 101-2, 145, 147 The Reign of Muhammadshah, pp 11-3, 19, 20.
ing transfers\(^1\) and standing imperial orders specifically meant for the subedar of Gujarat as mentioned earlier.

Maharaja Ajit Singh (1715-1717) appears to be the only subedar whose oppressive acts finally led to his dismissal\(^2\).

Shamsuddaulah Khan-1 Dawran, the next incumbent, managed his ouster secretly through Abdul Hamid Khan (ex. diwan) who bore enmity towards the Raja.\(^3\) During his second tenure (1719-21) the Maharaja's naib had been disobeying imperial authority, maladministering the affairs and oppressing the people; his dismissal, however came in the wake of the Saiyid's fall for the Raja had always been their staunch ally.\(^4\) Haider Quli Khan, the next incumbent managed Naib Subedar Anup Singh Bhandari's expulsion with the help of Mehar Ali Khan a leading local noble (ex-diwan)

1. The *farmans* of appointment or transfer were sent through a *sazawal* whose duty it was to announce the news to the *Nazim* and escort him to his new charge asking the outgoing incumbent to make over charge to the new arrival. P Saran Provincial Government, pp 163-64.

2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II p. 11; Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics*, pp. 137n, 179; The charge of oppression on Ajit seems to have been of old standing. On August 22, Sept., 5, and 27, 1715 there were complaints that the Rajputs of Ajit Singh were laying their hands on the royal *mahals* and the *jagirs* of the royal *mansabdars*. The *mutasaddis* and the *jagirdars* dared not say anything as the news writers were in collusion with the Raja. The Rajput sources attributed the cause of dismissal to his friendship with Saiyids. Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics*, p 137.

3. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II p 11-2. At the time the news was received, the Maharaja was away in Dwarka. Abdul Hamid Khan occupied the capital in his absence and placed it in the state of preparedness. The Raja was further dissuaded from his design of war by Nahir Khan. *Ibid.*

with whom he had come into confrontation.  

Haider Quli Khan who had turned a rebel from the beginning of his stay in the subah (July 1722-Feb 1723) was, likewise, determined to resist his transfer. But when he "reviewed his companions" he found them "not powerful enough" to fight Nizam-ul mulk who headed a 'large army and heavy artillery'.

Nizam-ul mulk was transferred after he had been declared a rebel. His naib, Hamid Khan was ousted by Shujat Khan, the deputy Governor under Sarbuland Khan (1724-30). With the assistance of the Marathas, Hamid Khan reoccupied Ahmadabad defeating and killing the leading imperialist in action.

Sarbuland Khan could succeed in expelling Hamid Khan with the active support of the local officials who were promised positions and promotions. In his turn, Sarbuland Khan turned a rebel (December 1725 - October 1730). Even though he had resigned (1728) but he was transferred (1730) only after he fell in disfavour with Amir-ul umra Shamsuddawlah. The dismissed subedar put up armed resistance but failed to resist Maharaja Abhay Singh who was assisted, among others, by the leading officials of the

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, d pp 37-40. Bhandari had to jump out of window of the fort to save his skin from the furious populace of Ahmadabad. Ibid, II p 40.


3. The Reign of Muhammad Shah, pp 89-90, 93.


region.1

Likewise Maharaja Abhay Singh and his naib, Ratan Singh Bhandari defied the imperial authority and oppressed the people from the very beginning of their administration.2 His transfer was contemplated only after he fell in disfavour with his patron, Amir-ul umra, and the latter found in Momin Khan (mutasaddi of Khambat and enemy of the naib-subedar) a candidate who could, as desired, oust the Bhandari who had already annoyed the leading local nobles.3 Thus Momin Khan, a candidate picked up from the region itself, succeeded, unassisted by the centre, in ousting the naib after a fight of one year with the assistance of local officials and the Marathas.4 The formal farman appointing him Subedar was issued only after he had occupied Ahmadabad.5

None of the three subedars appointed subsequently could assume charge in the face of opposition put up by a local noble, Jawanmard Khan Babi who had occupied the capital during the crisis that followed Momin Khan's death (Feb. 1743).6

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2. Ibid II pp 133-41, 157, 162, 164-5, 170-72
5. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 242-3; The Reign of Muhammad Shah p 124 M.S. Commissariat, op.cit. II p 476
6. Mirat-i Ahmadi; II pp 277-8, 302-3, 312, 314-5, 321-2, 326-31, 374-5. At the time Jawanmard Khan Babi occupied Ahmadabad, the town folk were happy to see that the man of the region had come to power: Sakna-i baldah umuman b' tasawwur-o-khayal een k'al hal Nazim hum-watni shude khushiha namude. Ibid, II p 312.
The centre as such failed to field a suitable candidate strong enough to oust Jawanmard Khan Babi, a faujdar from the region itself who had thus risen to the highest seat of provincial power in his own right and continued to hold it until (1753) the surrender of Ahmadabad to the Marathas.

Thus, in the downward process of devolution of imperial authority and power the noble’s dominant faction at the court was replaced, at the provincial level, by the Governor(s) whose authority was finally grabbed by subordinate official (faujdari) who, obviously, commanded power in the region in his own right.

Despite their successful moves to acquire hold over all the provincial departments and the determination, particularly from Muizuddawla onward, to retain the subah, none of the duly appointed subedar could succeed. The cause appears to be worth probing into the available evidence suggests that the Nazims could not pool required resources even to regularly pay salary to their soldiers, much less develop a strong financial base. From the time of Sarbuland Khan each Nazim was confronted with the same difficulty. In the year 1750-51 the entire income of the subedar from all sources, according to the Mirat, stood at a meagre sum of Rs four lakh only - the amount was not even equal to the income from the haveli Ahmadabad of the opening years of the century. It was despite the fact that the Nazims had encroached upon all the legitimate sources of income and levied illegal exactions whenever and wherever they could so.

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Among the factors which led to a sharp decline in revenues the one appears to be the Maratha occupation of lands in Gujarat.\(^1\) But the income also declined even from those areas which were still under Mughal control. It would also appear from the available evidence that the fall in revenues was also caused by frequent transfers (in early years) of officials and internal strifes.\(^2\) More particularly may be mentioned the fact that some Mughal officials failed to effect assessment and collection of revenues whereas the more competent and strong ones refused to share their resources with the Nazims.\(^3\) Moreover, the Nazims own capacity to effect collection of revenues suffered setbacks in the face of increasing opposition put up by the zamindars who were emerging as the real authority at village level.\(^4\)

The Faujdars:

The faujdars seem to have followed in the footsteps and stepped into the shoes of Nazims at sarkar/pargana level. They too tried to corner all administrative powers. But only a few of them who could stand in their own right, could succeed.

To begin with, the criterion of selection of faujdars as it came to be influenced by extraneous considerations, underwent a change. Thus Kunwar Abhay Singh and later on Kunwar Bakht Singh, were appointed faujdars of sarkar Saurath and sarkar Pattan

\(^1\) For references see discussion in the following pages.


\(^3\) \textit{Ibid} I pp 403-5, \textit{Ibid} II 241; For further references on the officials' incapacity, Chapter IV below. For the process and outcome of the officials' refusal to share income with the Nazims see discussion in the following pages and Chapter VII below.

\(^4\) For details, see Chapters II, IV and VI.
during the period of Maharaja Ajit Singh and Maharaja Abhay Singh's subedar. Both of them governed the affairs through their deputies. Likewise Bakhsh-ul mamalik Qamar-ud din acquired port-officership of Surat, and Amir-ul umra Shamsuddawla's father-in law got the faujdari of Saurath. Such appointees discharged their administrative responsibilities through deputies. Moreover, the principle of heredity became a common, if not universal practice as the administrative positions came to be usually granted to son after father. But, so far as our knowledge goes, the naibs as were deputed from the centre failed to retain the position once a noble commanding influence locally stood up in arms against them.

The practice of cornering more than one official positions in one person acquired momentum during the first half of the eighteenth century. The administrative practice of granting

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I p 401, Ibid, II pp 41-2, 196-7. Kunwar Abhay Singh's men resorted to plundering traders and caravans. His naib also resisted his transfer under the Maharaja's instigation Ibid II pp 8-9. For similar instance of politically motivated appointment and its consequence, Ibid I pp 347, 374. It may be recalled that Aurangzeb preferred to appoint faujdars who "enjoyed respect" in and "communicated with the inhabitants of" the concerned area. Ruqat, letter nos. XIX, XXXVI-VII, pp 24-6, 38-41 addressed to the Governor of Gujarat


6. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp. 9-11, 166-7, 196-7, 246-7. For the governance directly by the appointees and then their continuity in possession, see Chapter VII, below.
faujdari rights to the jagirdars crept into the eighteenth century. But the practice in the subah came to an abrupt end with the confiscation of all jagirs by the Nazims.

In violation of the well established norm of keeping the revenue matters independent of the executive during the closing years of his reign, Aurangzeb appointed (1699) one Mir Muhammad Beg as faujdar and amin of Dholqa. From Bahadurshah's reign (1707-11), the revenue positions (i.e. aml, amin, mutasaddi) came to be frequently associated with the executive (i.e. faujdar, Kotwal) officials as a matter of routine administrative practice. The faujdars aggrandised their positions further by contracting ijara rights. As such the faujdars followed in Nazims' footprints at sarkar/pargana level. The system of 'checks and balances' so far as it was based on the principle of 'division of power' was thus rendered meaningless at pargana and sarkar level also.

More so as the faujdars thus vested with extra authority over revenue matters, also came to enjoy immunity from administrative actions. There is evidence to show that the imperial


2. For references see discussion in the preceding pages.

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I p 342. Emperor Aurangzeb, according to the Mirat, had sanctioned the Faujdar of Vijapur to Safdar Khan Babi (1703 A.D)* as he had no relation with Diwani.* (Ibid, I.p. 355). It may be inferred that the faujdars were not desired even to be remotely linked with the financial affairs.


5. Please see Chapter, IV.
authority during its heyday took action, such as dismissal from service, reduction in mansab, imposition of fines, confiscation of property, imprisonment etc, against the erring officials.¹ But during his closing years, Emperor Aurangzeb showed leniency in taking actions against such officials.² Subsequently, the Mughal officials who indulged in infighting, embezzled state revenues, refused to settle accounts and resisted audits and transfers continued to hold positions and hardly faced punitive action.³ Some of them who had indulged in the acts of gross indiscipline were, on the contrary, favoured with promotions and other administrative assignments because of the patronage extended by a strong noble at the imperial court.⁴

With the passing of the entire administrative authority of the subah into Nazims' hands as discussed above, the Imperial as well as the Governor's authority and power came to be gradually devolved upon the faujdars.


2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I p. 261-2, For leniency shown against the oppressive jagirdar; ibid, I p 263, 275, for the leniency shown towards a noble who indulged in exacting money illegally, ibid, I, p. 338; towards levying unpaid labour; ibid, I, pp 266, 360-61; towards mansabdars on not maintaining required troops. M. Athar Ali, Nobility Under Aurangzeb, p. 150.


4. See for instance, Muhammad Beg Khan (ex-naib subedar) resisted auditing but was favoured with the position of mutasaddi and then subedar because of Asad Khan, wakil with whom he had "old relation." ibid, I pp. 392-4; also see ibid, II pp 41, 47-8.
The prevailing political situation—internal strifes and Maratha invasion—placed the local officials in general and locally influential nobles in particular, in a highly bargainable position which they endeavoured to utilize for attaining and retaining administrative and other positions.

Since each subedar-designate particularly from the time of Nizam-ul-mulk's subedari was called upon to oust the subedar-in-power, the former (for want of effective imperial assistance) had to enlist support of the locally influential and well informed nobles.\textsuperscript{1} Thus, for instance, Salabat Muhammad Khan and Jawanmard Khan Babi agreed to assist Subedar Mubariz-ul-Mulk against Hamid Khan only after they extorted a promise for the grant of faujdaris of Viramgaon (Biramganm) and Pattan.\textsuperscript{2} Later on Jawanmard Babi and Muhammad Babi procured through Maharaja Abhay Singh, under a similar situation, watandaris of Badnagar (Vadnagar) and naib faujdari of another pargana.\textsuperscript{3} Likewise Momin Khan "induced and persuaded" Jawanmard Khan Babi (junior) "to assume charge of pargana Pattan" on 'condition of confederation with the former against the Subedar-in-office.\textsuperscript{4}

In addition to their procurement of offices by extending valued support to the subedars, some of the local nobles success-

\textsuperscript{1} Thus, the Babis' assistance was sought because they were "well informed and in accord with the people" of Gujarat Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 86. For details about the Babis M.S. Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II pp 169-70, 405, 435. Please see also Chapter VII below.

\textsuperscript{2} Mirat-i Ahmadi, II p. 86. The two nobles had been close associates of Hamid Khan and now were pursuaded to change side, Ibid, II pp 69, 73, 78.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid, II pp 133, 145; also Ibid II pp 119-20, 132.

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid, II, pp 196, 239.
fully captured offices fraudently and by applying their military might.¹ The power of purse was also put to effective use for acquiring hold over administrative apparatus, as in Surat, and for procuring orders of appointment as in Palanpur, Bharuch, Cambay etc.² Some of them also contracted *ijara* rights and acquired administrative position on 'bilmuqte' basis and stronger amongst them, tried to retain the position even after the expiry of the period of contract.³

As regards the consistency in their attitude towards the Governors, the nobles in the *Subah* may, broadly, be categorized into three groups: There were the nobles like Muhammad Iraj (*Faujdar-amin* of Dholqa under Mubariz-ul Mulk) Himmat Dil Khan, Zanbil Khan (*Faujdar-i gird* and *amin*) and other who consistently stood by and assisted the *subedar-in-office*.⁴ These officials emulated and even surpassed the Governors, their patrons, in assessing the land revenue arbitrarily, levying cesses under various pretexts and imposing fines etc.⁵ Under the *Nazims* pa-

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1. For details, Chapter VII below; also *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II pp 82-3.
2. For details, see discussion under the *Nawabis* of Surat, Bharuch, Cambay and Palanpur, Chapter VII below.
tronnage these officials enjoyed immunity from punishment. As these officials continued to assist the Nazim even when the latter resisted his ouster from office, their tenure depended on his pleasure and ended with that of the Nazim. But then, the officials like Abdullah Beg (naib-mutasaddi) of Bharuch under Mutasaddi-subedar Mubariz-ul mulk continued to hold the office even after the subedar's expulsion. Once the subedar was placed under transfer, the naib-mutasaddi withdrew his support and did not participate in the battle of resistance fought by Mubariz-ul mulk. To ensure his continuity against the imperial desire and counteract the new subedar Maharaja Abhay Singh's design, the Beg obtained a sanad of deputyship from Nizam-ul Mulk Asaf Jah whom thus he chose as his new master.

In the third category may be counted the Babis and their ilk who also assisted the Subedar in power but with a difference. After making due bargains they threw in their lot invariably with the subedar-designate and actively assisted in his efforts to oust the dismissed subedar from office. Unassisted by the imperial centre the subedar had to lean heavily on their support for assuming charge and running the administration.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Our sources do not speak of such actions as having been taken on the basis of their oppressive acts against any of them. Instead they are continuously noticed in office until the Nazim himself was dismissed. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 94-5, 105-6, 164-5, 250, 260.
\item \textit{Ibid}, II pp. 94-5, 105-6, 164-65.
\item For references see discussion under Nawabi of Radhanpur, Chapter VII below.
\end{enumerate}
of the subah.¹

From the time of Maharaja Abhay Singh's period of subedar, the position of local officials vis-à-vis the Governor underwent a further change. The Maharaja's naib alienated and annoyed most of them who, in turn, refused to serve him.² Henceforth the leading amongst them like Muhammad Ashraf Khan Ghorni (faujdar of Barasinwra), Jawanmard Khan Babi (faujdar of Pattan and Viramg-aon) Zorawar Khan Babi (faujdar and watandar of Vadnagar) agreed to serve only after they had "settled expenses" with the subedars "by way of daily expenses" for their soldiers and thus tended to turn mercenaries, aligning the same way with the Marathas as and when it served their purpose.³

The alienation of the nobles that commanded respect and power in the region by Naib-subedar Ratan Singh Bhandari, cost the Maharaja his subedar. Momin Khan (faujdar of Khambat) who bore ill-will towards the Bhandari, rallied round him other annoyed officials and with their help expelled the naib out of office.⁴ Subsequently the centre appointed three subedars, one after another, but none of them succeeded in assuming charge of the subah, as Jawanmard Khan Babi, strongest of the local nobles,⁵ had captured power after Momin Khan's death (1743) and

1. For subedars' keenness for registering their support, Ibid, II, pp 119, 196.
4. Ibid, II pp. 184, 191, 196, 236.
5. Thus Fakhruddawlah, the subedar-designate, had sent sanad-i nayabat without naming anyone with the condition "that anyone of the provincial mansabdar... able to discharge responsibility" could be appointed naib. As "there was none who could hold the office", Jawanmard Khan wrote down his own name as naib. Ibid, II p. 322.
proved too strong to be ousted by the imperial nominees.¹ As such, the actual power of whatever had remained of it with the imperialists, passed into and came to stay with the locally influential section of provincial officials.²

The developments discussed above must have, cumulatively, disturbed the administrative arrangements, disrupted continuity and consistency of administrative control and eroded its intensity.

**Struggle For Power**

**The Marathas:**

The Maratha penetration into Gujarat that had started during Shivaji's times, became a common feature with the opening of the eighteenth century and culminated in the conquest of the provincial capital, Ahmadabad in 1753. But well before the fall of Ahmadabad, the province had, as discussed above, ceased to be an administrative concern of the imperial centre as its authority had come to be devolved practically upon its own officials. Acting as a catalyst, the Maratha presence accelerated the process of deterioration which had already set in and hastened the extinction of Mughal power from the subah.

The Maratha conquest of the subah was the consequence of their endeavours spread over more than four decades. The phased conquest may broadly be divided into three stages as discussed below:

During the first phase (C. 1701-1724) the Marathas seem to have, by and large, remained confined to south Gujarat which

2. For references and details, Chapter VII below.
included sarkars of Ramnagar, Nadot and Surat. The Marathas did make some headway during the period but it is quite important from other angle also.

In the first place the imperial defence strategy for the province seems to have undergone a vital change. During the years 1701-12 the reigning emperors endeavoured to deny the Marathas an entry into the Subah by fighting them on the frontiers, ensuring availability of necessary resources for taking preventive steps by the Governors and other officials who were specifically directed to do so.

During the years 1713-24 the mutasaddis of Surat, and not the subedars, are mentioned as fighting defensive battles against the Marathas well inside the Surat sarkar, instead of on the frontiers of the subah. It seems the imperial authorities had virtually abandoned the policy of defending the subah on the border after 1712. Secondly the set-backs which the Mughals suffered at Marathas' hands affected the provincial administrative control and the imperial credibility adversely. The Maratha forces inflicted a crushing defeat, imprisoning a number of


4. During this period our sources do not mention the reigning emperors issuing instruction as for the preceding years. Instead, the mutasaddis and gilded of Surat are shown as indulging in in-fighting and going un-punished. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 402-3, 410; Akhbarat, No. 2099, dt ? Jamadi I, 4th Ry Farrukhsiyar.
officials, mansabdar, including the commander of the Mughal army, the naib-subedar at Baba piyara pass near Surat in 1705.  

The battle not only exposed the deplorable state of Mughal mansabdar but also shattered their morale. The defeat, moreover, caused a great commotion and vast relaxation in the administrative control leading to 'disorder and anarchy'. The Kolis, in general raised disturbance and plundered Baroda. The zamindars of Rajpipla and Jagat rose in rebellion. A similar situation prevailed in the subah following Maratha attack of 1707 that was made soon after emperor Aurangzeb's death.

Further, Naib-mutasaddi of Surat Sheikh-ul-islam's defeat (1718-19) opened the flood gates of Maratha's "repeated annual incursions" into Sarkar of Surat. Pillaji Gaikwad fixed upon the hilly country in the neighbourhood of Songadh, befriended the zamindar of Rajpipla and secured his consent to erect small forts between Nadot (Nandot) and Sonpara (Sagpara), attached to his cause the Bhils and Kolis of the neighbourhood and finally (1719)

2. Many of the mansabdar, had not even the horses to ride' and could gather 2000 troops as against the required strength of 25000. Ibid I p 361. The mansabdar were "so seized with horror that they are unable to perform duties as faujdars" noted the Mirat. Ibid, I, p. 367.
4. Ibid, I p 366
secured from the Bhils the hill fort of Songadh.\footnote{M.S. Commisariat, History of Gujarat, II, p. 401 James Campbell etc. (ed.) Bombay Gazetteer, II (Surat and Baroda) Bombay, 1892, pp. 168-69.} With the defeat of Momin Khan, the Port officer of Surat in 1723-24, the Maratha ascendancy in sarkar Surat increased further.\footnote{M.S. Commisariat, History of Gujarat, II, p 402.}

The second stage begins with the year 1724. In this year the Marathas entered other parts of Gujarat and their incursions may be said to have continued henceforth from year to year without a break till they secured mastery over the subah.\footnote{Hirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 52-64, 78; M S Commissariat History of Gujarat, II p 421 Iqbalnamah, pp 118-19.} More particularly Hamid Khan, deputy of Nizam-ul-mulk, in the wake of his master's dismissal and his expulsion, allied himself with the Marathas for recapturing the subah and surrendered to them the chauth and sardesmukhi thus inflicting a severe blow on imperial authority in the province.\footnote{Hirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 92-3, 157, 160-1 RBG Chimmanji, D.B. Parasnis (ed.) Selections from the Satara Raj And The Peshwa Diaries-I, Shahu Chhatripati, 1907 Poona, Doc No. 105, p 47. English Documents, dt 7th April 1731. MS Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II pp 425-7, 438-40. pp 118-22.} Subsequently none of the subedars could resist the Maratha claims to chauth and sardesmukhi successfully.\footnote{Hirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 52-64, 78 M S Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II pp 411-16.} The imperial court, however, did not
I approve of the Nazims act of surrendering the chauth for quite sometime as will be pointed out a little later.

As regards the defence mechanism, the imperial authority continued to rely, almost exclusively, upon the subedars who were left to cope with the situation as best as they could. Lacking resources and determination, the subedars entered into agreement with the Marathas, fighting them only when they were hit directly. The subedars did not come to the rescue even of such pargana/sarkar level officials as were attacked by the Marathas for levying mal-i amani (also called khandni, meaning security-money) or chauth or for capturing the area itself. The centre thus left the subedars to cope with the situation single handed who in turn passed on the responsibility to local officials. Every official thus chose his own course of action independently of others.

Having successfully enforced their claims to chauth and sardesmukhi, the Marathas endeavoured to make outright annexations. In addition to their territorial acquisitions in South Gujarat they made prized acquisitions in central, eastern and northern parts of the subah. Thus during the second phase the


2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp. 92-3, 150, 160-61, 164-5, 186-7; Reign of Muhammad Shah, pp. 48-51,


4. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 52-3, 55, 58-9, 62, 64-6, 68-9, 74-81, 89-90; English Documents, pp 8-9; M.S. Commissariat. History of Gujarat, II, pp. 417-8,426,447,451, 453, 474; See also Chapter VII below.

Mutghal defence mechanism had broken down and the Marathas had become a power that had to be reckoned with in the affairs of the region.¹

The third stage begins with Momin Khan's agreeing to share with the Marathas as equal partners the income from the entire subah and the administration of the provincial capital in 1736.²

The development was facilitated by the half hearted decision, as also inability of the imperial court to oust the then Subedar in Office.³ Not strong enough to undertake the task, Momin Khan allied himself with the Marathas to fulfil the pre-condition for obtaining the Subedari.⁴ Thus there began the joint Mughal-Maratha rule (1737). With the issue of the farman, the Marathas gained formal imperial recognition of their new position though the Maratha - Momin agreement carried tacit approval of the court from the very beginning.⁵ The same arrangement, it may be mentioned, continued till after the close of the period of the present study.

In the light this discussion, it may be suggested that the process of Maratha conquest was gradual, spreading over a little less than half a century. The process seems to have been rendered easy and its speed accelerated by the prevailing factionalism,

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1. Please see particularly the imperial advice (1737) asking Mominod Khan to behave well with the Marathas. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II. pp. 195-6.


internal dissensions and strife among the Mughal nobles. Also the role played by the zamindars of the province in the struggle for supremacy does not appear to be insignificant.

The Zamindars

In the ongoing multi-cornered struggle for power in general and the Mughal-Maratha struggle for supremacy in particular, the role of zamindars seems to have been detrimental to the imperial interest.

In the year 1707, the Mirat, for the last time, notices the Rajputs and Kolis to have turned up to serve the Mughals against the Marathas. In another instance desai of Viramgaon is also mentioned espousing the imperial cause when the place was attacked by the Marathas.

On the other hand, there are more instances to show the zamindars serving the Maratha interest. When the Mughal forces pressed the Marathas hard (1725-26) the Kolis of Kaparbanj provided them with shelter. A little later they were sheltered in the zamindari land of Ali Mohan. The zamindars of Rajpipla, Sonpara and Sadarbisal allowed the Marathas to erect fortresses. Moreover, the muqaddam of Padra, desai of Viramgaon, Kolis of Thasra and Kaparbanj rendered valuable help to the Marathas for occupying Baroda, Viramgaon and Kaparbanj. Likewise the zamindar

1. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, p 378. Leading ones among them had ceased to serve from the year 1701 itself. Please see Chapter II below.

2. Please see *desais*, Chapter IV below.


4. *Ibid*.


48
of Lunawara helped Marathas plunder Birpur town. The administrator of the affairs of the zamindars of Jhabua is noticed in the Maratha camp against Mughals in 1724-25. It may also be mentioned that the Kolis and Rajputs are sometimes noticed as ravaging and occupying Mughal lands, and particularly after the Mughals suffered setbacks.

Even though the instances showing the zamindars espousing Maratha cause are not many, however the very fact that they ceased to serve the empire is worthy of consideration. Here it seems important to point out that from the point of view of the zamindars the emerging conditions were quite favourable: The Marathas' very presence in and around the subah must have meant that the Mughals would be much less able to concentrate on the front opened by the zamindars; then the imperial administrative control was declining and its consistency being disrupted. The shrinking Mughal authority was not simultaneously being replaced by the Marathas. The situation thus being propitious for advancing their own cause, the zamindars grasped and endeavoured to capitalize it.

In their endeavour to do so the zamindars seem to have emerged as the ones who exercised state authority and power at the level of village, the lowest point where the power had thus come to be devolved.

2. Ibid, II. p 65.
4. For details, Chapters II & VI below.
5. For details Chapter II IV VI and VII below.
## Appendix

### Subedars of Gujarat (1700-50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Subedars with tenure</th>
<th>Subedar's period of actual stay in subah</th>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Interim/naib subedars/naib-i subah</th>
<th>Period of administration of naib etc.</th>
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<td>19</td>
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A significant feature of the Mughal subah of Gujarat was the large number of big and small, autonomous and semi-autonomous principalities spread all over. Like their predecessors, the Mughals effected a complete conquest of these principalities whenever and wherever it was possible but in many cases where subjugation was impracticable they contented themselves with either the exaction of tribute or military service, or both from them.

Before examining the position and the role played by the Superior zamindars in society it may be worthwhile trying to identify them and determine their territorial sway. This may be done with the help of evidence contained

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2. Some initial explorations in this direction have already been made. For example, P.Saran in his The Provincial Government of the Mughals 1526-1658 (pp 117-24, 137-41) makes a selective study of the noted 'Chiefs. Irfan Habib's identification of the 'autonomous chiefs' though useful in a number of ways is, however, not wholly dependable. Not very exhaustive in detail, his observation that "the entire sarkar of Soreth was held by the tributary Chiefs" apart from being incorrect is contradicted by his earlier statement that "the villages of certain mahals of sarkar Soreth" being raiyati were situated outside the sway of zamindars; see Agrarian System of Mughal India, pp 142 and n,188. In his
Akbari, other works of the same period and the radi of Ali Muhammad Khan Bahadur, last Divan of The Mirat-i Ahmadi, the best work so far known on rat, is particularly important for the first half of the eighteenth century. Last but not least is the Divan's Account which is a compilation of documents that were available in the provincial office during the sixth decade of the eighteenth century. The work furnishes almost an exhaustive list of all the Superior Zamindars, and their watans that existed as late as, if not later than, the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

To begin with, the term 'zamindar' finds a definite usage with specifiable connotations in the regional documents pertaining to the subah of Gujarat and in the Divan's descriptive study of the chieftains during Akbar's reign A.R.Khan delineates the territories of 'Chiefs' of Gujarat, (Chieftains in the Mughal Empire During the Reign of Akbar, pp 77-96). His identification, however suffers from two major defects: he has not been able to identity all the chieftains, overlooking, for example, the chief of Sunt, all those who are identified as chiefs do not always fall in this category. Thus for example giraslas and some of the lands like giras, which were not the chieftaincies is have been included among their possessions. For detailed references please see the discussion in the following pages and Chapter V below.
Account.¹ In these sources, the 'zamindars' (zamindaran) formed only a section of the landed aristocracy whose possessions were called 'makan-i zamindari'², talluqa-i zamindar and sometimes only 'zamindari'. A part or the whole of the offering made by them to the imperial government was termed 'peshkash'. Their possessions (makan-i zamindari) were grouped into zilas which, as will be seen later, were units other than parganas, mahals and sarkars. The 'zamindars' enjoyed a position distinctly superior to the one held by

1. In the chronicles, particularly written at the seat of imperial power, the term 'zamindar' has been used so loosely as to make it difficult to differentiate even between an autonomous chieftain holding vast tracts of land and a petty zamindar holding merely a fraction of a village in a directly administered territory — a problem that has been commented upon by a large number of historians. See for example, Irfan Habib "The Zamindars in the Ain," Proceedings Indian History Congress- XX session, 1958, pp. 320-3. B R Grover "Nature of dehat-i Taaluqa (zamindari village) and the evolution of taaluqdari system During the Mughal Age", pp 166-67; Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp 136-39, S. Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars under the Mughals" pp 17-8 N.A. Siddiqui, Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals (1700-1750), pp 21-3; 28-30.

2. It may be pointed out that the term 'makan' is not exclusively applied to the possession of zamindars. In the available sources it is applied to the area of jurisdiction (makan-i faujdari), territorial administrative unit (sarkars of the Subah) and the territorial unit(s) held by rebellious elements (makanat-i muksi-dan).
other members of the class.¹

Such evidence as is available throws light on the origin of two distinct sections of the superior landholders in Gujarat. During the reign of Sultan Muzaffar, and even later on, many 'zamindaran' who were duly accepted as being beyond the effective reach of administrative pressure retained their possessions (aksari zamindaran k' dast-i zor waqai b' anha n' raside) undivided in return for payment of annual tribute (peshkash-i harsala).² Likewise 'the big zamindars who held many (literally, most) parganas' were also permitted to retain their possessions undivided 'on condition of joining service and maintaining troops'.³ They appropriated revenues of their watans in lieu of service and therefore were exempted from paying the peshkash.⁴

The same Sultan also expelled a section of Rajputs and

1. The other section is termed girasia whose possessions are described as 'giras', 'bantha-giras', 'bantha-chauth-giras' and payments made to the government exacted from these holdings, are termed salami. This section though not exclusive of the 'zamindaran' under discussion, categorized as 'Primary Zamindar' is discussed in Chapters V and VI below.

2. Accounts f.106 b, Besides, a few zamindars who embraced Islam were given a preferential treatment. They were also allowed to retain their possession undivided on terms of offering peshkash-i harsala. ibid ff 106 b, 173 b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p 190.


4. Ibid, I. p 22; Account ff 9b, 10b-11a.
Kolis from their possession; they in turn rose in rebellion and forced the Sultan to come to a settlement. Accordingly, the Kolis and Rajputs were allowed to retain a fourth part of the land called bantha' of their native places (awtan) and villages.' The remaining three parts of their possessions 'were attached to the government'. A particular section of the holders of bantha (banthadar) also came to be termed 'zamindaran' whose possessions (makan-i zamindari) were subject to the payment of peshkash from the time of the above named Sultan.  

Emporer Akbar is said to have confirmed the above mentioned zamindars in their respective makans on the Sul-

1. Account, f. 106 b, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I. pp 173-4, Ibid, Supplement, pp 228-9. In actual practice it was the land of a village, and exceptionally the villages themselves, which were thus divided. The produce of the bantha land, or village, was also subject to divisioning between the state, the banthadar and the riaya. For detailed view, please see Chapters I, (2) and V below.

2. Account, f. 106 b. The statement is followed by a detailed list of zamindars alongwith their makans and watan in the subah and the amount of peshkash-i muqarr-rari-i nizamat (a fixed but revisible amount of tribute to be collected annually and assigned as the salary of nazim-i subah) shown against their makans. The other section which also held bantha lands was termed girasia and it was required to pay salami on its bantha. For details see Chapter V. The author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi. (Suplement pp 228-9) mentions only salami as a claim on the banth. The statement is, however, followed by details of peshkash exacted by nazims from specified makan-i zamindari which were subject to payment of peshkash. Other payments are also mentioned in the parganas that followed, exclusively, the banth-taipad system, as will be seen below.

54
tan's patterns after he had conquered the region. 1

The 'zamindaran' that we propose to designate 'Superior zamindars' were, during the Mughal Age, sub-categorised into three distinct sections, namely the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi, zamindaran-i ismi, and the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin, presumably in the order of precedence. 2 In the following paragraphs an attempt is made to discuss broad features of the three sections, determine their role, positions and nature of relationship subsisting between them and empire during the heyday of the Mughal rule and ascertaining pattern of change, if any, by the onset of the eighteenth century.

A. ZAMINDARAN-I SARKARAT-I PESHKASHI: Six Makans:

At the close of the seventeenth century, the province of Gujarat was divided into two categories of sarkars,

1. Account f 105b; See also Mirat-i Ahmadi, i.p. 173.
2. Account ff. 105a - 9 b, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 224-5, 228-9. The latter work specifies the first two sections whereas some details of the third section though without naming them, are also provided. In the regional dialect these zamindars were described as Rawat, Rana, Rao, Raja, Jam, Thakur, etc. For the appellations and gradation based on the appellations in the region, see, Alexander Kintoch, Hindu Annals of Western Guzerat, Rasmale (reprint) 1973, N. Delhi, pp 568-9. pp 568-69.

The Account specifies 539 Makan-i zamindari existing around 1723-25. (ff 106b-219b).
namely, the *peshkashi* and the *kharaji sakars*. Of the sixteen sarkars of the subah, six---Sirohi, Dungarpur, Bansballa (Banswara)2 Sunr, Rarnagar (Dharampur) and Sulaiman-nagar (Kutch-i buzurg) --- have been described as *sarkarat-i peshkashi* as also *mulk-i zamindari* and *wilayat* belonging to zamindars (*Taalli-qi zamindaran*) who are also termed *umdah.*

Each of the six sarkars formed one *makan-i zamindari* administered by one zamindar.4

1. The term *peshkashi* indicates that no *mal-i wajib* was collected from the peasants by the imperial officials. The revenue paid by the zamindars of these sarkars was called *peshkash*. The *kharaji sarkars*, on the whole were subject to the payment of *mal-i wajib* by and large determined on the basis of detailed assessment by the imperial officials. However, within these sarkars there were the lands of the zamindars who paid *peshkash*. N.A. Siddiqi. op.cit p 23, also see the discussion in the following lines.

2. The first three of the six sarkars are reckoned as parganas of sarkar Sirohi (Subah Ajmer) in the Abul Fazl's *Ain-i Akbari* (Asiatic Society, Calcutta, II, pp 132-3). Later on during empror Aurangzeb's reign the three were raised to the position of sarkars. Mirat-i Ahmadi, *Supplement*, pp 224-5 N.A. Siddiqi. op.cit p 23. Ramnagar is now called Dharampur. The old capital Ramnagar, now known as Nagar, stands 24 miles South West of Dharampur, the new Capital. JN Sarkr, *Shivaji and His Times*, VI edn. Calcutta, 1961, p 166 n.

3. Account ff. 105 b-6 b, 109b - 10b 126b-27b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1, pp 25, 175; Ibid, *Supplement*, pp 24-8. Before the year 1662 Navanagar was also counted as one of the *peshkashi-Sarkars*. In this year it was annexed and turned *Kharaji*. (*peshmasi bud... kharaji gashte*). In the present discussion references to Navanagar are made for the pre-1662 period. For references, please see the discussion below.

4. Account ff. 105 b-6 a, 109 b-12a. As will be seen below the territorial limits of all these zamindars did not invariably coincide with the boundaries of sarkars placed under each of them.
By virtue of their location the six *makans* enjoyed considerable significance. All the six *sarkars* being situated on the outskirts of the *subah* came almost to ring the *kharaji sarkars* on the landside and, thus, all the land routes to and from the *subah* passed through the territory of one or the other *peshkashi sarkar*. Situated far off the seat of provincial power the six *sarkars* also enjoyed a favourable geographical position. Besides each of them commanded strong forts which were further protected by the


2. The Kutch, according to the *Ain* (II, p. 119), 'is largely a desert.' The region through which the route passes "is a saltish plain", says the *Mirat-i Ahamadi* (II, p. 114), "sweet water is absolutely unobtainable... there is a kind of mud at most places... It is not possible for a few horsemen to go abreast of one another on the road". The region of Sunt and Ramnagar, observed Hamilton Walter, "is strong, difficult to penetrate, extremely troublesome to subdue, expensive to retain and wholly unproductive as to revenues; Himilton Walter, *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindoostan and its adjoining territories*, J. Murry, 1820, I, p. 685. *History of Dharampur state (prant Dharampur) 1262 to 1937*, published by state Council (Author's name not mentioned), pp 13-5. Similarly, Dungarpur, Banswara and Sirohi were also situated in hilly region infested with forests and partly deserts. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, *Supplement*, pp 246-49, *Account*, ff. 105 b, 109 b, 110 a, 111 b; James Tod, *Travels into Western India*, Delhi, (Indian reprint), 1971, pp 59, 61, 68.
surrounding jungles. 1

The zamindars of peshkashi sarkars commanded considerable strength in men and equipment. The zamindars of Dungarpur and Banswara, each, commanded a force of 5000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry, that of Sirohi commanded 2000 cavalry and 5000 infantry and the zamindars of Bhuj and Navanagar 10000 cavalry 50,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry and 8000 infantry respectively at the end of the sixteenth century. 2

The zamindar of Navanagar was capable of raising his strength of cavalry to 12000 at about the same time 3 and the zamindar of Bhuj was in a position (1662) to dispatch 7000 mounted spearmen within a short period to help his clansmen outside his territory. 4 From the account of the forces commanded by these zamindars it is, however, evident that

1. Ain, pp 119, 132-3, Account ff 110a, 111b, ; Mirat-i Ahmadi Supplement p, 227; History of Dharampur, p 317; WW Webb, Chronicles of the Hindu States of Rajasthan, Delhi, 1972, p 29; Hamilton Walter, op.cit, I, p 685; It may be mentioned that there was a ban on the construction of new forts by the zamindars and the permission to construct a fort could be obtained from the imperial court only. Account f, 15a; Mirat-i Ahmadi II, p. 109. The Mughals seem to have allowed them to retain the forts which they possessed at the time of conquest.


the majority of their troops consisted of the infantry\(^1\). But
the evidence cited above also suggests that they commanded
forces which might have possessed considerable striking
capacity and were not means for fighting merely defensive
battles.\(^2\)

Moreover, the zamindar of Bhuj is also reported to have
maintained his own park of artillery (\textit{lawazma-i topkhana})
during the seventeenth and the following century.\(^3\) The
zamindar of Navanagar is also noticed as commanding his own
park of artillery which he had pressed into action against
the invading imperial forces in 1662.\(^4\)

Besides, the caste and clannish ties of the zamindars
seem to have formed the main sources of strength of some of
them. In our sources, the zamindars of Bhuj and Navanagar
who belonged to the Jadeja clan are described as \textit{marzaban},
\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{1.} For a detailed view, Irfan Habib, \textit{Agrarian System}, pp 163-4.
\item \textbf{2.} The zamindars of Bhuj and Navanagar had supported the
cause of Sultan Muzaffar Gujarati against emperor Akbar. Though our sources donot specify the composition
of the zamindars' forces fighting for the Sultan, the
element of swiftness in their movement suggests that
they were in command of a good cavalry; for details, AR
Khan, \textit{op. cit}, pp 78-80; for the offensive moves taken
by the zamindars of Bhuj, Khawaja Nizamuddin Ahmad,
\textit{Tabqati-i Akbari} (hereafter \textit{Tabqat}), Asiatic Society,
\item \textbf{3.} \textit{Account f. 111 b, Mirat-i Ahmad}, \textit{Supplement}, p 227. Under
the existing rule to manufacture the cannons and guns by
the zamindars was prohibited.
\item \textbf{4.} Kazim, \textit{op. cit}, p. 770.
\end{itemize}
There is evidence to show that the forces of Bhuj that raided imperial territory during Akbar's reign and later on (1662-71) rendered assistance to the zamindar of Navanagar consisted of (jadeja) Rajputs. Likewise Rai Singh and later on his son, Tamachi were equally supported by their Jadeja clansmen in their struggle for acquiring the gaddi of the zamindari of Navanagar.

The trouble that erupted between the members of the ruling family over succession to the gaddi of Navanagar highlights the fact that active support of the clansmen was not the less important than the imperial favor for the purpose of attaining and retaining the zamindari. Chhatrasal, the nominated successor of the ex-chief (died 1660), succeeded his father in accordance with the royal mandate and usage of zamindari and became the leader of his community


and raja of that land".¹ His uncle, Rai Singh, "persuaded" the Jadejas to 'desert his nephew' and 'won them over to his side'. He also reached an accord with the Jadeja chief of Bhuj², strengthened his position with his help and later on (1662) fought the imperial forces with the help of his clansmen for retaining the gaddi which in the meantime he had occupied.³ Evidently, Chhatrasal, the imperial nominee could not retain the gaddi for he failed to muster support of his own clansmen both within and without. Though Rai Singh was killed in action, his son continued to fight the imperial garrisons with the clansmen's support. He exerted so much pressure that the empire was forced to compromise with the Jadeja leader.⁴

The zamindars of Ramnagar and Sunt though belonging to the Rajput caste were, however, assisted by the Kolis and the Bhils, in addition to their own caste brethren when


2. According to the *Akbarnamah*, the zamindar of Navanagar being ex junior member of the Jadeja ruling house of Bhuj acknowledged the overlordship of latter and sought his approval regarding the succession and in other matters. Abual Fazl, *Akbarnamah*, Bib, Ind., Calcutta, 1877, III, p. 472; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, p. 194.


4. For further developments and references please see the discussion below.
they fought against the Mughals during emperor Shah Jahan's reign and later on against Shivaji.¹

Among the zamindars of the six sarkars Rajputs enjoyed a domineering position as members of one or another of their clans held these zamindars.² This apart, right from the time the zamindars submitted to the empire to the close of the period of the present study (1750), the zamindaris, with some interruption, as will be seen below, were retained by the same families.³


2. Ain, II pp 119-20, 132-3; Mirat-i Ahmadi, pp 284-5; Ibid. Supplement, pp 225-6; Account, ff.105b-6a, 109b-10b. There is contradictory information regarding the caste of the zamindar of Ramnagar. Relying on the unpublished English Factory Records, Sir. J.N. Sarkar notes that it was held by a Koli. Shiva Ji and His Times, 6th edn. Calcutta, 1961; p. 186. But the author of Hadiqat-ul Hind states that from the pre-Sultanate period the state was held by Surajwanshi Rajputs and it remained in their possession even during the period under review. The author adds that Raja Ram of Ramnagar, a contemporary of Shah Jahan, was son in law of Bhariji, the zamindar of Baglana, a Rathor Rajput. (Hadiqat-ul Hind, f.4; Tarikh-i Mirat-ul Alam MS No. 2348, Old accession, Jama Masjid Bombay, ff. 279-80.

3. Ain, II, 119-20, 132-3; Akabarnameh III, pp 189, 196, 821; Account, ff. 105 b - 6 a, 109b-10a; Mirat-i Ahma-di, Supplement, pp-225-7; History of Dharampur, pp11--9; Lala Sita Ram, History of Sirohi Raj, Allahabad, 1920, pp 172-6, 188,193. Later on the British also found the same families holding these zamindars.
Though described as zamindars of the *peshkashi sarkars*, the territorial extent of the zamindaris of some of them was far from being identical with the boundaries of the *sarkars* held by them. The zamindar of Kutch held a few *mahals* in the *sarkar* of Pattan and *subah* Thatta in addition to his own zamindari comprising the *sarkar*.\(^1\) The Jam of Navanagar, on the other hand enjoyed a share in the produce of two *mahals* in *sarkar* Kutch.\(^2\) Each of these zamindaris was regarded as one *makan-i zamindari* and this included the possession outside the *sarkars*.\(^3\) The other zamindaris consisting of one entire *sarkar* each are likewise and separately reckoned as one *makan-i zamindari*.\(^4\) Thus a *peshkashi sarkar* could form a single *zamindari-makan* though this was not invariably the case. The term *'peshkasi-sarkar'* seems to have indicated not

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Account} ff. 111a, 112a. It is not known whether the amount of *peshkash* was paid, if at all, through the zamindar of Bhuj or directly by the Jam of Navanagar. Most probably, the Jam who was an ex-junior member of the ruling family of Bhuj continued to hold these lands in his capacity of *bhayad* of the senior branch of the house.
  \item \textit{Account}. ff. 109b-12 a, 118b, 122a, 126b-7a.
  \item \textit{Ibid}.
\end{itemize}
so much the territorial extent of the zamindar's possession who held it as perhaps the boundaries of the administrative unit placed under the zamindar.\(^1\)

In the absence of dependable information a comparative study of the economic strength of the six zamindars may not be possible.\(^2\) However, from stray references available in the sources, the zamindar of Navanagar emerges as the richest among the six.\(^3\) Basically the economy of these zamindars was essentially agrarian, as one would expect. However Bhuj and Navanagar because of their geographical position were more favourably exposed to trade and commerce, the two zamindars commanded ports which were visited by ships of

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1. The zamindars do not seem to have been placed under the authority of imperial faujdars who were not appointed in their lands. Instead, the zamindars virtually held the position of faujdars and in this capacity they were designated sarbarahan. Yad-dasht, peshkash-i Sarbarahan R. No. 40 Pune.

2. The three known factors—extent of the area, jamadami which is not known for all, and the amount of peshkash may perhaps hardly be relied upon. The zamindari of Kutch, the largest in size, was "largely barren and sandy". (Ain, II, p 119). The amount of peshkash as also the military contingents furnished for imperial service, even if might have borne some relationship with the zamindars' economy, were equally a denominator of the degree of imperial control.

3. If we go by the aggregate mansabs, whether proposed or actually awarded, the troops commanded and furnished, the Jamadami, position of trade (ports and pearl fishery) and Abul Fazl's remark that there are "many towns and the agricultural area is extensive" in Navanagar, the above impression would be reinforced. Ain, II, p.119.

64
the surrounding areas. The most important trade for Bhuj, as well as Navanagar, was in Kutchi horses which were held 'equal to Arab horses'. Bhuj also exported cotton to Thatta and the zamindar of Navanagar probably had some connections with the trade in pearls which during the seventeenth century were taken out of sea under the supervision of the imperial officials.

It is thus evident from the preceding discussion that the strength, as also the sources of their power, varied considerably from each zamindar to another. Apart from the zamindars' capacity of resistance, the geographical position of the zamindaris on the imperial map, its productivity and manageability went a long way in determining the relationship of the Mughal empire with each zamindar. The possessions of all the six zamindars are invariably described as peshkash. But it does not mean that the payment of peshkash, which will be discussed a little later, was the only obligation of these zamindars. They were also required


to render military service with specified contingents under the \textit{Nazim-\textit{i} Subah}.

In continuation of the pre-Mughal practice \textit{b' dastur-\textit{i salatin-\textit{i} Gujaratia} the zamindars of the six \textit{sarkars} were placed, from the time of the conquest of the \textit{subah}, under the obligation of serving the \textit{Nazim} with specified contingents which they were required to maintain in accordance with the army regulations \textit{mawajiq-\textit{i} zaba\textit{-i fauj}}.\footnote{According to the arrangements made during Akbar's reign the zamindars of Ramnagar had to maintain 1000 horse-men and those of Dungarpur, Banswara and Sirohi 2000 each.\footnote{The zamindar of \textit{Sirohi} was assigned as \textit{jagir} to the \textit{Nazim} of Subah Gujarat on condition of maintaining two thousand \textit{sawars} for imperial service" is incorrect. The text says: From Raja Todarmal the zamindar \textit{yeq} zanjir-\textit{i} feel yaft \textit{w} \\
\textit{sarkar} \textit{Sirohi} b'shart-\textit{i} khidmat ba jamia'\textit{t} du hazar sawar ba naziman-\textit{i} sub\textit{ah} jagir muqarrar shud. \textit{Mirat-\textit{i Ahmadi}, Supplement, p. 226 The sarkar, thus, was assigned to the zamindar by way of jagir in return for service to be rendered with 2000 troops to the Governors of the Subah, the \textit{Mirat-\textit{i Ahmadi} (I p.134) puts it more clearly: zamindar Sirohi... Raja ra deed... Raja khila't... b' zamindar dade; muqarrar farmud ke ba jamia'\textit{t} du hazar sawar hamrah subedar Gujarat nawkri namude bashad. Likewise the Account (f.110a) states that zamindar mazkur... mulazmat... namude... muqarrar farmudand ke b' jamia'\textit{t} du hazar sawar dar subah nawkri namayad. The zamindar, it may be pointed out, was not a mansabdar. So the sarkar was not granted to the zamindar as 'jagir' against the tankhwah in strict}}
Kutch was exempted from military service during Akbar's reign\(^1\) but in the subsequent years (1609-13) he is noticed to have served with 2500 horse-men under the Nazim's command.\(^2\) Details regarding the service obligations of the zamindar of Sunt are not specified; he is, however, mentioned among the six zamindars who were required to serve.\(^3\) Needless to say that it was not merely a theoretical obligation but on occasions they are reported to have actually continued...

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\(^1\) Technical sense of the term. Rather, the zamindar was to enjoy revenues of his zamindari as a mansabdar-jagirdar would have done otherwise, on condition of maintaining the troops. To assign the revenue in jagir without granting a mansab seems to be a legacy of the pre-Mughal Gujarat; see Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp173-4; Ibid, Supplement, pp 224-5; Account ff. 106 b, 110, 126b, 127a.

1. Rao Khangar, the first ruler of Bhuj to submit, had obtained the pargana of Morbi at the time of his submission (Akbarnamah, Ill, p 530). Though the service obligation of the zamindar is not specified, the ruler being a du-hazar mansabdar (Tabqa, II, p.443) must have been under the obligation of serving the empire. His son and successor, Rao Bharamal, was duly exempted from service obligation as a reward for getting the last of the Gujarati Sultan arrested at the time (1592-93) of his final submission. He also got pargana Morbi (sarkar Pattan) which in the meantime seems to have been confiscated. The text (Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p. 226) says that the zamindar: darkhwast-i pargana Morbi w muafi-i nawkri kard... Khan-i Azam pazeeraft. The Account (f.110b) also states that: pargana Morbi b'jama deh lac mehmudi b'mujib farmudand... taklid-i nawkri muaf' dashtand. Akbarnamah, Ill, pp 472, 524, 530, 593, Mirat-i Ahmadi I.p 180.

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 180. The Bhuj contingent was led by the son of the zamindar.

3. Account, ff. 106 b, 110, 126b, 127 a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 224-5.
served the Mughal government during the seventeenth century whenever called upon to do so.\(^1\) Besides, troops of some of them were permanently stationed at the provincial capital where they remained till the close of the seventeenth century.\(^2\)

Rendering military service to the state was not invariably conditional upon holding a mansab.\(^3\) There is evidence to show that these zamindars served even when they were not recipients of mansabs. Under emperor Akbar, no zamindar excepting that of Bhuj was actually\(^4\) granted a mansab, however, everyone of them was required to serve, a fact which has already been noted. None of these zamindars is, similarly, noted among the recipients of a mansab under Jahangir; they are, however, noted as serving the Mughals (1609--13) during his reign.\(^5\) Likewise the zamindar of

\begin{enumerate}
\item Mirat-i Ahmadi, l. p 189 (1609-13); Ibid, l, p 224 (1650); Ibid, l. p. 256 (1663-64); Account, ff. 76a, 79b,
\item Account ff. 76 a, 79b,
\item S.Nurul-Hasan, "Zamindars under the Mughals", pp 19-20.
\item According to the Mirat-i Ahmadi, Raja Todarmal had proposed the award of mansab to the zamindars of Dungarpur and Banswara of 2500/2500 each, to the zamindar of Ramnagar of 1500/1000 and to the zamindar of Kutch 2000/2000 and to the zamindars of Navanagar of 4000/4000. Mirat-i Ahmadi, ll pp-134,136 Amongst them the zamindar of Bhuj alone seems to have been awarded the mansab.
\item Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 189.
\end{enumerate}
Dungarpur served the Mughals in the year 1663-64 though he lost the mansab in 1658 and could regain it after 1679-80 only.¹

The zamindars of the peshkashi sarkars endeavoured to abstain from serving the empire from the time of emperor Shah Jahan. The observation of the Mirat-i Ahmadi that these zamindars no longer rendered military assistance since the year of Aurangzeb's death² stands contradicted by the evidence available in the same and other works, pointing to a much earlier cessation of the tie. The zamindar of Sirohil, for the last time came to see the Nazim in the year 1648.³ Subsequently, (1657-58) prince Dara issued a number of nishans asking the zamindar to reach the imperial court and a few months later to serve under Raja Jaswant Singh. But the zamindar did not show up.⁴ From the year 1648 "no zamindar---

1. *Ibid*, I, p. 256; for the award of mansab please see the discussion below.


4. Kaviraj Shyamaldas in his documented work, *Vir Vinod* (1888), reproduces the prince's nishans (Vol. III, pp 1105-11). M. Athar Ali (*The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*) does not find the zamindar of the place among the participants in the war of succession. The author of *History of Sirohi* (pp 202-5) says that the zamindar sided with Dara and fought under Raja Jaswant Singh's command. He does not however substantiate his observation.
Dar of Sirohi came to see any Nazim. 1 much less to serve.
The zamindar of Ramnagar had ceased serving the empire from
1652-55 and perhaps even earlier and turned peshkashi for
good. 2 The zamindar of Sunt likewise, turned peshkashi
sometime during Shah Jahan's reign. 3 The zamindar of Dungar-
pur being a mansabdar (1000/1000 of which 800 were du aspah
sih aspah) and his troops having been posted at the provinci-
cial capital continued to serve the empire till the close of
the seventeenth century. 4 Though Tamachi, zamindar of Bhuj,
had evaded Prince Murad's call to serve under him, he seems
to have served a little later (1659-61) in his capacity as
mansabdar for some time. 5 Evidently, the zamindaran-i sarka-
rat-i peshkashi who had all been rendering service showed an
inclination towards turning peshkashi and in their attempts


2. As early as 1637-38 Azam Khan the subedar, had to lead
an expedition for realizing peshkash from him. The
zamindar seems to have, then, ceased to serve. Account,
f. 110b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p 234; for the
Peshkash being finally fixed sometime in 1652-55,
Bakhtawar Khan Tarikh-i Mirat-ul Alam, MS No. 2401,
Jama Masjid Bombay collection, ff. 278-80; Hadiqat-ul
Hind, ff. 2-4.

3. Account ff. 106 a, 109 b.

4. Ibid, ff. 76a, 79b, 10ba 126b.

5. (Emperor) Murad's farman (20 December, 1658), Sarad
Palace, Bhuj read with prince Dara's nishan (17 Jan.
1659) of the same collection; Account ff. 110b-11a.
Later on the zamindar assisted the imperial rebels
instead. For reference, please see the discussion
below.
to do so they had met with success by the onset of the eighteenth century.

No evidence suggesting any actual attempt by the provincial authorities to enforce the military obligation on these zamindars is available in the pages of contemporary, near contemporary or later works. Instead, the provincial authorities resorted to the collection of *peshkash*.

It would appear from the foregoing discussion that there was a lack of uniformity in the relationship between the Mughal empire and the Chiefs. In the ultimate analysis, this relationship was determined by the respective strengths of the two, although to be sure, this was done within the general framework of exaction of tribute and military service. It is also evident that the Mughal state was pragmatic enough to accept and continue the specific relationship with individual chiefs earlier established by provincial kingdom which was subsequently absorbed within the Mughal empire.¹ The Mughals, it seems, had also endeavoured to exercise greater control as and when possible. In this, they met with considerable degree of success but gradually the zamindars succeeded in reversing the trend in their favour.

¹. A.R. Khan, *op. cit* has taken particular note of this fact.
That the imperial government laid claim to a share in the revenue of the zamindaris, which, regardless of its mode of exaction, is an established fact. The zamindars of the peshkashi-sarkars, on the whole, were under the obligation of paying "peshkash-i harsala" (annual tribute) which consisted of the matalba-i sarkar-i wala (the claim of the Emperor) and peshkash-i nizamat (the tribute for the Governor). It was in addition to the offering made by them on special occasions as will be examined below.

The six sarkars were not, it seems, subject to the payment of mal-i wajib as pointed out above. In addition to being termed sarkarat -i peshkashi the six sarkars are also described as "peshkashi kharij az jama" i.e., not being subject to assessment and payment of mal-i wajib. The entire amount of revenues actually extorted from the six

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1. Account. ff. 105 b. 106b, 107b-11b, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 25. The zamindaris of Navanagar which had undergone a change in its position clarifies this point further. Before its annexation in 1662 the sarkar was also peshkashi (peshkashi bud). With its annexation it turned kharaji (kharaji gashte) it was then subject to detailed assessment under the direct administration, revenue collected came to be termed mal-i wajib as distinct from peshkash of the pre-annexation period. Account. ff. 105 b, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp. 284-6; Ibid Supplement, pp 219-21, Yad-dasht pargana haveli Islam-nagar Waghaira, in the possession of present researcher (hereafter P.C) No. P 3, P39-40 and ff. 55-6.
zamindars is invariably described as *peshkash*.\(^1\)

The *matalba-i sarkar-i wala* which was exacted from these *sarkars* by way of *peshkash* seems to have been calculated on the basis of the *jama*.\(^2\) While placed in the *khalsa*,

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1. *Yad-dasht: Haqiqat-i hasil-o peshkash, Farsi-daftar*, Pune Archives, Pune, Roomal No. 70 (hereafter R.No. Only). Unindexed. The document shows (1658) both *mal-i wajib* and *peshkash* as having been collected from a number of *parganas* of *kharaji-sarkars*. But against the three of the specified *peshkashi-sarkars* only the term *peshkash* is entered; also see, *nuskha-i peshkashi* in the *Account*, ff. 105 b, 106 b, 109 b-11a.

2. The zamindari of Dungarpur with its entire *jama* (1,60,00,000) was held in *jagir* by a member of the house of Chittor during Aurangzeb's reign. The *jagir* reverted to the *paibagi* for a brief period of roughly four months before it was assinged in the *jagir* of Rawal Jaswant Singh (zamindar of Dungarpur) and after the recall of the former *jagirdar* during the 22nd regnal year (R.Y). Since the zamindar had not paid the *mehsul* for the intervening period, the emperor ordered the *diwan-i subah* to realise 'the amount of *mehsul* of the intervening period which came to Rs. 66,690 and 6 *annas*.' *Mirtat-i Ahmadi*, I, p. 305. The recovery made in the 26th. R.Y. is recorded as 'peskahsi-i sarkar-i wala' (the tribute for the emperor) in the document entitled *'Yad-dasht: Matalba-i sarkar-i wala, sarkar Dungarpur*, dated (against the amount) 22nd R.Y. and 26th R.Y. (on the bottom), Pune, R.No. 70. Very clearly the amount was calculated against the *jama*, it is however, difficult to precisely asertain the relationship between the actual claim (*matalba*) and the *jama*. The recovery was made for a period of one-third of the year, the entire claim for the whole year comes to around Rs. two *lakhs* (66,690/3=22,230). It is just about half the amount represented by the *jama* (1,60,00,000/40 = Rs. 400,000). Was the principality on six month ratio? Was it merely half of the amount of *jama* that was claimed as *peshkash*? Were the instalments of *peshkash* equally spread over the whole of year? The region, it may be mentioned, mainly yielded *kharif* crops.

Likewise the amount of *matalba* which the zamindar of Banswara had paid and the balance which stood in arrear is recorded just below the *jama* in the *Account* (ff. 109 b). Unfortunately, the work doesnot specify the exact period of claim.
or paibagi, the matalba (claim) was realised by the diwan-i subah and remitted to the imperial treasury. It could also be assigned in the tankhawah jagir. The peshkash-i nizamat (the tribute for the nazim) on the other hand, was to be appropriated by the nazims of the Subah who were responsible for its collection also. It was extorted in lieu of military service i.e. the zamindars either served the empire with specified contingents, or else they were required to offer peshkash-i nizamat. Besides, it seems to have stood independently of and over and above the jama.

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 305; Account, f. 109 b.

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 305; Account ff. 106a, 110ab, for further references please see the the discussion in the following lines.

3. Account, ff. 14a, 20a, 74b; 106b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 25.

4. Thus, for example, matalba-i sarkar-i wala was collected from Banswara by the diwan of subah of Gujarat, whereas the zamindars was required to serve under nazims of the subah Malwa; since the zamindar of Dungarpur served the state with specified contingents during the course of the seventeenth century, he was exempt from paying it. During the year 1663-64 the zamindar served the state with 1000 contingents whereas the entire jama of the principality at this point of time was held in jagir by a member of the house of Chittor; the zamindar of Ramnagar enjoyed exemption, as pointed out above, from paying peshkash-i nizamat in view of his rendering military service. But when he stopped serving the empire, he was required to pay 'peshkash-i nizamat'. For the same and similar references, Account, ff. 106 b, 109 b, ibid, f. 109 b, read with Mirat-i Ahmadi Supplement, p 225; also Account, ff. 118b, 126 b, read with Mirat-i Ahmadi, l, p. 305, Account with Mirat-i Ahmadi ff. 106, 127a, read with, Supplement, p 234; emperor Aurangzeb's farman repro-
Some idea of the assessment of 'matalba-i sarkar-i wala which was calculated against the jama may be had by examining the jamadami figures which are fortunately available for some of the sarkart-i peskhashi. The jama for the principality of Banswara and Sirohi stood at the same figures from the close of the sixteenth century to the close of our period of study. However, the jama for Dungarpur had doubled sometime during the post-Jahangir and pre-1658 period. Evidently, the element of reassessing the jama and co-ordinating it with the actual paying capacity of the zamindar seems to have been generally lacking.

Likewise the peshkash-i nizamat due from the zamindars of the sarkarat-i peskhashi besides being an annual (har

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duced in the *Vir Vinod* 425-8 read with *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, pp 224-25, 305.

1. *Ain*, II, pp 132-3; *farmans* of Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb specifying the jama, *Vir Vinod*, pp 425-8, 1104; *Account*, ff. 106 a, 109b, *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, p 225. The jamadami of Sirohi stood at 1,20,00,000 dam during the Ain's period. (*Ain*, II p 132). Later on (1615) this is put at 100,00,000 dam (emperor Jahangir's farman, dated 1615, AD, reproduced in *Vir Vinod*, II, 239-49). The reduction (20,00,000 dam) may perhaps be attributed to the fact that twelve of the villages of Sirohi had been, in the meantime, included in sarkar Pattan, *Account*, f. 109b.


3. Also see, *Account*, ff. 109a-10b.
sala) claim was also subject to reassessment though not necessarily. Referring to peshkash offered by the zamindar of Sirohi (1585-86), the Tabqat says that he paid 'the total amount of peshkash (mubligh kulli peshkash kard). More particularly, the zamindar of Ramnagar paid different amounts Rs. 12000/- (1577-78), Rs. 9,000/- (1636) and Rs. 10,000 (1650-51) on three different occasions. Apparent-ly, the amount of peshkash was reassessed during the interven-ing period.

But the amount was not reassessed invariably. During the post-1652 period, the zamindar of Ramnagar was required to pay the same sum (Rs. 10,000), that he paid in that year. Likewise the amount paid by the zamindar of Navanagar seems to have remained fixed from 1577-78 to the closing years of the sixth decade of the seventeenth century.

1. Tabqat-i Akbari, II, p 382. See also Kazim, op.cit p 411, Account, (f. 106 b) describes it as peshkash- muguarrar-i harsala.


3. Also see Tarikh-i Mirat-ul Alam, ff. 279-80.

4. Ibid, f 80, the text runs as follows: muqarrari sakh- tand k' harsal deh hazar rupia b' tariq-i peshkash midade bashad) also see Account, f. 110a.

5. On the three different points of time --- 1577-78, 1636-42, and 1656-57, the zamindar is noted to have offered the same amount and the same number of Kutchi horses. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 213, 285, Yad-dasht: peshkash-i zamindaran, (dt. 1067 AH), Navanagar, Pune, R.No. 37.
As regard the obligation of paying *peshkash-i nizamat* and *matalba-i sarkar-i wala* position of the zamindars under review was at variance from each other. The zamindar of Bhuj enjoyed exemption from paying both the claims. The zamindars of Dungarpur and Banswara enjoyed exemption from paying the *peshkash-i nizamat* in view of their rendering military service but both of them were under the obligation of paying the *matalba-i sarkar-i wala*, as and when they were not receipient of *mansabs*. The zamindars of Banswara successfully evaded the payment of *matalba-i sarkar-i wala* during the reign of Aurangzeb. The zamindar of Ramnagar ceased to be service-rendering (1636), the exemption from paying the *peshkash-i nazamat* was withdrawn and he was instead forced to pay *peshkash* during the later period.

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1. Excepting for a brief interval when he served under Jahangir as noted above, and during the period the zamindar enjoyed *mansab* under Akbar and Aurangzeb as mentioned above, the zamindars of the place do not seem to have served the empire, *Account* ff. 110 b-11a; the zamindar, however, was obliged to pay the *peshkash* in the year 1659 on account of his rebellious act of sheltering Dara during the war of succession. *Ibid* ff. 110 b-11a; 122a.


3. *Account* f. 109b; it may be recalled that the *Matalba-i sarkar-i wala* was demanded if and when the *jama* stood unassigned in *jagir*.

Sir-o-hi was exempt from paying the peshkash-i nizamat as late as 1050-51 in view of his rendering military service. Since that date he did not come to serve the nazims. In future he seems to have been required to pay the peshkash in lieu thereof. The zamindar of Sunt was also required to pay 'matalba-i sarkar-i wala.

The zamindars of the peshkash sarkars seem to have by and large remitted peshkash directly to the treasury or through the faujdars of the sarkar in the immediate vicinity of their respective possessions. It was perhaps under exceptional circumstances that the subedar himself was obliged to lead military expedition for exacting the tribute. Before the close of the seventeenth century, the zamindar of Ramanagar was placed under the authority of the mutasaddi of Surat, who, therefore extorted tribute.

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1. Account, ff. 110a, 119b, 126b, Mirat-i Ahmadi I. p 224.
3. Kazim, op. cit pp. 768-70, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement pp 224-5 where he says that at the time the work was being written the nazim-i subah had to lead military expedition for the purpose, presumably it was not done in former days.
5. Account ff. 110b, 127a, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp- 228, 234. The latter work does not specify the time.

78
Besides, these zamindars were also required to make occasional offerings. One among such, the occasion of doing homage, appears to be more important necessitating the presence of the zamindar.\(^1\) Excepting the zamindar of Sunt all other zamindars under review are stated to have done homage to the Mughal emperor Akbar or to his envoy Raja Todarmal or to emperor Jahangir and Shahjan.\(^2\) The zamindar of Bhuj did homage to emperor Jahangir for the first, and perhaps the last time, when he was forced to do so.\(^3\) The zamindars of Sirohi, Dungarpur and Banswara did homage, perhaps for the last time in the years 1650 and 1700, re-

1. The *Account* (f. 85b) specifies the birth and accession anniversaries of the emperor when the zamindars were required to congratulate the emperor and send *peshkash*. Besides, they had to offer *peshkash* along with the requests *ara'iz* made to the court. The zamindar of Bhuj had sent *peshkash* while requesting 'emperor' Murad to forgive his fault of sheltering an imperial rebel, 'Emperor Murad's *farman* dated 20th Dec., 1658 and prince Murad's *Hasb-ul hukm* dated May, 1657, private collection of Sarad palace, Bhuj Maharaolakhpat of Bhuj also made a similar offering as late as 1756 to the imperial court when he sought to obtain the title of 'Mirza Raja' and the subedar of Thatta. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, p 545.


3. *Tuzuk*, I. p 19, Emperor Jahangir's *farman*, dated 19th urde-Bahisht 12th 11th year Sarad palace, Bhuj. See also the *Account*, ff. 110a-11b, suggesting that no zamindar of Bhuj came to do homage. It is in spite of the fact that the zamindar enjoyed exemption even from offering *peshkash*.
spectively.¹

On the occasions of doing homage each of the above mentioned zamindars made offerings which appear to be different from, though at times inclusive of² the regular claim of peshkash made on an annual basis. During Jahangir's visit to the subah, the zamindars of Navanagar had presented one hundred mahurs, one thousand rupees and fifty horses at the time of doing homage.³ Elsewhere, it is noted that the zamindar was under the obligations of offering three lakhs mehmudis and one hundred horses as peshkash.⁴ On the other hand, the zamindar of Bhuj offered precisely double of what the Jam of Nanavanagar had already offered.⁵ Since the zamindar of Bhuj reportedly⁶ enjoyed a special status supe-

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2. For referfe please see note on the preceeding page and A.R. Khan, op. cit. pp 211-12.


4. For reference see discussion in the preceeding pages.


6. Ain, II, p 119; Akbarnamah, III, p 472; Tuzuk, I, p. 443; Ibid, II, 19; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 194; see also Jahangir's farman 'granting' permission to the ruler of Bhuj for kissing the imperial threshold, assuring him of a befitting imperial treatment vis a vis Navanagar. op. cit.
rior to that of Navanagar, the offerings made by these zamindars may, therefore, be regarded as a denominator of their respective social status, though it is difficult to be definitive about this.

As regards the position of these zamindars within their zamindaris, they appear to have been left alone to manage on their own. Their possessions on account of being *mulk-i zamindari* were exempt from survey, and, likewise, no imperial revenue officials were appointed in their territories. Though the zamindars had accepted the circulation of imperial currency, the ones of Bhuj and Navanagar maintained their own mints and struck coins, called *kori*, *jami* and *mehmudi* there. The zamindar of Navanagar was forced

1. *Account*, ff. 20 b, 24a-25b, 28a-30b, 105b, 106b, 109b-112b. The *Ain* also does not furnish area statistics. Since the *jama* for Bhuj, Ramnagar and Sunt is not recorded in any of the available works, it may therefore, be argued that even the *jama* was not necessarily calculated for all the zamindaris. In its exhaustive list of the *Makan-i faujdar* and *thanabandali* of the entire subah for 1658 to 1725, the *Account* (ff. 393b-404b of, *ibid*, ff. 96a, 100a) does not mention one in these sarkars; also see, *Mirat-i Ahmad*, Supplement, pp 224-8 which likewise does not mention the *makan* of *faujdar* in the possessions whereas in the *kharaji* sarkars the work specifies the same. Besides, the *Mirat* in its general description of the appointment of these officials from time to time, does not speak of such appointments in these territories. Therefore, it appears that *faujdars* were not maintained in their territories.

2. Even after the extinction of the sultanate, the zamindars of Bhuj retained their coins along with their own names written in Deonagari, the name of Muzaffar III of Gujarat, and the year 978(AH) both in Persian character, G.P. Taylor, "Coins of the Gujarat Sultans" *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, 1903, pp31-5; M.S Commissariat, *A History*
(1640-41) to cease coining money, though minting appears to have been revived subsequently as is suggested by the stationing of an imperial official (1660) there.¹

But it does not mean that the imperial administration observed complete indifference towards all the internal affairs of these zamindars. The state maintained a waga’-i nigar at Dungarpur, presumably to live in touch with the internal developments.² Besides, the Jams of Navanagar were not free to work the pearl-fisheries which were placed under the control of imperial officials.³ Moreover, the emperor could also make land grants out of sarkar-i peshkashi, one such grant in the sarkar of Sirohi even survived the Mughal

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³ Account, f. 85b.

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rule in the Subah.\(^1\)

In its concern for ensuring smooth flow of trade and commerce, the Mughal state, it seems, forced the zamindars to provide protection to travelers and traders through their lands.\(^2\) Prince Murad (Oct. 1656), and a few months later emperor Shah Jahan ordered Rao Akheraj, the zamindar of Sirohi, to book the robbers who had plundered the goods of a traveller while passing through Danta, the zamindari territory which the Rao was granted with the express condition of preventing the occurrence of such events.\(^3\) From a hasb-ul hukm (May, 1657) it appears that consequent upon his plundering the Dutch traders one Akheraj (?) had been evicted out of his fort, and he took shelter in the territory of Bhuj with the suspected connivance of the zamindar of the place. The zamindar was, therefore, ordered to assist the imperial force chasing Akheraj, or else face similar conse-

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3. See texts of the nishan and the farman, *Vr Vinod*, III pp 1102-4, while referring to the place (Danta) of occurrence the farman notes that ma badawlat zamindari anja ra b' oo barai een inayat farmude' eem k' een qism umoors dar anja waqi shawad.
quences, i.e. expulsion from his possession.\(^1\)

Sometime the eruption of dispute over the succession to the gaddi also invited imperial intervention.

The imperial authority asserted its right to recognize the successor of a zamindar of peshakhi sarkar, though normally it gave recognition to the zamindar’s nominee to succeed him.\(^2\) Only two instances of imperial intervention in the succession to these principalities are traceable in the available sources for the entire period of Mughal rule in Gujarat. In the first instance, emperor Akbar placed for a short period, the principality of Banswara under direct administration (1603-4) on account of the trouble which had arisen over the succession between Agar Sen and Man Singh.\(^3\)

The second incident which relates to Navanagar during Aurangzeb’s reign deserves to be examined in some detail.

Chhatrasal, the duly nominated successor, succeeded

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No clue to identify Akheraj of the hasbul-hukm is provided in the text. There were two zamindars of the same name during the period -- Akheraj of Sirohi and one of Sehore (Rasmala), pp. 352-3.

2. Kazim, \emph{op. cit.} pp., 768-9; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I. p 254; Irfan Habib, \textit{Agrarian System} p. 184 and n; S. Nurul Hasan, "Zamindar Under the Mughals" pp.20-1.

3. \textit{Akbaranamah}, III, p 821. The chief of Banswara, Agrasen, was expelled and the principality was captured. Subsequently, Man Singh is noted calling upon the emperor having, in the meantime been confirmed in the seat of power. A. R. Khan, \emph{op. cit}, p 108.
his father in accordance with royal mandate and customary
practice of zamindar. 1 His uncle, Rai Singh, who was ac-
tively supported by his Jadeja clansmen of Navanagar and
backed by the zamindar of Bhuj belonging to the same clan,
occupied the gaddi (1660-61), imprisoned Chhatrasal, and
expelled the imperial officials from the mint and the pearl
fisheries. 2 In his turn, Rai Singh was killed by the impe-
rial forces that came to occupy the principality (1662)
which was renamed Islamnagar and placed under the direct
imperial administration. Chhatrasal was only nominally
restored to the gaddi and allowed to retain only three
parganas out of the whole sarkar which lost its former
status of the peshkashi one and was declared kharaji. 3

Rai Singh's eldest son, Tamachi escaped to Okha Mandal
where he led the life of an outlaw (wahur wattia). 4 With the
active support of the zamindar of Bhuj and the Jadejas of
Navanagar, he attacked the villages of Halar (sarkar Navana-

1. Kazim, op. cit. pp 768-9, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I. p 254,
Ranmal had remained "stead fast on the path of loyalty
and submission", his request for nominating his, son,
though a minor, was accepted. Kazim, op. cit.
3. Kazim, op. cit, pp 770-72, 775; Saqi, op. cit. pp 21,
42; Khafi Khan, op. cit, p 197; Account, ff. 28a 123;
Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 244-45, ibid , Supplement pp-219-
21.
Under the mounting pressure, Tamachi (of Navanagar) was offered a mansab which he seems to have refused.\(^2\)

Perhaps tired of the long time spent (1663-72) in outlawry, Tamachi approached Maharaja Jaswant Singh, then subedar of Gujarat (1670-72). Obviously on the subedar's recommendation and evidently because of the inability of imperial officials to deal with an influential caste-leader, "the pen of forgiveness was crossed over the books of Tamachi's misdeeds" in 1672.\(^3\) Tamachi, his brother Phul, Lakha, his eldest son and Varamal, the younger son were ennobled with mansabs of 1000/700, 300/150, 200/60 and 200/60 respectively, and, as per his request, he with his sons and brother was exempted from dagh and muster. Besides, 25 villages of the region which were the native places of Jadeja Rajputs who had accompanied him during his period of exile were, on his request, granted as ina'm to them. Tamachi was required to assist the nazim with a force

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1. Kazim \textit{op. cit}, pp 771--3, 775; GH. Khare, \textit{op. cit} Letter No. 62, dated 2nd June, 1667. Because of his acts of plundering and depredations he was given the cognomen of tagad, the robber, M.S. Commissariat, \textit{A History of Gujarat}. II. p 168.


of 1000 sawars and infantry of the same strength.\textsuperscript{1}

But the Jam suffered a substantial loss both in his possessions and position. The sarkar of Navanagar was not given the position of peshkashi and it remained a kharaji sarkar. The Jam was given only a portion of the sarkar, the remaining part including mahal haveli and city of Navanagar remained under the direct administration of the imperial government. The zamindari was put under the jurisdiction of the local faujdar instead of the Nazim of the subah. The single makan-i zamindari as it was treated previously, was split up into twenty two makans with reduced status.\textsuperscript{2}

Thus, out of necessity all the three -- Chhatarsal, Tamachi and the emperor -- had to make room for each other, Political expediency and economic necessity thus forced the solution. With the adjustment of Tamachi's interests the territory, mainly plain and fertile, could be managed with relative ease.

The territory of the zamindar of Ramnagar, was annexed apparently for strategic considerations and it seems to have


\textsuperscript{2} Account ff. 105b, 123a and b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 217 219-20, 225. P.C. (Peshkash document), Nos. 39, 40, 55.
been restored, subsequently, on economic grounds. In his bid to occupy important strategic points between Gujarat and the Deccan Prince Aurangzeb captured Baglan and annexed Ramnagar. Since the time of its annexation the administration seems to have found it difficult to meet the administrative expenses out of the revenues of the territory. Consequently the zamindari was restored to its zamindar with provision that he would pay a sum of rupees ten thousand as peshkash every year.

These zamindars do not appear to have much inclination for participating in the imperial politics as is evident from their moves during the war of succession between the sons of Shah Jahan. On the eve of the war, Prince Dara endeavoured to persuade Rao Akheraj of Sirohi to reach the imperial court. As he did not show up, the prince asked him to join Maharaja Jaswant Singh along with the other zamindars of the surrounding parts. But the Rao does not

1. *Tarikh-i Mirat-ul Alam*, ff. 279-80; the text says that *wilayat Ramnagar... maftuh gasht... az anja kharj az dakhlash afzun bud*. But the empire seems to have retained the fort of Ramnagar, even after the restoration.


seem to have participated in the war.² Rao Tamachi of Bhuj had also welcomed the prince who passed through his territory before the battle of Deora. Also, the zamindar had engaged his daughter to Sipihr Shukoh in the hope of his own and Dara Shukhoh's future and prosperity.³ Dara's devastating defeat at Deora, followed by Qutubuddin Khan Khweshgi's retaliatory inroads into the zamindari and a timely imperial warning seem to have forced Rao Tamachi to change his stand.⁴ Instead of supporting Dara on his way back, the zamindar regarded him with complete indifference⁵, and a little later welcomed the imperial commander into his territory, surrendered prince's precious articles and offered

1. M. Athar Ali in his Nobility Under Aurangzeb does not find the Rao among the participants in the war. However, the author of the History of Sirohi (pp 202-5) claims that he had joined Dara's side. The author of the latter work does not cite any evidence in support of his contention.


3. A mansabdar from Gujarat, he had joined (emperor) Murad's ranks and followed him to the imperial capital. Subsequent to Murad's imprisonment he became Aurangzeb's partisan who favoured him with a rise in mansab and faujdar of Pattan, a territory adjacent to Kutch. At the time Dara arrived in the subah, the Khan, instead of joining his ranks, carried raids into Bhuj.


5. Muntakhab-ul Lubab, p 137; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 245.
peshkash from which he otherwise, enjoyed exemption.\textsuperscript{1} A little later, the zamindar was favoured with a khilat, an elephant and a mansab.\textsuperscript{2}

The zamindar of Bhuj was also summoned by 'emperor' Murad to join his standard before he left for the imperial capital.\textsuperscript{3} But the zamindar does not appear to have joined him, for a little later, he is noted to have welcomed prince Dara as pointed out above.\textsuperscript{4}

It is evident from the preceding discussion that the zamindars of the peshkashi sarkars ruled over their inherited territories on a hereditary basis with full autonomy under the paramountcy of Mughal emperors. Their subordina-

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1. Account, f. 110 b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p 227.

2. Account, f. 110b; The date of awarding the mansab is not recorded. However, Tamachi had held the zamindari from 1654 to 1662 (MS Commissariat, A History of Gujarat, I, p 152) and the mansab was certainly awarded during Aurangzeb's reign. (M. Athar Ali, \textit{op. cit}, p 208) From 1661 onward, Rao Tamachi had become a partisan of the rebel zamindar of Navanagar and opposed the emperor. It seems therefore, logical to assume that the mansab might have been granted between 1659 and 1661 presumably as reward for the coolness he had shown to Dara and the favorable attitude towards the imperial commander.

3. Murad's farman dated 20th December, 1658, Bhuj collection, Prince Murad who was subedar of Gujarat on the eve of the war of succession, proclaimed himself emperor on December 5, 1658 MS Commissariat. History of Gujarat, I1, pp 133-6.

4. Murad's 'farman', \textit{op. cit.} read with Prince Dara's Nishan to the ruler of Bhuj, \textit{op. cit.}
tion to the empire implied rendering of military service, the offering of peshkash and accepting the circulation of Mughal coinage within their domains. Moreover the zamindars were to ensure safe passage to the travellers and traders passing through their lands. Besides, the boundaries of their respective makans, defined as they were, could not be changed of their free will by the zamindars, though they did endeavour to change and extend the sphere of their influence.¹ The empire, in its turn, seems to have extended the protection from external threats though some time the zamindar had to face it on its own.² The disputes over the gaddi could also invite imperial interference, though under normal circumstances the Mughals granted gaddi presumably to the

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1. Akbarnamah, III pp 524-530, Tabqat-i Akbari, II, pp 386-9; Account, ff 110 b-11a. Thus, for instance, the zamindar of Bhuj had also tried to oppose the imperial nominee and support a rebel, presumably the man of his choice for the gaddi of Navanagar as mentioned earlier. The zamindar of the place had expelled the Baghela and Jadeja zamindars of Santalpur and the surrounding areas (sarkar Pattan) and killed the zamindar of Halwad (1577-78) during Akbar's reign. Though the zamindar was forced to vacate these lands he, however, succeeded in acquiring pargana Morbi in exchange for surrendering the last of Gujarati Sultans to imperial forces.

2. The Marathas attacked Ramnagar twice in the year 1672. On the first occasion the imperial forces came to relieve the zamindar of the pressure. On the second occasion, the Marathas captured the capital town which the zamindar is reported to have reoccupied on his own after a lapse of ten years. J.N. Sarkar, Shiva ji and his times, p 186; GS Sardesai, New History of Marathas (1600-1707), pp 193, 208, 226, 229; History of Administration of Dharapinar, pp 17-8; G.N. Sharma Mewar And the Mughal Empire, Agra 1962 pp. 130-1.
zamindar's nominee at the time of each succession and recognized him as successor and granted lands in return for required obligations. These zamindars, it also seems, showed an inclination for exchanging tribute for military service and by the onset of the eighteenth century a majority of them had turned exclusively peshkashi which indicates decline in the overall imperial control.

B: ZAMINDARAN-I-ISMI: 15 makan

Next to the six makan of the zamindaran-I sarkarat-I peshkashi, the Account lists 'mahalat-I ismi' constituting fifteen makan-I zamindari which formed the possessions of the zamindars called ismi (zamindaran-I ismi). The literal meaning of the term 'ismi' (renowned, nominal) does not help us to draw any comprehensive inferences except to distinguish them from the 'zamindaran-I sarkarat-I peshkashi' discussed above. According to N.A. Siddiqi, 'the zamindars who held a number of villages or an entire pargana and paid peshkash were known as ismi zamindars'.

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1. This inference is based on the fact that the empire is reported to have intervened only twice, once each in Dungarpur and Navanagar where disputes had arisen on the question of succession.


3. N.A. Siddiqi, op. cit, p.23.
amil' and conditional upon the payment of fixed amount as peshkash or rendering military service in lieu thereof. But in view of the explanation given below Siddiqi's view of the ismi zamindars may need to be qualified. Besides, the available evidence may also be utilized to ascertain the relative position of the ismis in terms of time and space within the category of the Superior zamindars.

In its exhaustive list of the zamindaran-i ismi the Account specifies fifteen makan in the entire subah which existed and continued to exist during the first and the second quarters of the eighteenth century. Against a makan-i zamindari the name of its zamindar is also specified suggesting that one makan was held by one zamindar ancestor of each, according to the same work, were confirmed in their

1. The ghair amil possessions were exempt from detailed revenue assessment and were held and administered by the zamindars themselves. For details see ibid, p.25.

2. ibid, p. 147.

3. Account, f 112b. The Mirat (Supplement, p.225) mentions Navanagar as one of the ismis' territory which, however, is not listed by the Account. It may be recalled that Navanagar before the year 1662 was one of the peshkashi sarkars which was declared kharaji in the said year when it was annexed. Its zamindar was however, allowed to retain a portion of the sarkar and came to be counted as ismi until he reoccupied the entire lands sometime during post-Aurangzeb period and regained his lost status of the pre-1662 period. References will be cited at the relevant place in the following pages.
respective possessions during Akbar's reign.¹

By virtue of their location, the possessions of the ismi zamindars enjoyed a position of some significance. Their lands were, by and large, situated on the outskirts of the kharajî sarkars adjoining the territories of the zamin-daran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi and other superior zamindars holding lands in the former sarkars.² Besides, the territories of the ismi zamindars of Ali-Mohan, Haft-Polla (Pol), Danta, Rajpipla, Lunawada, Atlesar-Cheharmandvi, and Bansda were situated in hilly regions and infested with thick jungles, wild animals and, in some cases, surrounded by thick forests.³ Besides, the route to Porbandar and Chhaiyan was infested with thickets of acacias which rendered riding through it quite difficult.⁴ These zamindars moreover, strengthened their position further by maintaining fortresses which the empire had allowed them to retain at


2. These zamindaris were situated along the boundaries of the zamindari lands of Sirohi, Dungarpur, Banswara, Ramnagar and Jagat. Account, ff. 15a, 112b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 206, 209, 214, 233; Rasmala, pp 444-6, 463-4; Hamilton Walter, op. cit., I, pp 684-6; MS Commissariat, History of Gujarat, I, p. 326 n., Bombay Gazetteer, V. pp 413, 432-3, Raghubir Singh, Malwa in Transition (1678-1765), Bombay, 1936, I, p. 78.


the time of conquest. But unlike the zamindars of the *pesh-kashi sarkars* all the noticeable *ismis* had to surrender one of their fortresses which were held by imperial officials whereas the other was retained by the *zamindar* himself.  

The possessions of some of the *ismis* apparently commanded positions which were strategically very important. The territories of Rajpipla and Danta were of particular significance for the routes to the Deccan and the North passed respectively through the two zamindaris.  

Likewise the Malwa-Gujarat link-route passed through the zamindari of Jhabua.  

*Pargana* Nadot, one of the zamindari *mahals* of Rajpipla seems to have attracted traders for trading activities details of which are not known. Moreover, Rajpipla was enriched with corelian mines situated at Ratanpur. The stones were taken to Limbodra where these were processed before carrying to Cambay, an imperial trade centre, by the

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4. *Dastak* dt. 9th *Ziq'a'd*, I. R Y Muhammad Shah, *Baroda Archives, Persian Documents*, No. 91 (Hereafter *Baroda*).
merchants.\(^1\) The geographical position exposed the possessions of Porbandar to sea-trade. There were in all three ports—Porbandar, Chhaiyan and Ranavao—which were situated within the zamindari of Porbandar.\(^2\)

Some information regarding the caste of the zamindar-\(i\) ismi some of whom may be identified as the direct descendants of the ex-ruling families\(^3\) is also available. Rajpipla and Ali-Mohan were held by Gohels whereas the Bheels and Kolis formed a major part of their soldiery. Pol was possessed by Rathods; Lunawada by a Solanki; Barea by Chauhan; Porbandar by Jethwas and Kesod and Jhabua were also held by the Rajput Chiefs.\(^4\) It seems that the Rajputs were

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96
the dominant, if not the exclusive, holders of these zamindarias. Moreover, the same families continued in their possession throughout the period of the Mughal rule in Gujarat. 1

The possessions of each of the ismi zamindars exclusively situated within the kharajī sarkars consisted of a mahal, but less than a sarkar, in no case less than a mahal. 2 As such the ismis enjoyed a secondary position vis-à-vis the zamindaran-i sarkar-i peshkashi each of whom held not less than a sarkar, an administrative unit over and above a paragana and a mahal. Thirdly, the ismis were not allowed to administer their entire holdings with full autonomy as part of their zamindari was placed under direct administration 3, unlike the zamindars of the peshkashi

1. No information regarding other zamindars' caste is available.

2. Account (ff 106b -7a, 112b) enumerates these zamindaris under the heading 'mahalat-i ismi and Mahal-hai sarkar-taalluqat-i zamindaran-i ismi. Each possession is recorded as 'mahal of such and such place (i.e. mahal Lunawara) and mahal-i zaminda so and so. Account, ff 24b, 27a, 106b -7a, 112b, 113ab and Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 205-6. 209-10, 214, 218. It may here be pointed out that mahal Kesoj was situated within the pargana of Mangrole (sarkar Soreth) which consisted of two mahals. (Ibid., p. 218). As such an ismis' possession could not, necessarily, constitute an entire pargana. The possessions of Lunawada, on the other, consisted of two mahals each of which formed a separate pargana. Ibid., pp 205-6; Account ff. 107a, 113b).

3. For references and details please see the discussion in the following lines.
sarkars who administered it on their own. Finally, the
zamindaran-i ismi appear to have been the leading members of
such former ruling families as had not been able to pre-
serve unity of the family and its possessions. Thus the
zamindari of Navanagar which formed a single makan-i zamind-
ari before its annexation (1662) was split up into 22 makans
at the time (1672) the chief claimant was restored to the
gaddi. The leading member came to be designated as the ismi
whereas the remaining 21 members of the family were termed
as zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin each holding his own posses-
sion independently of others. 1 Similarly, the Rajput chiefs
of Idar, Lunawada, Porbandar, Cheharmandvi and Rajpipla who
were the leading descendants of their respective families
enjoyed the position of ismis whereas the dependent members
and vassals of the families were classified as zamindaran-i
mahin-o kahin and they had direct dealings with the state. 2

Like the zamindars of the peshkashi sarkar the ismis
were also required by emperor Akbar, as under the Gujarati

224-25 Account ff. 123ab peshkash documents. P.C Nos.
39 to 40. For the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin see the
following section.

Supplement, pp. 224-5, 228-36. read with Rasmala, pp
443-4. Therefore, it seems that the leading member of a
divided family of a chief, emerged as the ismi whereas
the leading dependents of the family as zamindaran-i
mahin-o kahin.
sultans, to render military services and/or pay tribute.¹

Excepting the zamindar of Rajpipla who was enjoined to furnish 1000 horse-men for service under the nazim, the details of contingents which the other ismis were likewise required to furnish are, however, not recorded in our sources.² In the subsequent years, the zamindars of Ali-Mohan along with Rajpipla (1609-13) and Lunawada (1661-2) are noted to have served the nazim with 650, 2000 and 500 horse-men respectively.³ Besides, the zamindar of Porbandar is noted in imperial service in 1670-71 from sometime past.⁴ The troops of Rajpipla remained posted at Ahmadabad till the close of the seventeenth century.⁵ The zamindar of Navanagar when installed (1672) in his new position of an ismi was directed 'to be active in rendering military service' under the nazim with 1000 horse and infantry of the same strength.⁶ Whether all the ismis continued to serve the

¹ Accountt ff, 105b, 106b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 225, 233. None of these zamindars is noted to have been awarded a mansab during the Mughal rule.

² Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p.233.

³ Mirat-i Ahmadi, l, pp. 189,256.

⁴ Ibid l, p. 257.

⁵ Account, ff. 76a, 79b.

⁶ Mirat-i Ahmadi, l, p. 284. It may be recalled that the ismi zamindar of the place and three of his brothers and sons were awarded mansabs.
empire till the outset of the eighteenth century is not specifically known.¹

Unlike the peshkashi-sarkars, the ismīs' possessions were subject to the assessment and payment of mal-i wajīb in addition to the peshkash-i nizamat.

If an ismī, like the zamindars of peshkashi sarkars, was not required, or else could not be forced to render military service, he was obliged to offer tribute, called peshkash-i nizamat. The tribute, the amount of which could remain fixed (muqarrar) at the same figure for a number of years, was levied apparently whenever due on an annual (harsala) basis.² Accordingly, the zamindar of Rajpipla was under the obligation of paying 35,556 rupees sometime during Akbar's reign.³ During Jahangir's closing years the amount was reassessed and fixed at 9,077 rupees. Thereafter, it was not reassessed during the course of the

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1. The Mirat-i Ahmadi (Supplement, p. 229) and the Account (ff 76a-79b) however, suggest the continuity in the rendering of the service till the year of Aurangzeb's death.

2. Account ff, 107a; 112a-3b; For a detailed view of the peshkash-i muqarrar please see Chapter I. (2) below.

3. Account f, 106b read with ibid, f.112b; Vir Vinod, II, p. 89 Treaties and Engagements, II, p. 41, During the same emperor's reign a sum of Rs. 100,000 was extorted. It was however the result of zamindar's rebellious act and not a part of regular payment. Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement p. 233.
seventeenth century. The zamindar of Jhabua's recorded offering during the seventeenth century consisting of 15,000 rupees and two horses dates back to prince Murad's period of subedar. The peshkash on the zamindari parganas of Ali and Mohan was assessed at 100,000 and 52,000 Mehmudis respectively sometime between 1668 and 1670. The amount was not reassessed during the later years of the century. The peshkash due from the zamindari parganas of Atlesar and Cheharmandvi came to be assigned, sometime during the post-1662 period, in the salary of the mutasaddi of Surat, or a strong military Commander (Sahib-i quwat-o fauj) who could enforce the assessment and collection by leading military expeditions into the territory. The other ismis were also required to offer peshkash-i nizamat though the amounts and exact time of their offerings are not specified for the seventeenth century. It may, however, be submitted that

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1. Peshkash, Docs., PC No. 28. The document was prepared during Mohd. Shah's reign. Having reflected the amount mentioned in the text, the document carries the expression: ba'd azin aml niyamde.

2. Account f. 126b.

3. Ibid., ff. 112b, 127a, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p. 233.

4. Account f. 127a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 205-6. The possession turned ghair-amli (immune from assessment) and its possessor, a zortalab.

5. Account ff 107a, 112b-3b, 118a-9b, 121b, 126b-7a Mirat-i Ahmadi; Supplement p. 231.
though the peskhash-i nizamat was a regular annual claim, it was by and large, collected only now-and-then because the zamindars rendered military service in lieu thereof.

Even these zamindars, like those discussed in the previous pages seem to have shown a tendency of becoming peshkashi.

Unlike the peshkashi-sarkars, the ismis' possessions were subject to the assessment and payment of mal-i wajib in addition to the peshkash-i Nizamat which has been discussed above.¹ The part of the possession which was subject to the payment of mal-i wajib appears to have been marked, and so far as our knowledge goes, was placed under direct administration. Thus, pargana Birpur, forming part of the possessions of the zamindars of Lunawada and port of Porbandar Chhaiyan respectively were accordingly marked and placed under the direct administration from the time of conquest.²


2. Account, ff. 27ab, 112b, 114b-8b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I.p. 288; Ibid. Supplement, pp. 191-3, 209-10, 214, 231; Yad dasht haqiqat-i Sarkar Soreth, op. cit. Though the Ain does not specify the administrative position, it however, furnishes area statistics for a number of parganas, as will be seen below, held by the ismis. It is not known whether the zamindari lands thus furnished with area statistics were entirely administered by the zamindars themself or by the imperial officials. It may be seen that the mahals of other ismis formed part of one or the other parganas which are furnished
The zamindars of the places, however, continued to enjoy their share amounting to a fourth of the revenues which were collected by the imperial officials.\(^1\) The share could also be given by setting aside a duly marked part of the otherwise directly administered lands.\(^2\)

Out of the revenues which they appropriated from the mal-i wajib paying lands, the zamindars were required to pay peshkash in addition to what they paid on the peskashi territory.\(^3\)

Reasonably adequate information reflecting the empire's attempt at ascertaining the paying capacity of the zamindars under review is also available. The Ain-i Akbari records the area statistics for the zamindari parganas of Cheharmandvi-Atlesar, Barea and of all mahals of Sarkar Nadot (excluding mahal Rajpipia), thus probably including the ones constitut-

\[\ldots\text{Continued}\ldots\]

\[\text{with jama, and sometimes with area figures. Seemingly, they were also required to pay mal-i wajib. Anyway all the ismis, as also the entire lands of them all, may not be categorised as exclusively 'peshkashi' contrary to N.A. Siddiqi's contenton, op.cit; see also PC No. p 3 p 39a, p 40a, for Navanagar.}\]

\[1. \text{Account, ff.112b, 214b-6b - Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 288; Ibid, Supplement, p. 233.}\]

\[2. \text{Account, ff. 214b-15a, 216b.}\]

\[3. \text{Haqiqat-i Nazar-i peshkash-i zamindaran, op.cit.}\]

103
ing possession of the zamindar of Rajpipla.\textsuperscript{1} The \textit{jama} figures as recorded in the \textit{Ain} for these zamindaris being in odd numbers also suggest some exercise having been made in calculation.\textsuperscript{2} When we appreciate the availability of area statistics and the nature of \textit{jama} figures in the context of the desais' appointment\textsuperscript{3} to the zamindaris of Rajpipla and Atiesar the success of the imperial attempt at ascertaining the paying capacity of the \textit{ismis} during Akbar's reign may appear more meaningful.

The imperial endeavor to ascertain the zamindars' paying capacity during the post-\textit{Ain} period is, on the other hand suggested by the fact that the \textit{Ain} and the later works record different amount of \textit{jama} for the same lands.\textsuperscript{4} The \textit{jama} of the eleven mahals (\textit{sarkar} Nadot) forming the zamindari of Rajpipla registered a rise of 5.6 percent from the

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Ain}, II, pp 120-4; The area recorded for the zamindari \textit{parganas} is too meagre to suggest the entire lands were covered by the land survey. Was a part of land that during later years was held and administered by the zamindar himself, left unsurveyed?
\item \textit{Ibid}, II, pp 120-4. The work doesnot mention any amount of revenue under \textit{suyurqhal}. Therefore Shireen Moosvi's view that when we subtract the \textit{suyrghal} figure from the \textit{jama} figure we obtain round \textit{jama} figures, is not-applicable. Shireen Moosvi, \textit{Suyurghal Statistics in the \textit{Ain-i Akbari} -- An Analysis"}, Proc, IHC, 1975.
\item \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, Supplement, p. 233 and letter of Sharif Khan Bharauchi (January 1586) to Gangadas Nagar of Ahmadabad, Pune, R. No. 47,
\item \textit{Ain.}, II, pp. 120-4; \textit{Jama: Subah Gujarat} (1670), Pune, R.No. 70, \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, Supplement, pp.205-6, 209-10
\end{enumerate}
period of the *Ain* (67,36,228 *dam*) to the later half of the seventeenth century (71,12,870 *dam*). The increase appears to be meagre compared to the rise of 148 percent in the *jama* of Bisrai, a directly administered *paragana* of the same *sarkar*.¹ On the other hand, the *zamindari parganas* of Cheharmandvi and Atlesar registered a rise of 148 percent during the same period. It may, however, be pointed out that during the post-1672 period, Atlesar came to be categorized as *ghair-amli* and the *zamindar* of Cheharmandvi as *zortalab*. The former characterization indicates the termination of assessment and the latter necessitated the actual use or show of force for collecting revenues.²

Besides, the *zamindars* of Rajpipla and Cheharmandvi-Atlesar successfully changed the nature of revenues which they paid to the State. Since the *zamindar* of Rajpipla did not pay revenues, the *Subedar* led a military expedition

1. *Ain*, II. pp.121-2; *Jama, Subah Gujarat*, (1670), *op. cit*; *Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement*, pp. 205-6, 209-10. We have reached the above mentioned total by deducting the *jama* for Bisrai, the twelfth *pargana*, out of the total *jama* for all the *parganas* as given in the *Ain*. The course has to be adopted for the two remaining sources put the *jama* for the eleven *parganas* together whereas the same has been separately specified for the twelfth *pargana*.

(1627), extorted \textit{khichri} \textsuperscript{1} fixed the same amount as \textit{peshkash}

to be paid by the zamindar in future.\textsuperscript{2} The other zamindar
ceased to pay \textit{mal-i wajib} from the year 1672. He could be
obliged to pay \textit{peshkash} instead, by a strong military
commander.\textsuperscript{3} Thus, some of the \textit{ismis} showed the tendency of
turning exclusively \textit{peshkashi} during the course of the
seventeenth, century.\textsuperscript{4}

But, then, the Mughals were neither able to exercise
control in equal degree on all the \textit{ismis} nor on the entire
possession of each zamindar even during the period of the
\textit{Ain}, for neither of them finds the same treatment in the
\textit{Ain}. Thus, Rajpipla and Ali-Mohan are mentioned in the
general description and not included in the statistical

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Khichri} was the amount of money which the authorities
could collect directly from the \textit{riaya} occupying the
lands that were otherwise subject to the payment of
\textit{mal-i wajib} and had passed under a zamindar's control
who could not be forced to pay the revenue by way of
\textit{mal-i wajib}. It could also be levied as an additional
impost over and above the \textit{ma\-l-i wajib}. For details, see
the discussion in Chapters V and VI.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Nazar-i peshkash-o Khichri waghaira, Subah Gujarat;}
\textit{taraf Batrak-o Mahikantha} PC No. 28.

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Mirat-ul Hind, op. cit. ff.17-8. Jama-o hasil Subah
Gujarat, op. cit; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 205,
206.}

\textsuperscript{4} Also see \textit{Account}, f.27a, read with \textit{Ain}, II pp.121-2
Before the dawn of the eighteenth century the recalcitrance of the zamindar of Cheharmandvi-Atlesar had
come to be regarded as an accepted reality though he
had been subjugated during Akbar's reign.
account, though the remaining parganas of the former zamindari, as referred to above, are furnished with area statistics.\(^1\) Besides, none of the mahals of the other ismis excluding pargana Barea and Birpur of (the zamindari pargana) Lunawada and Atlesar-Cheharmandvi is even noticed in the Ain.\(^2\)

The imperial interference, particularly in revenue matters was distasteful to the zamindars. Alongwith the desai, a qazi and a waqai nigar were also appointed in the territory of Rajpipla during Akbar's reign. The zamindar resenting the appointment of the desai, killed him.\(^3\) Likewise, the zamindar of Cheharmandvi had also killed the imperial desai during the same reign.\(^4\) The zamindar of Porbandar also attacked the imperial officials holding the fort and the port of the place.\(^5\)

The zamindars of Rajpipla and Atlesar-Cheharmandvi successfully consolidated their hold over their respective

\begin{itemize}
  \item 1. *Ain*, II, pp. 120-2.
  \item 4. Sharif Khan Bharauchi's letter *op. cit.*
  \item 5. Photocopy of Aurangzeb's farman, dated April, 1683, *Settled (Barakhali) case No. 1159; District Record office, Junagadh (hereafter Junagadh) recollects the said incident which took place at an unspecified time in the past but surely during the reign of the same emperor.*
\end{itemize}
possessions sometime before 1627 and 1673, respectively.¹

There is another set of evidence reflecting further the undoing of the imperial achievement of the Ain’s times during later period. The Ain, as noted above, furnishes area statistics for a number of zamindari parganas. Recording the position as existed around the year 1681-82 which persisted during the later period also, the Account, on the other hand, specifies the territories of the ismis as ghair-pai-moada.² More important is the fact that these lands came to be regarded as exempt from survey and immune from furnishing accounts of the villages on the specific ground of being mulk-i zamindari.³ It indicates the termination of Mughal hold on revenue matters and highlights the increasing hold of the ismis over their respective territory before the close of the seventeenth century.

1. PC No. 28 and 38 For further references, please see discussion in the following lines.

2. Account, ff. 24b, 25a, 27ab. The work specifies the lands in the context of Aurangzeb’s farman enquiring into the subsisting position of land survey in the subah, see Ibid. f.24a.

3. Instead of the area-figures, the following expression is suffixed against the territories: bina bar mulk-i zamindari raqba dar paimaisk niyamde or bina bar mulk-i zamindari Sarishta-i dehat b’daftar niyamde or bina bar mulk-i zamindari sarishta-i dehbandi b’daftar nami ayed Ibid ff. 24b, 25a, 27ab, also see Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement pp.209-10.
But all the *ismis* were not able to regain their hold entirely and similarly consolidate their position. The zamindari areas of Porbandar (Port) and Birpur continued to be administered by the imperial officials throughout the seventeenth century. There were, then, certain sources of revenue which were yet controlled by the state. Within the territory of Rajpipla (Sarkar Nadot) taxes on merchandise were levied and collected by the imperial officials as late as 1719. Tax levied on the pilgrims visiting Amba Bhavani in the territory of Danta were also collected by the State officials before its abolition in 1662. The *jama* for the zamindari *pargana* Ali-Mohan and *Pargana* (as different from port) Porbandar were, for the first time, recorded during the post-*Ain* period only, suggesting that the government had acquired some control over these lands.

This discussion leads us to the inference that though the magnitude of overall imperial control over the *ismis* had declined long before the onset of the eighteenth century, in comparison to the *zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi* the


109
former were placed under the greater degree of subjugation.

As pointed out above, gazis were appointed in the territory of Rajpipla and Cheharmandvi. Similar appointments were made in the territory of Porbandar and Jhabua, while at the latter place a muhtasib was also maintained during Aurangzeb's reign. We may infer that the Mughal system of judiciary was also enforced. The mahals held by a few of them moreover, lay within the jurisdiction of the imperial faujdars and thus would be subject to his supervision and control. How far did the presence of faujdars affect the zamindar's position internally? In the absence of detailed evidence it may not be possible to answer the question categorically. As regards the military command of the ismis when posted outside their zamindris, they served directly under the nazim-i Subah, a privilege enjoyed by them all.

The zamindaran-i ismi had only unwillingly accepted imperial control which they tried to throw away as and when possible. The zamindar of Cheharmandvi-Atlesar had established his position as zortalab before the dawn of the eighteenth century. But the zamindari of Rajpipla, during

1. Account, ff.99b, 100a.

2. See, thus, Nadot (excluding Rajpipla), Mohan Kesoj fell within the jurisdiction of the faujdars of Baroda, Mohan and Mangrole. Ibid. ff. 427b-8b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 209-18.

3. Account, ff. 27,-76b. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp.189, 266.
emperor Akbar's reign, was annexed in immediate response to the zamindar's rebellious act of killing the imperial desai. Having thus been fully subdued, the zamindar had no way out but to offer peshkash as the token of submission for the restoration of his lost possession.\(^1\) Rai Naraindas, the Rathor zamindar of Idar (predecessor of the ismi zamindar of Pol) had shown his solidarity with Rana Pratap of Udaipur by rising in rebellion while the latter was hard pressed by Akbar. The imperial administration annexed the territory in retaliation for a while.\(^2\) The zamindar of the place again rose in rebellion during Rajput wars (1679-80) which led to the loss of Idar, the stronghold, and large tract of territory for good.\(^3\) It suggests that the imperial authority was quick, as far as possible, in retaliating the acts of rebelliousness, though the response and nature of action would not have been invariably the same.

\(^1\) Mirat-i Ahmadi Supplement, p.233.


\(^3\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp.294-5. The Rathors finally retired to Pol which they continued to hold till recently, MS Commissariat, A History of Gujarat, 11, 449n. However, ex-vassals of the house of Rathor seem to have been allowed in their possessions as zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. Account. ff. 117ab.
During the course of the seventeenth century, some of
the *makan-i zamindari* of the *ismis* lost their unity, though
the specific cause of their breaking up is not known. The
*Ain* mentions Ali-Mohan as the zamindari held by a Chauhan
zamindar, later on it was broken into two; Mohan (one *makan*)
remained in the *subah* Gujarat while Ali (one *makan*) was
transferred to Khandesh.¹

Similarly, Porbandar which had been treated as one
*makan* as late as 1640, came to be split up into four *makans*.² Atlessar and Cheharmandvi were likewise divided into
two *makans* sometime during the post-1663 period.³

To sum up, the zamindar who held an entire *mahal*, or
more than a *mahal* or group of *mahals* but less than a *sarkar*
paid *peshkash-i nizamat* or rendered military service and
were subject to the payment of *mai-i wajib*, whose zamindaris
lay (though not invariably) within the jurisdiction of *fauji-

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1. *Ain*, II, p. 120 Account, ff.107a, 112b; *Mirat-i Ahmadi

2. *Nazar-i Peshkash* Documents, Pune, RNo. 43, Account, f.
124b; *Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement*, p.214. The remaining
three *makans* -- Ranavao, Chhaiyyan and Navibandar --
were categorised as *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin*, i.e.
inferior to the *ismis* in general and to Porbandar in
particular. Besides, the Rana of Porbandar is said to
have been regarded as the head of the four *makans.*
*Wilberforce. History of Kathiawad*, p. 123; *Bombay
Gazetteer*, IX, pt. I, p. 126; *ibid.* VIII. pp 109-10,
301,

3. *Nazar-i Peshkash*, Docs, op.cit., *Mirat-i Ahmadi, Sup-
plelement*, pp.233-4, Account, f.118a
dars and were subject to some degree of control by the imperial authority, were called ismi zamindars. Though the ismis and the zamindars of the peshkashi-sarkars enjoyed a position which was identical in more than one respect, a line of demarcation may possibly be drawn between the two:

First, the zamindars of the peshkashi-sarkars were allowed to retain their entire possessions intact whereas the ismis were deprived of a part of their ancestral land at the time of conquest of the subah. Secondly, the possessions of the zamindars of the peshkashi sarkars consisting of not less than entire sarkars constituting the highest administrative unit within the province, while those of the ismis comprised, invariably, less than a sarkar which as an administrative unit, was comparable to a pargana level administration. Thirdly, the zamindars of the peshkashi sarkar were directly subordinate to the nazims while some of the ismis fell within the jurisdiction of faujdars of sarkars, or an equivalent authority, though they served directly under the Nazim. Fourthly, the zamindars of the peshkash-i sarkar enjoyed full autonomy in the administrative sphere of their entire zamindari but the ismis were deprived of part of the possessions which was placed under direct administration. Moreover, they were subject to greater control particularly in matters concerning revenues and judiciary. As such
the ismis enjoyed only a semi-autonomous position within a part of their possessions while those of the peshkashi sarkars enjoyed autonomy in the true sense of the term. Fifthly, the zamindars of the peshkashi sarkars paid only peshkash while the ismis were also required to pay mal-i wajib. The territories of the latter therefore, were not entirely peshkashi. With the passage of time, it is also evident from the preceding discussion that the demarcating features were getting blurred. There had emerged signs of differentiation among members of the stratum of ismis as some of them had risen higher and moved closer to the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi. In some spheres like rendering of military service, assigning of jagirs, offering peshkash-i nizamat, circulation of Mughal currency etc. no qualitative difference appears to have existed between them. Finally, the zamindars belonging to both the categories followed the rule of primogeniture in the matter of succession which, at least technically, was subject to imperial approval. 1

Thus there existed definite signs of differentiation between the two strata of the category of zamindars, signs

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1. See, for imperial interference in the succession of Nawanagar in the year 1695 when the zamindar enjoyed the position of a ismi, Mira't-i Ahmadi, 1, pp. 330-1.
of intra-stratum differentiation had emerged and inter-strata distinguishing features were, though only gradually, getting blurred.
CHAPTER 1 (2)

THE SUPERIOR ZAMINDARS

On the eve of the eighteenth century

C : ZAMINDARAN-I MAHIN O KAHIN:

In its description of the zamindaran-i Subah the Account specifies the last set of 'zamindars', called zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. They held 518 makanat-i zamindari during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. These makanas like those of the ismis were exclusively situated within the 'kharaji-sarkars', outside the makanas of the zamindars discussed in the preceding pages.¹ According to the description given in the Account the mahin-o kahin (lit. big and small) were, along with the other zamindars, confirmed in their possessions during emperor Akbar's reign.²

The appellation (mahin-o kahin) apparently indicated the size of the makan -- big and small, which by itself does not serve as a denominator to distinguish this stratum of the zamindars from the rest. However, a study of the size of their possessions makes an interesting reading. This appears to be worth examining for highlighting one of the visible sign of differentiation amongst them. Thus we come

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¹. Account, ff. 105b, 107a - 11b.
². Ibid, f. 105b
across zamindars like Malik of mawza Kadi (pargana Kadi, sarkar Ahmadabad) and many others whose 'makan' consisted of a fraction of cultivable land confined to a single village.¹ There were also other zamindars like Bhagwant Singh of mawza Kalol whose zamindari possession spread over as many as 42 villages, still confined to portions of cultivable area forming each of the villages under him.² There was, then, another section of zamindars each of whose zamindaris consisted of a little less than a pargana and sometime even

1. Out of an entire area (6000 bighas) constituting mawza Kadi khurd the Maliks, zamindaran-i mawza held 1075 bighas out of the cultivable area (4000 bigha). The remaining cultivable area (3225 bigha) is mentioned as ralyati and the rest (2000 bigha) is categorised as raqba kharij az zira't. For similar examples see, Brahman, (zinnardar) zamindar of mawza Asland; Koli zamindar of Morwali and Rajput, zamindar of village Dewrah as representative cases. The document entitled "Yad-dasht: dehat pargana-i Kadi" (PC No. 3to 7) lists all "zamindaran" and zamindari villages in the pargana. The Account specifies zamindars, their watan possession and the area statistics of each of the 'paimooda-mawza' forming the pargana. For the examples referred to above see, P.C. No.3,4 and 5 read with Account ff. 312b, 325a, 329a for other examples of similar nature, P.C.No. 1 to 6 read with Account, ff. 318b, 320b, 323a, 324b, 327b, 330b, 331b. It will not be out of place to mention here that in the present cases we come across also expressions like Koliyan, Rajputan, Moselmanan, zinnardaran (more than one person belonging to the caste held the possession) etc, each holding a fraction of cultivable portion of land; see, P.C.No.3 read with Account ff. 309ab, 322ab. In such and similar possessions share of member-zamindar must not have extended more than a few bighas of land. Also see following pages.

2. P.C No. 3b-4b, read with Account. ff. 310a, 312a-4b, 322b-3a, 324a, 325b, 326b-7a, 329b.
more, thus considerable in size.  

As regards the location of the possessions of the zamindaran-i mahin o kahin it is evident that these were situated in almost every pargana of each of the kharaji sarkars; they thus covered plains, the rugged and mountainous regions. The geographical position of the zamindari and its distance from the seat of provincial power seem to have had some bearing on the size and extent of the zamindari as well as on the position of the zamindar within his possession.

The large sized possessions were mainly situated far off the provincial seat of power within favourable geographical surroundings. Thus the zamindari parganas comprising one makan and more than one makan-i zamindari were situated on the sea-coast of the peninsula Gujarat, i.e. Sarkar Soreth. Similarly, zamindari parganas of Dantiwara, Akle-sar, Tarkesar, Bundeli, Manzal, Nimdah etc. fell on the

1. Thus, the zamindari parganas of Talaja, Mhowa, Sehore, Palitana Mandvi, Gariadhar etc. were respectively held by Partap Singh, father of Bhao Singh, Jemla, Dewdas, Pirthwiraj at the opening of the 18th century. Account ff. 125b, 126a read with peshkash Documents, P.C. No. p.17, p.19, p34, p36.

2. Account r. ff 106b-9a, 114a-27a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement pp.228-39 read with Ibid, pp.246-9;.

3. For example, see Mangrole, Mandvi, Chorwar, Jagat, Talaja, Amreli, Ghoga etc. Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.212, 214-5, 217-8; Account, ff. 108b, 109a; Ain, II, pp.117-19.
outskirts of the subah adjoining the possessions of zamindar-ran-i ismi and those of sarkarat-i peshkashi. Still other like Lolyana, Morwara, Gohana, Duda, Baxra, Palitana, Sehore, Gondal, Gariadhar, Morvi etc. were located in hilly regions and sometime surrounded by forests and relatively in distant corners. But no paragana level zamindari was situated around the seat of provincial power.

How far the distance from the seat of power and geographical surroundings could prove favourable to zamindar viz a viz the imperial government? It may be viewed from the position of the zamindar of pargana Tarkesar who, on account of distance (dur-i dast) and geographical surroundings (dar kohistan waqi’shud) could not be retained under the administrative control so much so that a faujdar too could not be

1. Account ff, 107b-9a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p.201-3, 205-6, 210-1. It may be pointed out that large size possessions of zamindars, which were situated on the mainland, fell on the Northern and Eastern side of the Subah. The part was, by and large, devoid of plains and infested with hill ranges and forest. Hamilton Walter, op.cit I, pp. 605,608,680, 683-5, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.210-1 also.

2. For distance, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.212-5, 217-9 for geographical conditions, Ibid., pp.246-7; Sujan Rai Bhandari Khulasat-ut tawarikh, Delhi 1918 p.57 James Tod, Travels into Western India, p.19 Wilberforce, op.cit, pp 37-9
maintained there. 1 Similarly the zamindaris situated on the sea coast had come to enjoy immunity from the routine administrative control. 2

On the other hand none of the parganas constituting the sarkar of Ahmadabad and Baroda was entirely held by zamindars. 3 These sarkars stretched over and contained mainly the plains constituting the subah. Within the sarkar Ahmadabad there were, however, relatively big zamindars holding vast tracts of land in the pargana of Viramgaon (Jhalawar), noted for its jungles and the recalcitrant Jhala Rajputs. 4

As distinct from the makan-i zamindari of the zamindars discussed in the preceeding pages (Chapter I(1)) the makan of each zamindar of the present section was not invariably held by one zamindar. Thus mawza Bhadarya formed the zamindari of Rajputs (Rajputan) who held 982 bigha 10 biswa of cultivable area in the village. 5 Similarly there were

1. Thus the text says: pargana Tarkesar-az Ahmadabad yek sad -o panj kuroh taraf junub muttasil Rajpipla ... chun dur -i dast dar kohistan waqa' shude dast-i nazim -o jagirdar namirasid. Mirat-i Ahmadi: Supplement, p.206.

3. Account (f 15a) states that dur mulk bena bar sahil darya -i shor k' bar ba'zi jahast-o kharij az tagsim ast. of Ain II, p.124, for further references see the following discussion.


5. P.C. (Kadi), No.3 read with Account ff 9b, 322ab.
Syeds, Maliks and Khans etc respectively the zamindars of the village(s) Shali, Jarkal, and Badan, Ankhar—each (group) holding one *makan-i zamindari*. It is equally true of some of the zamindaris that consisted of entire *parganas*. It may, therefore, be contended that in the case of the *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* a zamindari *makan* would be held by one zamindar as also it could form collective-holding held together by more than one member who might have belonged to the same family.

A study of the caste composition of the *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* brings a few important points to light. In addition to various clans of Rajputs, the Ahirs, Brahmans, Kolis, B hats, Charans, Jats, Kathis, Syeds, Afghans, Maliks and other Muslims are also mentioned as being in possession of zamindaris in the *subah*. Among the Rajputs some clans such as Jhalas, Panwars, Bhodias, Babarias, Makwanas, Gohels

1. *Account* ff. 304a, 320b, 321b, 325a, 327b, 329a, 330b also see ff. 114b, 116b, 19a, 309a for additional informations.

2. *Ibid*, ff 122a, 123a, 124b, 125b.

3. As will be seen below there were also the *makan-i zamindari* which could he held simultaneously by the members of different caste and communities.

etc., who did not possess the zamindaris described in the preceding Chapter, are mentioned as holders of *makan-i zamindari* in the group under discussion.\(^1\) It may, therefore, be submitted that from the point of view of caste and community this section had a relatively wider social base though mainly confined to high castes.

It has been observed that there were well marked blocks of territory each consisting of a single *pargana* or a group of *parganas* under the zamindari members of the same caste. \(^2\) The observation being based on the information contained in the *Ain* may be substantiated further with the help of other sets of information, particularly for the Mughal *Subah* of Gujarat. Some of the territorial blocks like Kathiawar, Jhalawar, Gohelwar, Babariawar, Jethwar etc. were named after the castes, viz; Kathis, Jhalas, Gohels, Babaria Jethwa zamindars holding zamindaris in the regions named

\[\text{References:}\]


respectively against their castes. However, caste-blocks of territory need not be regarded as the exclusive holdings of the said caste. Thus Koli zamindars possessed zamindari village (Othania), in Jhalawad. The Kolis are also mentioned as being in possession of zamindari lands in the vicinity of Bankaner (Wankaner), one of the constituencies of Jhalawad. One of the four divisions into which Jhalawad was divided, was in the possession of Koli zamindars. Similarly the town of Maliya (pargana Maliya) formed part of the Jadejas' zamindari in Jhalawar itself. Therefore, the zamindars after whose caste the territory was thus identified, as is evident in the context of Jhalawar, were not the exclusive holders, they might better be described as the dominant possessors of the zamindari lands.

There were, then, as pointed out above, the parganas which were entirely held by zamindars. Vis-a-vis caste and clans of zamindars, such parganas as were exclusively za-


3. *Ibid*.


5. *Account* ff. 123b.
mindari holdings may be categorised into two: first, parganas forming zamindaris held by members of the same caste and clan. In this group the zamindari parganas like Sehore (Gohel), Navibandar (Jethwa), Palitana (Kathi) etc. each of which formed one makan-i zamindari may be mentioned.¹ There were still other parganas which contained more than one makan-i zamindari, were, however held by members of the same caste. Thus pargana Jagat comprised seven independent makans and was held by Baghera (Baghela) Rajputs.² Pargana Bhadarwa is mentioned as the zamindari of Rajputs (Rajputan).³ Parganas comprising Kathiawar (Four) consisted of 16 makan-i zamindari each of which was held by a Kathi zamindar. Among the sixteen Kathis, nine are identified as the descendents of one Khoman Kathi alone.⁴ Similarly the parganas of Porbandar ⁵, Navibandar, Ranavao and Chhaiyan (two mahals, in all) were grouped into three makans which

1. Ibid. ff. 124b, 125b, 126a; Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos. 17, 19, 34, such parganas are noted as, for example: pargana Palitana-yek makan b'ism Jhala zamindar pargana mazkur.

2. Account, f. 123a; peshkash Docs; P.C. No. p. 20; p. 38.

3. Account, f. 125a;


5. Mahal Porbandar is counted as the possession of ismi zamindar mentioned already.
were held by Jethwa Rajputs. Evidently the possession of a family, much less of a caste and clan, had come to be divided into separate makan-i zamindari presumably due to the working of the rule of succession and determined imperial bid to split up zamindaris into smaller units.

But the sub-divisioning of zamindaris among members of a family, caste or clan of Rajput and Kolis (i.e. the original possessore of land) does not explain the existence of the second category i.e. non-Koli-Rajput zamindari parganas in particular or the multi-caste zamindari parganas in general. Thus, for example, pargana Tilakwara, an exclusive zamindari pargana, contained six makans which were held by Gohar, Hafiz, Murad Khan, Partap Singh, Bhanji and two more zamindars not named in the work. Similarly, the makan-i zamindari in the pargana of Sarnal were held by Malik, Syed Miyan, Khan and Rajput zamindars. There were, similarly, many other independent makan-i zamindari held by persons who belonged to different castes and communities in one and the

2. For references please see discussion in the following pages.
No precise information regarding the emergence of non-Rajput Koli zamindar during the Mughal age is available. 2

Some changes in the caste composition of this category of zamindars appear to have taken place during the post-Ain period. 3 In addition to the castes of zamindars which are mentioned in the Ain, the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century documents mention Qureshis, Brahmans, Syeds, Afghans also. 4 Members of such castes as are not mentioned in the Ain may be noted for the parganas of Sanwas (Khans), Sonkhera (Rajputs) Nadiad (Muslims), Kadi (Solankis, Brahmans, Bhat, Maliks, Syeds, Kolis) etc. 5 In yet another pargana (Sarnal) the Ain enters ‘girasia’ in the caste column of zamindars. 6 During the opening years of


2. For the period of Sultans of Gujarat, See S.C. Misra, Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat, pp.204-6, 208.

3. The inference may hold good only if the information contained in the Ain is regarded as complete.


5. Account, ff. 115b-6a; 121a, 223a; Peshkash Docs. P.C. Nos 6,27; cf. Ain, II, pp. 115-23.

6. Ain, II, pp.120-1; It may be pointed out that the Ain mistook girasia for a caste. The girasias were also among the possessors of superior rights in land, See Chapter V below.
the eighteenth century we come across Maliks, Syeds, Miyan
and Khan zamindars holding 12 out of 14 makan-i zamindari in
the same pargana. 1

No further information regarding the emergence of
zamindars belonging to the castes mentioned above is avail-
able. Another set of evidence related to some other zamin-
daris however suggests the replacement of zamindars belong-
ing to one caste by those belonging to another. In the Ain,
Bajana, Wasara, Maliya and Ranpur are specified as parts of
Jhalawar, zamindaris of which were held by Rajputs of Jhała
clan. 2 During the last decades of the seventeenth century
and first decades of the eighteenth Malik Bahadur Khan is
mentioned as zamindar of Bajana which formed one makan-i
zamindari in this region. 3 Likewise, Bahadur Khan is men-
tioned as the zamindar of (qasbah) Ranpur (one makan) Sahab
Khan as the holder of zamindari makan of Wasara, and Maliya
is specified as one makan-i zamindari held by a Jadeja
Rajput. 4 Similarly, Sankhudar (Beit) is shown as the pos-
session of Badhela Rajputs in the Ain while in the records
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1. Account, ff. 114b, 115a, 304a; Peshkash Docs. P.C. Nos.
   12.
   29.
4. Account, ff. 122b, 123b, 230b, 237b; Peshkash Doc. R.No.
   38, Pune,
mentioned above the place is specified as the zamindari of one Bheema Rathor. ¹

It will also be worthwhile tracing the causes of the division of caste-family possessions. But, then, no precise information regarding the process and causes of dividing of the caste-family possessions is available. Still from stray pieces of information some idea of it may be formed.

It has already been noted that the zamindari of sarkar Navanagar was treated as one makan before it was annexed in 1662. Subsequent to its restoration there we hear of 22 makan-i zamindari held by the Jadeja descendents and dependents of the ex-zamindar belonging to the same clan. ² Similarly the Rathors' zamindari of (pargana) Idar formed one makan before it was finally annexed in 1680. During the post-annexation period the Rather vassals and descendents of the ex-chief (a Rathor), in all, held 15 makans. ³ Excluding the zamindar of mahal Haft-Pollia (Pol) each one of them came to be categorised as zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. ⁴

¹ Ain, II, p.117; Account, f.123a.
³ Account, ff. 119ab; Peshkash Docs. P.C. Nos. 4,10,11.
⁴ Account ff. 119ab; 123ab; Peshkash Doc. P.C. Nos. 3,4,10,11, 39.
The rule of succession clearly played its role.\(^1\) Besides, we may take into account the chiefs' responsibility for providing sources of livelihood to the junior members of their families and their respective supporters by making land grants and the latters' willingness for and the empire's policy of entering into direct relationship with these smaller units.\(^2\) At the time the Jadeja chief of Nawanagar was restored to his gaddi, each of his family member who had approached the emperor was granted a status independent of their chief. The chief had particularly requested for the grant of 25 villages to those Jadejas who had stood by him during his days in exile.\(^3\) It was these Jadejas who held the divided principality of Nawanagar in the form of independent makans as zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin.\(^4\)

A glimpse of the division of zamindaris may be had by highlighting the position of some zamindars holding their---

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lands in *pargana* Kadi. In the *pargana*, Hathi Singh, (6 villages) and Bhagwant Singh (42 villages) held one *makan-i zamindari* each. In addition to that, the brotherhood (*brathri*) of Bhagwant Singh held 15 villages as 'zamindars' independent of chief in the same *pargana*. Likewise Amar Singh, zamindar of (watan) Harsola and Pirthvi Raj, zamindar of (watan) Mansa held 34 and 16 villages respectively forming two *makans*. Their kinsmen (lit. brothers) held 33 villages independently of the head of their respective families. ¹ The zamindaris were split up though the caste-family identity still survived. ²

Like the *zamindaran-*i *ismi*, the *zamindaran-*i *mahin-*o *kahin*, were also required to render military service. All of them were enjoined upon to perform the duty of 'watch and ward' (*chowki-o pehra*) within the villages of their respective zamindaris. ³ For ensuring the proper performance of assigned duties, the administration took an undertaking (*muchalka*), established *thanäs* and *faujdari* stations within

1. *P.C.* (Kadi) Nos. 3,4,5,6,7; also *Account*, ff. 307b-32a. They held these villages in their capacity as 'girasias', i.e. primary zamindars.

2. It appears that the brotherhood was provided means of subsistence by its chief. In due course of time the dependent brotherhood entered into direct relationship with the imperial administration.

their zamindaris, and sometime at the watan village (or town) itself.¹ In addition to policing their zamindaris, they were also required to furnish troops for imperial service whenever called upon to do so.² It may be pointed out that the duty of 'watch and ward' was an essential obligation of all of them whereas the specified contingents for performing duties outside their respective zamindaris were to be furnished as and when required (ind-ul talab) otherwise they were required to pay peshkash-i nizamat in lieu of service.³

Like the other constituent sections of the category of Superior zamindars, the tendency to exchange peshkash for service is discernable in the case of the present section also. By the year 1682, a section of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin had succeeded in exchanging peshkash for service.⁴

There were the zamindars like those of Tarkesar, Santalpur and other places who are characterised as zortalab and

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1. Ibid, f. 93a; for details of thanas Ibid, ff. 163a-4b; 168b-9a; 211b-2a, 227a-30b and passim; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.190-238.

2. Account, f. 106b. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p.256. for the military service actually rendered by some of them during the reigns of Akbar and Aurangzeb see Akbarna-mah, III, pp.66-7, 593; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp.175, 189, 256.


4. Account, f.106b; Mirat-i Ahmadi; Supplement, pp.121-2.
could be forced to pay *peshkash* only. ¹ Also the zamindars whose possessions were located far off the seat of provincial power and in the coastal areas of peninsular Gujarat enjoyed virtual exemption from service. ² Moreover, some of them, like that of Bargir had, for unknown reasons, been directly allowed to go *peshkashi*. ³

A similar view of the declining imperial control may in more definite terms be formed by having an insight into the state's economic claims in the produce of the zamindaris.

Like those of the *ismsie*, possessions of this section of zamindars were from the beginning of the Mughal rule subject to the payment of tribute and *mal-i wajib* which were respectively called 'peshkash-i nizamat' and 'matalba-i sarkar-i wala.' ⁴ The imperial administration strove, as far as possible, to ascertain the actual paying capacity of

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1. Account, ff. 27b, 74b; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; Supplement, pp.192-203, 205, 206, 214, cf. *Ain*, (II, pp.121-22) which furnishes area figures along with the *jama* for these zamindaris.


3. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; Supplement, p.230. The work describes the position of the zamindar of Bargir as zamindar anja b jamiya't du sad sawar taqdim-i khidmat-i nazim hazir mishud.... man ba'd peshkash bar oo qarar yaft.

4. Unlike zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi who paid *matalba-i sarkar-i wala* by way of *peshkash* other zamindars with few exception paid it in the form of 'mal-i wajib'. *Yad-dasht* zamindaran-i subah, op.cit.
zamindars and to curtail powers otherwise enjoyed by them. In this attempt the empire had met with appreciable success and placed the zamindars under a greater degree of subjugation in comparison with the ones discussed in Chapter I(I). But during the course of the seventeenth century, particularly during its latter half, some of the zamindars who, among others happened to be richer in resources and stronger as to their resisting capacity, successfully reversed the ongoing process of acquiring greater control in their favour.

The imperial administration extended land survey to cover possessions of 'zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin'. It appears the practice had been initiated under the Mughals during Akbar's reign.¹

¹ Excepting seven parganas of Sarkar Ahmadabad and Pattan and the entire sarkar Soreth, the Ain furnishes land area statistics for all the parganas of the subah in the statistical account. Since the zamindars' possessions were located within these parganas, these lands too might have been covered by land survey. But the information in the Ain appears to be incomplete for it does not speak of the survey of the entire lands situated within the surveyed parganas. Our suspicion is strengthened by the fact that the works of later date giving the same information for the later period (c. 1682) show a rise in the land area for the same parganas over and above the ones given in the Ain. For example, Account ff. 278a, 279a-98b; 303b; 304b-7a; 351b-3a. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pargana</th>
<th>Area 1595 (in bighas)</th>
<th>Area 1682 (in bighas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Dholqa</td>
<td>8,34,606</td>
<td>13,68,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sarnal</td>
<td>80,646</td>
<td>1,37,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Mehmudabad</td>
<td>45,590</td>
<td>53,818</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

133
The evidence contained in the Account establishes it beyond doubt that the zamindars' possessions were covered by land survey and the practice was kept up even during the subsequent period. Excepting 4 out of 282 villages which formed pargana Kadi, all others were surveyed by Raja Todarmal. Another document specifies that 252 out of 282 villages of pargana Kadi contained zamindars' lands all of which had been surveyed. To be more precise, zamindar Hathi Singh whose possession in the same pargana extended

\[ \text{...Continued...} \]

...Continued...

The latter work records the number of villages constituting the pargana and land area of each village separately, thus indicating that entire lands had been covered by land survey by the later date. However, the possibility of restructuring of parganas during the post-Ain period may not be ruled out as the Mirat-i Ahmadi (Supplement, p.190) suggests the creation of some new parganas. (Ibid. p.190 cf. Ain II, pp.120-1). The following evidence substantiates it further:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pargana</th>
<th>1595 Area</th>
<th>1682 Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Piplod</td>
<td>39,930</td>
<td>21,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Kadi</td>
<td>9,36,837</td>
<td>6,32,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Masumabad</td>
<td>2,13,605</td>
<td>1,14,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fall in the land area was definitely the outcome of taking out of some villages from these parganas, for the later work records area of each village (excepting 7 out of 340 villages which, according to the work, were not covered by Raja Todarmal's survey) constituting the three parganas, leaving no possibility of turning the once surveyed area into ghair paimooda.

1. Account, ff. 319a, 321b, 326a, 330a.
2. Ibid, ff. 307b-32a read with P.C. (Kadi) No. 3 to 7.
over eight villages possessed mawza Pethapur by way of watan. \(^1\) The account furnishes detailed area statistics for Pethapur the same way as it does for the \('\text{raiyati}'\) villages.\(^2\)

The Account furnishes village-wise information regarding all the 28 parganas which constituted sarkar Ahmadabad. Describing the position that existed around 1682, the Account mentions 10 parganas as ghair paimeeda while the rest (18) are furnished with area-figures. All the parganas which are described as 'paimeoda' contained 63 makans held by

1. Account, ff. 309a; P.C. (Kadi) No.3.
2. P.C. (Kadi), No.3; Peshkash Docs. P.C. No.6,7; The Account records area in the following way:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mawza: Pethapur} & \quad 3900 - 10 \text{ biswas} \\
\text{raqba (total)} & \\
(a) \text{adadani waghaira} & \quad 1550 - 10 \text{ biswas} \\
\quad \text{i) abadani} & \quad 100-0 \\
\quad \text{ii) Kondra} & \quad 175-0 \\
\quad \text{iii) rah} & \quad 345-0 \\
\quad \text{iv) goristan} & \quad 7-0 \\
\quad \text{v) zamin-i shor} & \quad 30-0 \\
\quad \text{vi) hawz} & \quad 10-0 \\
\quad \text{vii) jungle} & \quad 501-0 \\
\quad \text{vili) lab-i ab} & \quad 380-0 \\
\quad \text{ix) devasthan} & \quad 2-10 \\
(b) \text{Laiq-i zira't} & \quad 2350 \text{ bigha} \\
\end{align*}
\]

To cite yet another example, mawza Badasma, a watan village finds the description in the same way:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{raqba} & \quad 1000 \text{ bigha} \\
\text{abadani etc...} & \quad 300 \text{ bigha} \\
\text{Laiq-e zira't} & \quad 700 \text{ bigha. Account, ff. 309b, 314a.}
\end{align*}
\]
zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. The watan portions of their possessions are also specified in the documents. 1 The Account in its village-wise description records the area of all the villages, including the watans, which were situated within the parganas declared as 'paimoodah'. 2 It establishes beyond doubt that the imperial land survey was extended to cover even the watan possessions of zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin.

Instead of citing evidence in exhaustive detail it may, in brief, be submitted that around the year 1682, when the last land survey was undertaken, possessions of zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin which happened to be situated within the parganas of paimoodah lands, were also in equal degree, subject to the land survey. The survey covered all the zamindari villages including watan. Analogically it may be argued that possessions of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin


2. See, for example, Account, ff.307b-32b, 362b-9b. the document entitled 'Yad-dasht: Dehat-i pargana Kadi [(P.C. (Kadi) No.3to7)] specifies zamindar, watans and the rest of villages forming the entire zamindari of each zamindar holding lands in pargana Kadi. On the other hand the Account, as mentioned above, records area statistics for each of the villages constituting zamindari possessions. Evidently, land survey was extended to cover the entire lands of zamindari and no exception was made in these cases.
were not exempt from land survey and it might have been extended to cover their lands in the rest of subah also.¹

The administration had an inclination for surveying all lands, including zamindars' possession, though the policy had met only with partial success. ²

The policy of surveying all lands including those of zamindars, which was initiated under emperor Akbar was not only kept up,³ but also enforced further to cover new parganas. The evident increase in the area statistics for the same parganas from the date of the Ain to the year 1682

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1. The Account gives exhaustive details of villages and parganas forming sarkar Ahmadabad. As regards the other sarkars it does not record details below the pargana level. Ain, II, pp.120-4.

2. In the year 1682, emperor Aurangzeb had ordered the survey of lands of the parganas that had remained unsurveyed by that year. He had ordered that assistance of "zamindaran" was to be taken for that purpose. Account, ff.23a, 24a.

In the aforesaid year, entire sarkars of Soreth and Godhra and 49 mahals situated in the remaining eight kharaji sarkars are characterized as "ghair paimooda", Account, ff.23a-31a. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p.25. For further details see the following discussion.

3. See for example, parganas of Dholqa, Sarnal, Kadi, Mehmudabad, Masudabad, Nadiad, haveli Ahadabad, Arhamatar, Bheel, Piplod, Prantij etc. are furnished with area statistics in the Ain (II, pp.120-1) as well as Account (ff.23ab, 25a; 163ab, 174a-5a, 202ab, 218a-9a, 278ab, 302b-3a, 307b-8a, etc.).
may serve as a reliable indicator. 1 Besides, the Ain does not furnish area statistics for the parganas of Petlad, Thamna, Mandva, Hyderabad and Kaparbanj. 2 But the Account furnishes detailed area statistics for all these parganas. 3

A reverse trend is also noticeable. All the parganas of sarkar Godhra are furnished with area-statistics in the Ain. 4 Subsequently the entire sarkar turned ghair paimooda. 5 Similarly, nine parganas of sarkar Ahmadabad which had been surveyed during the Ain-period, are described as 'ghair-paimooda' during Aurangzeb's reign. 6 So is the picture of one pargana of sarkar Baroda, five of Bharuch, six of sarkar Champaner and eleven mahals of sarkar Godhra which had been surveyed during the sixteenth century, but came to be categorised as 'ghair-paimooda' by the ninth

1. An increase in the recorded area is noticeable in the parganas of Arharmatar, Bheel, Prantij, Petlad, Thamna, Dholga, Sarnal, Kapadbanj, Mehmudabad, Nadiad, haveli Ahmadabad etc. Ain, II, pp. 120-1 cf. Account, ff. 23ab; 25a.

2. Ain, II, pp.120-1.

3. Account, ff. 183a, 218a, 277a, 332b, 337b. It may also be seen that all the parganas of Sarkar Soreth and pragana ldar (sarkar Ahmadabad) remained 'ghair-paimooda' throughout the period. Ain, II pp. 120-5; Account, ff.28a, 168b.


5. Account, ff.27ab

6. Ain, II, pp.120-1 cf Account, ff. 23b, 24a, 25a-6a.
decade of the seventeenth century. In brief five new parganas came to be covered by land survey during the post-Ain period, while 48 parganas and one entire sarkar (Godhra) lost their position of surveyed areas during the same period. Inferentially, the possessions of more zamindars stood ghair paimooda during the post-Ain period than at the time of the Ain. However, the zamindaris that were situated around the seat of provincial power and which could be managed with relative ease, felt more weight of the administrative control. It appears from the fact that the parganas which came to be covered by land survey during the later period were located in close proximity to the seat of provincial power while the others which turned ghair-paimooda were located in more distant places, generally touching the zamindari possessions of ismi zamindars. Apparently imperial control on the zamindars of distant regions was on the decline. This may be established further with the help of another but similar set of evidence.

Excluding a few mahals in the sarkar Pattan and sarkar Ahmadabad and the whole of sarkar Soreth all other mahals of

3.  *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, (pp.188-222) specifies the distance of parganas and direction from the city of Ahmadabad.
the subah were covered by land survey during Akbar's reign. ¹ By the year 1682, the exclusively zamindari parganas came to enjoy immunity from land survey as well as from furnishing details of villages and revenue-returns to the Diwan-i Subah. Thus, for example, Account states 'on account of being mulk-i zamindari (bina bar mulk-i zamindari)' details of villages of the seven mahals of sarkar Godhra were not received in the Diwan's office. ² Thus, the zamindars who held entire parganas and mahals and whose possessions were situated in relatively distant parts came to enjoy immunity from land survey and some of them even from furnishing accounts of villages as a matter of administrative norm during the post-Ain period. These zamindars had evidently extended their administrative sway over the lands which had been surveyed and presumably placed under direct administrative control during the period of the Ain.

However, all the zamindars who came to hold entire parganas were not necessarily exempt from furnishing accounts of villages to the provincial diwan even though their lands being located in the ghair palmooda sarkar of Soreth

¹. *Ain*, II, pp.120-21, 124.

². *Account*, ff.17a, 26b, 27a; For similar position also see *Ibid.* ff. 26b, 27a; *Mirat-i Ahmadi (Supplement*, pp.205, 210-11) describes these parganas as held *bila qaid dehat* hence the number of villages too is not specified cf. *Ain*, II, p.123.
were not covered by land survey.\(^1\) Territories of a large number of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin lay within the jurisdiction of desais who acted as watchdogs of imperial interest in revenue matter.\(^2\)

The imperial administration also maintained jama (the assessed revenue) figures for the territories of zamindars. It was maintained regardless of the position concerning land survey and the furnishing of accounts of villages.\(^3\) A study of the jama figures of the zamindars who turned autonomous makes an interesting reading.\(^4\)

\(^1\) Account, ff. 25a, 26a-8b.

\(^2\) No exemption seems to have been granted in regard to the appointment of the desais. However, the strong ones appear to have extorted the concession in the course of the seventeenth century. For details and references, please see 'desai' Chapter III below.

\(^3\) Account, ff. 23a-31a read with ibid, ff. 114a-27a. Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.205-6, 210, 211. Jama for some of the ghair-amli lands held by a few zamindars however, were not maintained.

\(^4\) Ain, II, pp.120,124, Doc. Yad dasht, Jamadami Subah Gujarat 1682-83 (partly torn), R.No.33. Pune; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.211-1; Account, ff. 18a-20a. These parganas are not among the ones which lay within desais' jurisdiction at least during Augangzeb's reign. Please see desai Chap. III. below.
It is evident that these parganas were assessed even during the post-Ain period, the jama figures for the different points of time (1595, 1682-83 and 1719) are not the same. Secondly, the jama in the case of first seven of the ten parganas cited above records a fall in the assessed revenue demand of the state. A rise indicated in the jama of the last three parganas being too meagre does not fall in line with the general trend shown in the jama for the subah as well as the empire. Thirdly, the jama figures for the years 1682-83 and 1719 onward having remained the same suggest that the jama in respect of these zamindaris was not reassessed during post-1682-83 period, though an upward revision is evident from the jama for the non-zamindari areas as well as areas of relatively petty zamindars. Thus a recorded fall in the jama (serial Nos. 1 to 7), or a negligible rise in the amount of jama of a few (serial Nos.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zamindars' Parganas (Sarkar Soreth)</th>
<th>JAMA - DAMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. 1595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Amreli</td>
<td>17,94,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Palitana</td>
<td>2,40,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dharal</td>
<td>6,24,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lathi</td>
<td>2,96,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mandvi</td>
<td>1,27,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dhatrod</td>
<td>2,52,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Malikpur</td>
<td>9,95,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Dungar</td>
<td>7,60,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Gariadhar</td>
<td>6,23,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Jagat</td>
<td>8,03,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

142
8 to 10) and finally the non-revision of the same during post-1882-83 period is suggestive of an over all decline in the imperial control over the economy of the same and similar zamindars.¹

The parganas referred to above had come to be held and administered by the zamindars themselves.² There were also the zamindars whose makans, either entirely or partly fell within the parganas which continued to be under the direct imperial administration.³ The entire lands including the non-zamindari ones, forming these pargana are also described as 'ghair palmooda'. However, the diwan's office maintained detailed account of each village, including the watan part of zamindars in the same way as it does for the non-zamindari villages.⁴ No discrimination seems to have been made in

¹ It has been suggested that jama approximated to the hasil during the last years of emperor Akbar's reign. The gap between the two widened particularly during Shah Jahan's reign and the trend was not reversed during the subsequent period; see M. Athar Ali, Nobility Under Aurangzeb, pp.46-50. The negligible rise and more clearly the fall in the jama appreciated in the context of widening gap between the assessed sum and the actual collections go to suggest that the zamindars were able to pocket major part of their revenues. For some of the other zamindars' territories showing the same and similar trend, Ain, 11, pp.123-4, read with Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp.210-8.

² Account, ff. 123a-5b, 168b-9a; 213a-4b; 274b-7a.

³ Ibid, ff. 345b-55a. Ibid, ff. 227a-37b; 300a-32b; 370a-71b.

⁴ Ibid.
the appointment of authorities responsible for assessing and collecting the revenues during the heyday of Mughal rule.¹

Among the territorial possessions of zamindars part of which was held by them while the other portion remained under the imperial officials, may be mentioned the Gohel's possessions. The zamindar administered pargana Sehore while Ghoga, a port town and a constituent of the zamindari was placed under the imperial officials.² The zamindar obtained his share in the revenues of the port from the provincial treasury.³

Instead of retaining parts or entire makans of zamindars under its direct administration, it appears that the imperial government, in some cases, remained contended with direct control over one of their sources of revenue. Thus, for instance, taxes on pilgrims visiting Amba Bhavani in the territory of Danta, a self-administered makan, were collected by the imperial officials before their abolition in 1662.⁴ Likewise, taxes on traders in the region of Sehore

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1. Ibid.
2. Account, ff. 126a; also Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p.194.
3. Doc. entitled, "Yad-dasht: bandar Ghoga, R.No.39, Pune, For similar position in Jhalwad and Idar see; Account, ff. 230b-7b.
etc. (sarkar Godhra) were levied and collected by Imperial officials, though the territory had come to be held by autonomous zamindars.\(^1\) Moreover, the villages of Mandal, Dekawara and Hadala (Viramgaon) were held and administered by the zamindars themselves.\(^2\) However, the *dastur-ul amals* laying down rates of taxes and levies to be extorted at the *nakas* (entry-exit point) of the aforesaid villages housing *mandis*, were maintained in the *diwan's* office.\(^3\)

Not much information is available regarding the position and role of zamindars in the process of assessment and collection of *ma\-l-i wajib* from the peasantry of *ghair-paimooda* zamindari lands which had been placed under direct control. However, the revenues for the *peshkashi* territory were collected and paid by the zamindars as will be seen below.

As distinct from the *makanat-i zamindari* referred to above, all the *makans* which happened to be situated within the continuously surveyed parts of the *Subah*, were placed under direct administration from the times of the *Ain* to the

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3. *Ibid*, (ff.227b-8b) specifies each item of trade, rates of levy, place of levying taxes and other instructions to Imperial officials regarding the coins etc. For similar references also see *ibid* ff. 228b-9b.
opening of the eighteenth century. The available evidence for these zamindaris casts light on the sway of rights and position of zamindars within their possessions during the last quarter of the seventeenth century.\(^1\) The available information is of particular significance for it casts light on the inter-relationship between zamindars' lands and the raiyati lands from a different angle.

Even if a zamindar held merely a portion, he was indeed identified with all the villages or parganas as the case might be.\(^2\) The identification appears to be a mere conventional form of description rather than an indicator of the sway of the zamindar's right.\(^3\)

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1. The last of the reported land surveys was ordered in 1682. The pre-1682 position of lands which continued to be surveyed till that year was, according to the document, based on Raja Todarmal's survey as revised by Nawab Shihabuddin Khan during Akbar's reign.

2. For such identification, see Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, pp.155-7. The zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin were also identified the same way. The documents describe the zamindars as: so and so zamindar of mawza/ pargana such and such, or zamindar(s) so and so of mawza /pragana such and such.

3. Irfan Habib (*Agrarian System*, pp.141,143) and following him, B.R. Grover (*dehat-i taaluga* op.cit p.166) conceive of the raiyati and the zamindari villages as exclusive of each other. According to them, the raiyati could not form part of a 'zamindari' village and vice versa. N.A. Siddiqui (op.cit, pp.146-7) also follows the same line of argument. These scholars, rule out possibility of the existence of raiyati lands in the taaluga (zamindari) of a zamindar. Their understanding of the raiyati and zamindari rights as being other than and different from each other is quite correct. But in view of the evidence cited below their view on the existence of the raiyati lands within the
suggests that the zamindar's right could be confined to a
definite portion and the rest could be the raiyati land,
even if the village was reckoned as 'taalluqa-i zamindar'.

It has been pointed out above that the possessions of
the Rajputs and Kolis were divided into two parts, namely;
the talpad, revenues from which were attached to the govern-
ment, and the bantha which was retained by its original
possessors. It is yet to be seen whether the division im-
plied the sub-division of revenues, of the land constituting
the village, or of the villages themselves. Secondly, what
does bantha denote--watan, share of zamindar comparable to
malikana, or nankar, or else the entire zamindari out of
which the zamindar was entitled to a share.¹

To begin with, taalluqa of (Superior) zamindar was divid-
ed into the watan possession and the rest of the zamindari.
To cite a representative example, zamindar Pirthi Singh's
zamindari consisted of eight villages of which mawza Petha-

¹. Equating bantha with watan-jagir, B.R. Grover holds
that Rajputs etc. "were given one fourth of the terrri-
tory known as bantha as watan villages." He argues
that revenues from talpad were paid as peshkash to the
Habib equates bantha of Gujarat with the malikana of
North India and treats it as the share of zamindar.
Agrarian System, pp.149-50. S. Nurul Hasan regards
bantha as the renumeration given to the intermediary
zamindars. Thoughts on Agrarian Relations p.35.
pur formed his watan-possession. The area of each of the
villages constituting his zamindari is recorded as under:.

Mawza Pethapur

(Total area constituting the village) = 3901 bigha

A. (Area under) habitation etc, excluded

(minha adabadi waghaira) = 1550 bigha, 10 biswa

B. Cultivable area (raqba laiq-i zira't) = 2350 bigha, 10 biswa

a. raiyat 1763 bigha 10 biswa

b. giras 587 bigha

Evidently the division into bantha and talpad implied
dividing of land as different from the categorisation of
villages. Instead of citing evidence which is available

1. P.C. (Kadi) No. 3, 7 and R6 Account ff. 121a, 309b. For
the composition of zamindari villages including identifi-
cation of the watan villages of the zamindaris of Jai
Singh, Roop Singh, Partap Singh, Kishandas, Abhairaj
and many others, P.C. (Kadi), Nos. 3-7, p7, R.6; Ac-
count, ff. 309a-32a; Ibid, ff. 311a, 312b, 315a, 318a,
324b etc.

2. Account, ff. 311a, 312b, 315a; 318a, 324b, for other
similar examples, Ibid, ff. 309a-32a.

3. Here raiyat stands for talpad and the giras for ban-
tha. For a detailed view please see discussion in the
following lines and Chapter V below.

4. The possibility of categorisation of villages on the
same lines may not be rejected out right. But, simulta-
neously it cant be regarded as the standard mode of
division. In its description of all the villages consti-
tuting 28 parganas of sarkar Ahmadabad the Account
specifies only one village held entirely by way of
for hundreds of the zamindari villages it may be submitted in brief that every zamindari village, (situated within the surveyed parts) including the watan of the Superior zamindar is likewise divided into talpad and the bantha. Since the land of every one of the village constituting the makan-i zamindari could be divided into the talpad-bantha, the division may not be considered as the one into the watan and non-watan portions for, as pointed out above, the lands of watan possession too were divided the same way.

A further view of the fact that the lands were physically divided and that the division implied something more than mere categorisation into talpad and the batha, may be formed from another piece of information which reflects the area under actual cultivation in mawza Lekhawara (pargana Bheel, sarkar Ahmadabad), the watan possession of Amar Singh

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...Continued...

bantha. Ibid f. 249a.

1. *Account*, ff. 174b-5a, 218b, 241a, 309a read with *Ibid*, ff. 175b-81b, 219a-20b, 241b-49b, 309b-32a. It may be pointed out here that the bantha-talpad system of dividing lands did not cover the entire subah. The system was confined to the areas which had been covered by land survey. For details, please see chapter V below.


3. The document is entitled *khasra mazruat mawza Lekhawara pargana Bheel, fast-i-kharif.....1098 fasli*(R.No. 37, Pune; hereafter *mazruat Lekhawara*). It furnishes details of the cultivators muzaria'n each cropped field, providing identity and area of the same.
zamindar. Thus specifying the cropped area under the following heads and sub-heads, the document notes:

1. (Total cropped area) 4523 bigha
   A. Talpad 3560 bigha
      a. Rayal 3130 bigha
         i). Kameja 1460 bigha
         ii). Paikashta 1670 bigha
      b. Pusaita 211 bigha
      c. Wazifa 219 bigha
         i). Khudkashta 93 bigha
         ii). (Muzarian kashta) 126 bigha
   B. Bantha-giras 963 bigha
      i. Zamindar kashta 115 bigha
      ii. (Muzarian kashta) 848 bigha

It may thus be seen that the entire cropped area (4523 bigha) consisted of the talpad (3560 bigha) and the bantha (963 bigha) which represents 2.129/- of the cropped area. But the entire bantha lands (1537 bigha) constitute 24.99% of the entire cultivable area (6150 bigha) constituting the village. Secondly, 62.65% of the total bantha area was

1. Area statistics of entire lands forming the village are as under (Account f. 174b.).
   Total area of the village - 12150 bigha
   A. Habitations etc. - 6000 bigha
   B. Cultivable area - 6150 bigha
      i. Raiyati - 4613 bigha
      ii. Bantha-giras - 1537 bigha
cropped whereas 77.17% of the talpad land was brought under cultivation during the crop season. The proportion of the cultivable and the actually cultivated area for one and the same category of land thus being different strongly suggests the existence of the two categories of physically divided lands in the village. A closer scrutiny of the plots (identity of which has been furnished in the document) and the duly named cultivators (muzarla'nn) further reveals that neither the plots nor the cultivators were common under the two sets of land. It indicates categorisation of the cultivators, or land holders also.¹

Since the talpad and the raiyatı are used to denote the same portion of land in the two documents, it would therefore, appear that the two denoted the same non-zamindari possessions. However, the difference between the two may not be lost sight of. The talpad lands (3560 bigha) consisted of the raiyatı (3130 bigha) and the wazıfa (219 bigha) and pusaita (211 bigha) lands. It suggests that the raiyatı was exclusive of lands which had been set aside by way of revenue grants (conditional upon or free of service

¹. The similar categorisation of the cultivators is also noticeable amongst the ones cultivating bantha possession of the Primary zamindars (Chapter V below). Even though it may not be pressed too far, its significance may however not be lost sight of.
obligation) whereas the taipad was inclusive of them. So far as the sway of the zamindar's right is concerned taipad and the raiyati were identical to each other. Still the one cannot be equated all the time with the other. The raiyati could be less than, as in the present case, and presumably even equal to the taipad. Finally, the raiyati, and for that matter, the taipad, could exist though not necessarily even within the taalluqa of a zamindar the sway of whose rights thus would cover only a portion of the village otherwise identified as a zamindari village. 1

Though the available evidence does not suggest it conclusively however the zamindar (i.e. holder of the bantha) does not seem to be the sole owner of the bantha lands. As is evident from the mazruat Lekhawara document, the cultivators (muzaria'ın, enjoying unspecified rights) cultivated bantha lands which were subject to direct assessment by the government, a fact which will be discussed later. Presumably the muzarian of the bantha enjoyed some kind of rights in the land that is why they are specified in

1. For further details, Chapter V below.

2. cf. B.R. Grover, "dehat taalilua - i zamindar" op.cit. Also cf. Irfan Habib's observation that 'raiyati land was different from taipad and was not even originally under the possession of the Kolis and others.' Agrarian System. pp.142-3; Also cf. NA Siddiqui's opinion that taipad was situated outside the taaliluqa of zamindar and the raiyati lands were situated outside the villages which contained bantha lands. op.cit, pp.146-7.
their own right. Another document mentions the zamindaran-i kameja implying that the zamindar's right was not necessarily identical to the (proprietary) rights enjoyed by the kamejas.¹ Regardless of the nature of rights enjoyed by others, the zamindar does not seem to be the absolute owner of the entire bantha lands, particularly the ones other than his khudkashta lands and held by the assesses.

Even though the talpad could be found in the zamindari village but it seems to have come to fall outside the sway of the zamindar's right. According to the Mirat, talpad "was attached to the government".² The Account terms the revenues from talpad "mal-i padshahi".³ The talpad, moreover, was identical to the raiyati as distinct from the bantha i.e. the zamindari lands. It is therefore maintainable that the talpad did not entail (Superior and Primary) zamindar's rights.⁴

¹. Doc. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi P.C. No. 3b, mazruat Mahej, P.C. NO. 209a. For a detailed view of the rights of various persons holding bantha land under the Primary zamindars, please see discussion in Chapter V, below.


³. Account f. 106b, zamin sikhissa dar har deh talpad mal-i padshahi qarar yaf.


153
Secondly, the revenues assessed on talpad were collected as *mal-i wajib* and the receipts shown as *hasil* in contrast to the revenue receipts from the *bantha* of (Superior) *zamindars* which were termed *peshkash*.¹ The two amounts stood exclusive of each other. The collection made as *hasil* (against *jama*) and the *peshkash* from the following villages which contained *bantha* lands² would clarify the point:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>villages</th>
<th>Peshkash-i zamindaran</th>
<th>hasil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in rupees)</td>
<td>(in rupees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Akhaliyaghara</td>
<td>151/-</td>
<td>202/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Asjol</td>
<td>502/-</td>
<td>101/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Adol</td>
<td>701/-</td>
<td>2716/-8 annas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the amount levied as *peshkash* being less (Sl. No. 1 & 3) as well as more (Sl. No. 2) than that of the *hasil* the one did not form part of the other.

¹ Neither all the revenues collected from the *bantha* were termed *peshkash* nor even all the amounts called *peshkash* were extorted from the *bantha*. For details please see discussion in the following lines and Chapter V, below.

² *Account*, f. 174b, read with *ibid.*, f. 178b; *ibid.*, f. 309a read with *ibid.*, f. 311b, it may further be added that there was no *makan-i zamindari* in pargana Azamabad. No collection is therefore recorded as *peshkash*. The realised amount is reflected as *hasil*.
The state demanded a share in the produce of the *bantha* of zamindar and it was called *peshkash*. The origin of government claim in the *bantha* - revenues is traced back to the days of Sultan Muzaffar Gujarati who introduced the *bantha-talpad* system. Since then the *peshkash* came to be extorted from the *bantha* of the zamindaran (and *salami* from the *bantha* of the girasias) and the practice was kept up during the Mughal age.\(^1\) Under the Mughals the claimed share in the *bantha* revenues of the zamindaran was levied as *peshkash-i nizamat*.\(^2\)

The *peshkash-i nizamat* was determined on the basis of detailed assessment. It has been submitted above that detailed information regarding the area actually cropped by individual plot-holders of the *bantha* of Superior zamindar were maintained in the office of diwan, the same way as for the talpad. Likewise the office maintained the *dastur-ul amal* specifying the proportionate share of the *riaya*, the state and the Superior zamindar. Thus the produce of (barani, unirrigated) *polaj* of the *bantha* was divided into four parts (*chahar hissa*) of which two parts (*du hissa* i.e.

\(^1\) *Ibid*, f. 106b.

\(^2\) *Account*, ff, 106b-9a, 339a, 340a, 409a. But entire extortions made as *peshkash-i nizamat* were not levied on the *bantha*. 

155
half of the produce were left with the riyat; a fourth (chaharum hissa) was apportioned as government's share (hissa-i sarkar) and the remaining quarter (hissa-i chaharum) as the hissa-i banthadar. Similarly produce of the irrigated (chahi) polaj was divided into six equal parts. The state and the bantha-dar each, were entitled to a sixth part whereas the rest (four parts of two-third) was marked as the raiyat's share. In a nutshell, the dastur-ul amal and amal-i dastur which are available for the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb suggest it without exception that the part of the produce which was extorted from the peasantry of the bantha was equally divided between the state and the zamindar. According to the available dasturs the state share could be assessed, though only exceptionally, on lump sum basis (amal-i bitmuqte). The peshkash-i nizamat was demanded and collected as an annual claim (harsalah) from every makan-i zamindari as government's share in the

1. Account, ff. 339a, 340a, 409a; dastur-ul amal, p.c. Nos. 22, 25-6, 33, 41, 45-7. The earliest available dastur-ul amal dates back to the period of subedari of Isa Tarkhan (Shahjahan's reign) who introduced the bhagwatal as the mode of assessment and collection; last of the dasturs were framed during Aurangzeb's reign and were, at least officially, not revised subsequently.


4. Account, f. 339a

156
produce of the *bantha* provided the (Superior) zamindar was not called upon to render military service.¹

It may be added here that from the view point of *riaya* no difference existed between the *bantha* and the *talpad* in terms of revenue demand. The above quoted *dasturs* specify the *riaya's* share which remains the same regardless of the category of land. The difference lies in the fact that revenue from the *bantha* were shared between state and *banthadar* whereas the one from the *talpad* were to be expropriated by the state at the exclusion of the *banthadar*.

From the preceding discussion it would appear that the 'zamindar' was neither the absolute owner nor the only claimant in the produce of the *bantha* lands. Since the state claimed a well defined share in the *bantha* revenue on regular basis in addition to extorting revenues due from *talpad* at the exclusion of the zamindar, it is difficult to equate *bantha* with the *malikana* which was expropriated by the (primary) zamindar alone.²

¹ Ibid, ff. 114a-26b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, *Supplement*, pp. 229-39, B.R. Grover (*Nature of land rights*, *op.cit*, p24.) mistook the amount of *peshkash* as specified in the latter work as the one paid by the zamindars due from *talpad*, See also Account, ff, 174b, 181b, 309b-32a; Mawazna fis-sinwsat Subah Gujarat sarkar Ahmadabad pargana haveli Ahmadabad, P.C. No. 105, cf. N.A. Sid-diqi, *op.cit*, p.147.

Thus the sway of the zamindar's right had been curtailed and confined to the bantha, revenues from which portion were, under the rules governing assessment, shared by the zamindar and the state on equal basis. The bantha, as such, may be described as 'reduced zamindari' as distinct from the 'share of zamindar'.

The peshkash-i nizamat which was a regular claim, in the present context, on the bantha of zamindar does not seem to have borne any relationship to the jamadami which represented the talpad portion of land.

It is an established fact that the hasil denoted the revenues actually collected as against the jama which signified the 'revenues assessed. Since the hasil, stood exclusive of the peshkash-i nizamat as noted above it may be argued that the latter was neither included in nor signified the peshkash-i nizamat as noted above it may be argued that the latter was neither included in nor signified the jama.

1. For further details, please see discussion in Chapter V.
2. Though Irfan Habib does not appear to have come across the expressions 'peshkash-i nizamat' and matalba-i sarkar-i wala but his observation that the peshkash (i.e. in its present form) was different from the jama, the two being indicators of two distinct imperial claims, levied separately, holds good. Agrarian System, pp.184-5; cf. M.A. Nayeem who notes the prevalence of two distinct claims but erroneously tries to calculate proportionate relationship between the jama and the peshkash -i nizamat without paying attention to the fact whether the former signified and represented the latter at all M.A. Nayeem, "Mughal documents Relating to the peshkash of zamindars of South India, 1694-1752", IESHR, Vol. XII, No.4, Oct-Dec 1975, pp.425-33.
fied by the *jama.*

The preceding discussion pertaining to the assessment of *peshkash-i nizamat* relates exclusively to the zamindaris of *paimooda* areas which were divided on *bantha-talpad* lines. But most of the zamindari *makans* were located in the regions lands of which were not surveyed. In these areas the imperial attempt at correlating the amount of the tribute with the actual yield seems to have been at variance from zamindari to zamindari as will be discussed below.

The *peshkash-i nizamat* from a section of zamindars holding lands in *ghair-paimooda* areas seem to have been determined after making some exercise in calculation. The office of *diwan* maintained details of the zamindari villages. Secondly, nature of figures of the amount actually extorted also goes to suggest to the same effect. But then, there were the zamindars whose offering are invariably

1. For further evidence, *Account*, ff. 167a, 174b-75a, 183b-4a, 275a, Since the evidence relates to the areas which followed *banath talpad* system, the inference therefore, may hold good for the same parts.

2. *Account*, f 28a. *The* *Mirat-i Ahmadi* (*Supplement*, pp 211-19) refers to such zamindari which did not furnish details of villages, (or *sarlhta-i dehat*) implying that other zamindars furnished it.

3. See, for example the amounts of *peshkash* i.e. 2378/-, 568/8annas, 1025/- 1312/8 etc. paid by the zamindars of *sarkar* Soreth etc. during the first few years of the eighteenth century. *Peshkash documents*, *P.C* Nos. 2, 9, 14a, 17a-9b;
recorded in round figures which hardly suggests any exercise in calculation. There were still other zamindars like those of Jagat, Dhatrod (Sarkar Soreth), Dantiwara, Santalpur, Kakrej etc (Sarkar Pattan) who, sometime during the post-Ain period, ceased to furnish account of villages under them and turned zortalab. Located in favourable geographical position far off the seat of provincial power zamindars of these places were strong enough to resist imperial interference because of their strong caste bastions also. Similarly ghair-amlī portions of the zamindaris were immune from assessment and subject to the minimum of imperial control.

As such no uniform standard of assessment was applicable to entire lands of all the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. The variations ranged between wide limits; on the one hand there were the zamindari lands which had been placed under

1. Thus a Koli zamindar of Chunwal paid 15000 jami during the subedari of prince Murad and Bahadur Khan. Khoman etc. zamindars of Jhalawar paid the same amount during price Dara's period of subedari, for the same and similar instances Peshkash documents, PC, Nos, 1,2,19,20 and haqiqat-i sarkar Soreth -PC, Nos. 22a, 23b.

2. Ibid., 22b-9a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 203,205-10,212-6,218.

3. These lands are described as miskin-i Jattan, miskin-i Kolyan or miskin-i Kathiyan etc. The reason of non-furnishing the details of villages is also ascribed to the recalcitrance of the zamindars. Account, ff. 22b-9a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 202-3,214-6.

4. Account, ff 26b-7b; N.A. Siddiqi, op.cit p.25.
direct administration, thus minimizing the difference between *peshkash* and *mai-i wajib*; on the other there were the lands which at the onset of the eighteenth century\(^1\) were not assessed at all.

It is worth submitting that *peshkash-i nizamat* was also described as "*peshkash-i mugarrari*"\(^2\) which expression implies that the amount was fixed (regardless of the mode of assessment), but was 'liable to be revised after a reasonable span of time'.\(^3\) The available evidence for the latter half of the seventeenth century also suggests that the amount could remain fixed for as little as three years to as many as ten years.\(^4\) It was equally true for the offerings made by the zamindars regardless of the mode of assessment and collection.\(^5\) As such, in spite of surveying cultivable lands and maintaining details of the actually cropped area

\(^1\) It has already been mentioned that more of the zamindaris turned *ghair paimooda* and a number of zamindars passed out of administrative control.


\(^3\) B.R. Grover, *Elements of continuity and change in Land ownership and rights from the Mughal Age to the early British Period* 'Presidential Address, Med. Sec IHC Calicut, 1976 pp 20-2

\(^4\) *Peshkash* Documents, *PC* Nos, 1-2, 5, 8-12, 14-5, 28-35, 38, 43; *Account*, ff 122b-3a, 124b-6a, 166-7a, 303b-4a, *Yad-dasht fis-sinwat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, peshkash zamindaran, mawza Anwarsaj wghaira. PC*, No. 105.

\(^5\) *Yad-dasht*, P.C.No.105. *op. cit.*
and the destur-ul amals, the peshkash, for all practical purposes, was not fixed on yearly basis. Since the zamindar paid the same amount of money for a number of years the crop-season-wise assessment might not have direct and consistent bearing on the amount thus actually paid. The crop-season wise assessed paying capacity of the zamindar not being taken into account every time it would allow the zamindar some degree of freedom in revenue matters even within those zamindari lands which otherwise were placed under direct administration. Also the zamindar's income would be determined not only by his proportionate share but also by the difference in the amounts paid (peshkash) and actually collected.

In addition to appropriating land revenue a number of zamindarn-i mahin-o kahin enjoyed income from other sources also. Some of them enjoyed revenues of the ports which were situated on the coastal line of Gujarat peninsula and were obvious centers of trading activities. The zamindars of Halwad and Jia Koli were allowed a share of Rs. 7/8 annas and Rs. 20/- respectively out of every Rs. 75/- from the imposts levied on merchandise at the mandis of Viramgaon, nakas (exit-entry points) of Hadala, Patri (Patdi). Wasara,


162
Janbo, Mandal, Weekawara etc. (pargana Viramgaon, sarkar Ahamdabad). Likewise the zamindar of Patdi of the same pargana enjoyed a share in the revenues collected by the officials from the namaksar (salt-pan) located in the zamindari. Some of the zamindars held lands and villages by way of ina’m, exacted fines, levied prohibited taxes (abwab-l mamnua’) and resorted to plundering activities both on land routes and the high seas.

In the light of this discussion it may summarily be submitted that:

Despite the fact that the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin were more numerous, holding vast tracts of land all through the kharaji sarkars and enjoying wider social base, they were assigned a position secondary to those of the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashl and the zamindaran-i ismi. A considerably large number of them had been the junior members and vassals of the leading chiefs of the region whose prin-

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1. Dastur-ul amal-i mandvi qasbah Viramgaon, reproduced in the Account 227a-8b; ibid, f228b. The taxes were gathered by the state officials and the zamindars collected their share from the treasury. ibid.

2. Account ff.229-30b; for the location of the salt pans, Ain, II, pp 148-9; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, p. 192.

cipalities had broken up as a result of ongoing political process.

This stratum was placed under greater degree of administrative control. Zamindars' geographical position on imperial map, caste-clan bastions, productivity, manageability and the capacity to resist went a long way in determining the state-zamindar relationship. Since these factors lacked uniformity and varied from place to place, the position of the zamindaran-i mahin-okahin was also at variance from one another.

Moreover, the intra-strata differences were further sharpened particularly during the second half of the seventeenth century, during which period a process suggesting qualitative change in the state-zamindar relationship is discernable. During the period two simultaneous processes viz; of acquiring a greater hold over a group and secondly conceding autonomy in greater degree to the other are noticeable. Consequently we come across a section of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin who, by the close of the seventeenth century, had been thoroughly subjugated so much so that most of the shades of distinction subsisting between them and the Primary zamindars had been eroded. The other section that in major part had earlier been subjugated, emerged as truly autonomous, under only a nominal imperial
control. Likewise the zamindars who had been autonomous only partially, also emerged as fully autonomous. Moreover, some of them ceased to be service rendering and still others stopped paying mal-i wajib and turned exclusively peshkashi. As such the intra-stratum signs of differentiation became more prominent where a strata of them approximated in its position to the zamindaran-i sarkart-i peshkashi and the zamindaran-i ismī. Thus the process of blurring the inter-strata-distinguishing features also gained currency. It may particularly be mentioned that the zamindars who had consolidated their position by repelling imperial administrative pressure, were the ones who were relatively richer in resources and in command of considerable power in men and material. But the zamindars whose position was relatively more vulnerable, were exposed to bear the maximum of imperial administrative pressure. It is also worth appreciating that the imperial policy of promoting disunity among the caste-family members by entering into direct relationship with them and making inroads into the main source of their power could be pursued within its logical limits and on a limited scale. Therefore, the zamindars' caste bastions could not be eroded to an appreciable extent for the greater benefit of the empire.
So far we have discussed features and tried to ascertain distinguishing characteristics of the constituent sections of the (Superior) 'zamindaran' as they find description in the contemporary works, particularly the regional documents. On the basis of this discussion [Chapter 1(1) and (2)] and some other evidence it may be submitted that:

Forms of holding zamindaris and the provisions made for sharing revenues were of varying nature. Though the Mughal had adopted an overall structure of the pattern of relationship established under the Sultans of Gujarat, it had consistently made efforts for acquiring greater hold over the zamindars. In this attempt the Mughals adopted reasonably flexible attitude, presumably keeping in view the sources of their strength and power and the capacity for acquiring and retaining control over them. The pattern of relation thus established, lacked uniformity and, consequently there emerged zamindaris having definite signs of differentiation.

Beside the manageability considerations which, by and large, were governed by the geo-social compulsions, the economy factor appears to have been a strong motivating force behind the imperial attempts at acquiring control over
the zamindaris on the one hand and the zamindars' own capacity to resist and repel it on the other.

The empire pursued a definite but cautious policy towards the 'symbols and sources' of zamindars' power.\footnote{For a general view of the zamindars' symbols and sources of power, Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp. 160-9.} Attempts were made to dislodge them from forts and fortresses and convert them into instruments of administrative control; raze the strongholds of some recalcitrant ones to ground, deny them freedom of raising new ones and, in their stead, raise its own fortresses at commanding points.\footnote{Ain., II, pp 121-24; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 121, 143-4, 174, 211, 213, 225-6, 262, 274, 285-6, 326-7, 369-70; Ibid, Supplement, pp 217-9, Account ff. 15a 18a, 70a.} But the policy, presumably as it could be, was pursued to its logical limits and a number of zamindars, particularly the stronger ones, continued in possession of their respective strongholds.\footnote{Mirat-i Ahmadi I, pp. 372-3; Ibid, Supplement pp, 205, 207, 209, 213-4, 218, 233; Tarikh-i Mirat-ul Alam, ff. 2-4; Hamilton Walter, op. cit, p. 685.}

Caste-clan affiliations and family bonds seem to have constituted the main source of the Superior zamindars' strength in Gujarat also.\footnote{For some details, please see, Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp. 159-64.} Though the members of other
castes and community too made inroads into the category presumably through state channel, Rajputs and Kolis continued to be in the domineering position which the state could hardly erode, even though some efforts to that effect were made. The well established practice of providing suitable means of subsistence, called jiwaee, shasun or giras to the leading caste-members and junior members of the family following the rule of primogeniture in matters of succession, might have helped the zamindars in preserving unity of the inheritance from within and resisting pressure exerted from without. But where and when found feasible the empire

1. For such inroads through state channel during the period of Sultans of Gujarat, S.C. Misra, Rise of Muslim power in Gujarat pp. 204-6, during Mughal age, Junagadh, S.C. No, 1159 (mahal, Kutiyana).

2. Rule of primogeniture applied to the larger principalities, though not invariably. (For exceptional instance, Account, f 109b); For the grants made by head of family, Hamilton Walter, op. cit, I, p.618; For the chiefs' concern for providing suitable means and respectable social status for his leading clansmen, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp.284-5.

The sons of petty zamindars divided, though not equally, the patrimony among themselves - the 'younger brothers shared alike assigning a larger share (Motab-hag) to the eldest who was designated motabhagia and held the seal of zamindari (Rasmala, pp 567,569-70); Treaties VI, pp. 9-10). In such cases the inheritance was not physically divided, generally, it was held jointly (Treaties, VI, pp. 33,70; Appendix No, VI, pp xx -xxiv, Baden Powell, Land System of British India, London, 1889. I. p.107). The expressions such as brotherhood (brathri or fraternity), brothers (brathran) children or descendents (awlad), Rajputs (Rajputan), Kolis (Kolilyan) etc. used to denote holder(s) of one and the same makan, as pointed out earlier, testify to the existence of collective holdings. But
established direct relationship with the vassals and dependents of leading zamindars, either by eradicating or along-with the head of family for dismembering the otherwise united. makan-i zamindari.\(^1\)

The imperial authority seems to have, though only exceptionally, intervened in matters concerning succession in larger principalities, the small zamindars appear to have decided the matter among themselves although they too had to procure confirmatory orders from the provincial authorities.\(^2\)

The Mughal state had allowed the Superior zamindars to continue in their possessions on condition of rendering military service to and sharing revenues with the empire. The service obligation, with some exceptions, was an essential obligation for all of them, and the zamindars had to serve, as they did, regardless of the award of mansab.

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...Continued...

the bhayads, according to British works, were not averse, under given circumstances, to their coming into direct contact with the state.

1. Please, see for example the instances of Idar, Porbandar, Kadi and Navanagar referred to in the preceding discussion.

2. Only two instances one each relating to Dungarpur, Sirohi and Banswara during Akbar's reign and the last relating to Navanagar during Aurangzeb's reign are noticeable in our sources; see also, Rasmala, pp. 312, 319-20; 340-2, Tarikh-i Soreth, pp. 96-7; Treaties, VI, pp. 2,4,20,77,89; Hamilton Walter, op. cit i. p 640.
The State's share in the revenues was met under two major heads, viz; mataiba-i sarkar-i wala (claim of Emperor) and the peshkash-i nizamat (tribute for the Governor). The former was denoted by jama and levied as peshkash from the zamindars of peshkashi sarkars, and, as mal-i wajib from the rest of them. The peshkash-i nizamat was demanded on an annual basis, if and when a zamindar was not required to serve. The state made elaborate arrangements for assessing their paying capacity and endeavoured to enter, as far as possible, into direct dealing with the riaya. In this attempt the state met with appreciable success. But, as a matter of fact, it could neither acquire hold in equal degree over all of them neither retain the acquired hold consistently. Therefore, the Superior zamindar's position vis-a-vis the empire and the riaya was at variance from one another and, consequently, they bore definite signs of differentiation amongst themselves, thus giving rise to the three distinct sections who could mainly be distinguished on the basis of extent and degree of autonomy which they enjoyed within their respective possession. The pattern of relationship established initially witnessed some significant changes before the onset of the eighteenth century.

The state, on the one hand, successfully subjugated (by and large relatively petty) Superior zamindar thoroughly
and simultaneously conceding autonomy in greater degree to the other zamindars who, in the beginning had been placed under greater degree of administrative control. The seventeenth century witnessed a dual process of acquiring and repelling the imperial hold. In this game of see-saw a number of the Superior zamindars emerged stronger. The development led to blurring the inter-strata distinguishing features on the one hand and widening and intensification of intra-stratum differentiation.

Secondly, the Superior zamindars also tended to, and a number of them also succeeded in exchanging service for peshkash-i nizamat. Thirdly, some of them successfully transformed the nature of imperial claim from mal-i wajib to peshkash which did not necessarily bear relationship with the zamindar's paying capacity.

Along with the element of continuity in the attitude of imperial authorities towards the 'erring' zamindars, element of qualitative change is also discernible.

With regard to the acquisition of military service and exactation of tribute, the Mughal state was quite insistent.

1. For further references, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp. 189, 256-7; ibid Supplement, p 190, = 192, 203, 205-6, 224-7, 234, 290-1; Jama dami Subah Gujarat, R.No. 47, Pune; Yaddasht haqiqat-i Peshkash-o hasil sarkar Sorathe PC. Nos, 21-4; Rasmala, pp 253-4; Treaties, VII, pp 191-2. Hamilton Walter, op. cit I, p 645.
The zamindars, at times, displayed reluctance in performing the enjoined duties. The garrison placed at various places throughout the subah under the superintendence of the Governors and over all watch kept by the centre, to an appreciable extent, ensured enforcement of the assigned obligations. 1

As regards the collection of peshkash it was Governor's responsibility to ensure its remittance, faujdars of sarkars and parganas were in direct charge. The Governor was, however, required to undertake military expeditions for reinforcing the local administration. 2 But the nazims, or else some strong commander had to directly ensure its collection from the leading recalcitrants who could not be managed by the faujdars. 3 Likewise the leading recalcitrants of Surat

1. For details of administrative arrangements, Account, ff 74b, 93a&b; For a general view, Q Ahmad, "Faujdars of parganas and sarkars", Proc, IHC, 1958, pp.352-4; and Milieu of study under Introduction to the present study.

2. Account, f. 105b; Alamgirnambah, pp. 769-70. For expeditionary proposals the subah was divided into 30 units (zila) each of which consisted of specified makan-i zamindari number of which ranged from one to 42. Necessarily not corresponding to the boundaries of any of the administrative unit a zila could be equal to or more than a pargana and a sarkar. The zila seems to be a geo-administrative unit, comprising specified makan-i zamindari along the routes adopted by the expeditionary forces. Account ff. 106 b-9a.

2. Account (f.74b) for the expeditions actually led against leading recalcitrants, Mirat-i Ahmad, I, pp. 192, 213-4, 216,239,254, 326-30.
region had to be dealt by the port officer, or else by a strong commander (Sahib-i quwwat-o fauj)\(^1\)

Occasionally one or the other zamindar evaded payment of *peshkash*, abstained from performing enjoined duties, defied command, plundered villagers, travellers and traders, rose in open rebellion and harboured imperial rebels.\(^2\) All such reported acts of rebelliousness invited administrative action which resulted in various kinds of punishment, such as imprisonment of zamindar, enhancement in the amount of *peshkash*, imposition of economic penalty and transfer or attachment of zamindari for a while.\(^3\) Simultaneously, incompetent Governors were replaced by more powerful and competent ones, strong military contingents were sent from the centre for meeting emergency and more administrative pressure was brought by establishing new *thanas*, or else the strength of the existing one was raised in the areas of


173
Incidents of zamindars' rebelliousness are reported, more frequently, during Aurangzab's reign, presumably suggesting an increase in the acts of defiance.\(^2\) Increased recalcitrance seems to have infuriated the emperor who, in desperation, ordered the Governor, to kill the 'mischievous, rebellious and confirmed offenders.'\(^3\) Harshness in the attitude of administration is equally evident from the actions reportedly taken against the defiant, particularly the smaller zamindars.\(^4\) Non-compromising approach is also reflected in the acts of annexation of zamindaris, a consid-

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erable number of which was extinguished during his reign. \(^1\)

The evidence cited above must, however, not lead us to infer that the administration under Aurangzeb dealt with all the defiant zamindars with equal sternness, or that the pressure once exerted was kept up all through his reign. On the contrary the emperor was obliged twice to restore Raja Chandrasen Jhala to the gaddi of Halwad in 1680 and again in 1706 under mounting pressures. The zamindar was also able to extort the privilege of exemption from paying peshkash (1680) and the Thanedari of Mhodasa (1706). \(^2\) Likewise the emperor compromised his position with the de facto chief of Navanagar as mentioned earlier. Besides, the zamindars of Jagat, Nadot, Kolis and the Bhils of many places rose in rebellion and seem to have evaded punishment during the closing years of his reign. \(^3\) During the same emperor's reign the zamindars of Santalpur, Chunwal, Kakrej, Chehermandvi, Atlesar, Tarkesar, Jhalwar and Kalthiawar

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3. Mirat-i Ahmadi I.p. 370
successfully turned exclusively peshkashī zortalab zamin-dars. As such the empire if and when feasible, endeavoured to acquire greater controlling position and react effectively. But where and when such a position was difficult to attain and retain, or else react effectively, it contented itself with the exaction of tribute and retrieve its steps rather than prosecute doubtful contest. By the onset of the eighteenth century rigidity seems to have given way to compromising approach and some laxity. The process found its way into the eighteenth century when it seems to have acquired further momentum and unprecedented dimensions.

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1. *ibid*, Supplement pp.192,196,203,205-7, 212-3 216; yad-dasht: haqiqat-i peshkash-o hasil sarkar Soreth, PC Nos, 21-4; Account, ff.23a-7b.
CHAPTER - II
The Superior Zamindars
(1700 - 50)

In the preceding discussion we noticed the zamindars of various descriptions, having many features in common as also definite signs of differentiation, within the broad category of Superior zamindars. It has also been observed that the empire made elaborate arrangements for adjusting, preserving and maintaining the often discordant interests of the zamindars and its own through various devices but mainly by maintaining constant vigil and continual pressure, the degree of which varied from place to place. It is further noticed that during the course of the seventeenth century some of the zamindars successfully repelled the imperial pressure and effected a favourable change in their position leading to gradual erosion of the inter-strata distinguishing features and the emergence of intra-stratum variations. Having been in nascent stage and confined to select zamindaris, the process found its way into the eighteenth century and, within a few years of its opening, gained momentum and went on unabated, acquiring unmanageable dimensions. Gradually the zamindars greatly disturbed the entire system of balancing interests. There was a progressive decline in the degree of imperial control. Much before the Mughal rule had physically become extinct from Ahmadabad (1753) the Moghul authority ceased to exert any pressure on them. A drastic change in the conditions of holding zamindaris and the imperial attitude towards the zamindars becomes manifest. Without losing their positions, the various sections of Superior zamindars mingled with each other.
and formed a single bloc. These zamindars were locked in contest with the empire, even though they fought among themselves and remained disunited. Under the emerging pattern of relationship, exacting peshkash by force survived as the only point of contact between them and the Mughul state. In this Chapter an attempt is made to discuss the elements of continuity and change in the position and role of the Superior zamindars in their relationship particularly to the Mughul state and in relationship with their own. In view of the emergence of almost uniform conditions of holding zamindaris resulting from the prevalence of similar circumstances, these processes are studied at one and the same place since they relate to all sections of the Superior zamindars.

Following the example of the relatively stronger and the more privileged of them, the rest of the Superior zamindars too ceased to serve the empire. To begin with, the mansabdar-zamindar of Dungarpur withdrew his troops (1701) from the provincial capital in the wake of subedar Shuja't Khan's death (1701) in office.1 With the withdrawal of his troops the last of the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi who had continued to furnish

specified contingents ceased to serve the empire for good.¹

Thus, with the turn of the century even a mansabdar-zamindar could not be forced to serve in contrast to the situation during the seventeenth century when the same and the other zamindars regardless of the award of mansab, had rendered service obediently.

The zamindar-i ismi followed the example set by the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peskhashi. Of the ismis those who were still in imperial service withdrew their troops (1701) which were stationed at Ahmadabad.² With this, all the ismis ceased to serve the empire for good.³

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1. Subsequent upon his withdrawal of troops Prince Mohd. Azam, the next subedar summoned the zamindar. But he did not show up. Later on subedar Firozjang and Shahamat khan led expedition into the territory. The zamindar, however, refused to call on the subedars Account ff. 79ab, 126b, please see also Ibid, f. 105b and Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement p. 225.

2. Account ff. 79b, 112a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement p. 229. Similar inference may be drawn from the detailed description of contemporary events given in our sources. During the course of the seventeenth century the Mirat, on a number of occasions as noted earlier, specifies the zamindars who served the nazims. In subsequent years (1702-50) such references in regard to the above mentioned zamindars disappear altogether. But the Mirat-i Ahmadi, at another place (Ibid, I pp 173-4; Ibid, Supplement, pp. 224-5, 228-9 (and following him the other works of later date trace the development to the year of Aurangazeb's death (1707). See, for example, Treaties, VI, pp. 93, 98, 203, 210, 229; Rasmalai, pp. 556-67. Bombay Gazetteer, II pp. 119, 213, 219. From the evidence cited in the previous and the present chapter, it would appear that the process was a gradual one and did not emerge and develop all of a sudden in 1707.

3. Account ff 79b, 112a
The tendency to abstain from rendering military service is likewise well evident in the case of zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin also, a number of whom had already ceased to serve, as noted in the preceding Chapter. But unlike the above mentioned zamindars this stratum continued to serve for a little longer and withdrew only gradually. Leading ones among them withdrew their troops from the place of postings along with the zamindars of the other sections. But some of them whose zamindaris were located in the areas adjoining the provincial seat of power, responded to the subedar's call (1707) and furnished troops to fight the invading Maratha forces soon after emperor Aurangzeb's death.  

A little later (1714) one Jassa zamindar is noticed in the company of subedar Daoood Khan, informing him of the high handedness of the zamindar of Navanagar. Later on (1724-25), subedar Mubariz-ul mulk is reported to have summoned the zamindars to join his standards for pushing the Marthas out of the subah. Momin Khan the subedar (1737-43) had also asked Jatta, zamindar of Antrasma and the Kolis of Mandwa to present themselves for defending the ford and passage of Kholwad. It was apparently a call for duty but no zamindar is mentioned as having responded to it.  

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1. Account f. 112a.  
4. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II. p. 86.  
No evidence suggesting any actual attempt by the provincial authorities to enforce the military obligation is available in the pages of contemporary, near-contemporary and later works. Instead, the provincial authorities resorted to the collection of peshkash through expeditionary forces specifically led for that purpose. Such expeditions were led by the Nazims, or sometimes by an equally strong commander. Gradually it became a norm. As a corollary to the development which indicates a definite change in the zamindars' attitude, the nature of economic claim, mode and method of its assessment and collection, as would be examined below, underwent a drastic change.

It seems worthwhile to examine the observation of the Mirat-i Ahmadi that "whenever the Nazim-i subah leads an expedition" the zamindars pay peshkash. Presumably no tributs was paid without this coercion and this point itself indicates the process and pattern of the emerging mode of Mughal-zamindar relationship in the context of time and space.

Collection of peshkash through expeditionary forces led by the Nazims as a matter of routine is in direct contrast to the ways and means of collecting it during the seventeenth century when such a course of action was adopted under extraordinary circumstances.


2. That was why, it seems that all the zamindari makans came to be designated mehwas. Account, ff. 112b-13b.

circumstances and against the strong recalcitrants in particular. As the situation, according to the Mirat necessitated the presence of nazims in "each pargana" at the head of a strong force, it emphatically reveals the defunct state of pargana and sarkar level administration with regard to its dealing with the Superior zamindars who had turned bold and strong enough to successfully defy the faujdars and other local officials. The continued necessity of leading expeditions each year for the collection of peshkash is also indicative of the absence of a permanent solution at the local level.

Some information which casts light on the changing attitude of the Superior zamindars and, by implication, on the ineffectiveness of the routine administration, is also available.

1. Beside the expeditions mentioned in the text, the Nazims were also required to undertake such expeditions for reinforcing local administration. Account, ff. 106 b-7a.


3. According to a regional work (Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 150, 156) the faujdars and the thanedars waited for the arrival of watangiri forces in the areas of their respective jurisdiction. At the arrival of such forces they merely assisted the Nazim. The work also reports that from the fourth decade of the eighteenth century active support of the locally influential nobles had become a necessity for the nazims for collecting peshkash from the zamindars of sarkar Soreth. The Mirat also indicates that the local nobles accompanied these forces and mediated between them and the zamindars. Mirat-i Ahmadi II. pp. 93-4, 244.

4. Combining more than one official positions into one hand (i.e. executive and revenue) may, in the present context, be seen as an attempt apparently made for strengthening officials' hand who, on their part, might have clamoured for acquiring such a privileged status. The attempted solution instead of providing a respite to the administration, proved harmful for the state as well as the riaya. For references, please see Political Milieu under Introduction to this work and Chapter VII below.

182
The situation necessitating the leading of expeditions seems to have partly arisen as early as the period of the subedar of Prince Mohd. Azam (1701-1704) and subsequently it came to stay for the rest of the period. The Prince had been able to ensure remittances of peshkash, presumably through routine administrative channel from two of the zamindaran-i ismi and a number of zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin, even though expeditions are not reported to have been led during his period of administration. 1

But the fact that all the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi (100%), 13 of the zamindaran-i ismi (87%) and a considerably large number of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin (74%) evaded payment, speaks of the emerging ineffectiveness areas of the routine administrative channel, demanding intervention of the higher authority. Hence the Nazims had to step in. 2

During the period of administration of Prince Bedar Bakht, the next (interim) subedar "no expedition - no peshkash".

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I. pp. 346-57. The prince had only reluctantly accepted the subedar of Gujarat and shown his unwillingness to continue there, for he had found the subah "not congenial" for himself. Ibid. Also, the prince had to deny the Marathas an entry into South Gujarat, in which parts they roamed all through his period of subedar. Ibid For the remittance of peshkash, please see Account, ff. 126b, 127a; Haqiqat-i naziman-i Gujarat, pp. 53-4; Peshkash docs, P.C. Nos. p8-p19, p25-26, p37.

2. The peshkash documents contain detailed information about peshkash for the years 1701-24 concerning 160 zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin. Taking the giure (160) as 100 for calculation purposes, it would appear that of them only 42 zamindars i.e. 26% remitted the peshkash. Ibid, P.C. Nos. p8-p19, p25-26, p37; Account, ff. 126b-27a.
situation comprehending almost all the Superior zamindars seems to have emerged, and, come to stay. The *Peshkash* documents and other works of the period do not mention any amount of *peshkash* having been exacted from any of the zamindars of *peshkhashi sarkars*, the *ismis* and 160 of the 518 *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* details of whose offering are available for the period covering the *subedar* is of Prince Bedar Bakht and his successor, Ibrahim Khan (1707).  

The *Mirat* too does not mention any *watangiri* expedition as having been led during their days of administration. It may be pointed out in brief that any amount of *peshkash* exacted from the *zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi* and the *zamindaran-i ismi* is invariably associated with the *watangiri* expeditions led


2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; I, pp. 367-74, 374-81, To reinforce the argument it may further be pointed out that the zamindars of Soreth-region are not recorded to have offered *peshkash* during the periods of *subedari* of Ghaziud-din Khan (1708-10), Asad Khan (1712), Dawood Khan (1713-15), Maharaja Ajit Singh (1719-21 i.e. second tenure) and Nizam-ul mulk (1723-24) who are also not mentioned to have led expeditions into the region. *Peshkash* docs, P.C. Nos. p 9, p 14, p 20, p 30, p 39, read with *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I. pp 382-400, 401-13 *Ibid* II. pp 21-38 47-54, and 58-62; But Ghazi-ud dinkhan, Shaha-mat Khan (1713), the Maharaja (2nd tenure) are mentioned to have led expeditions into Ahmadnagar and Jhalawar (*sarkar Ahmadabad*); Daood Khan into *sarkar* Pattan and Nizam-ul Mulk's *naib* Hamid Khan into Jhalawar, *Mirat-i Ahmadi* I. pp 382-89, 398-400, *Ibid* II, pp 21-38, 58-62. The zamindars of the same areas are accordingly reflected to have paid *peshkash* to the same *subedars* *Peshkash* Docs, P.C. Nos. p 8, p10, p12, p25-6, p28, p31.
into their respective territories for the purpose. Likewise the peshkash documents reflect the peshkash as having been exacted only from those zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin whose areas had been visited by the watangiri forces. As such it may be maintained that a no expedition-no peshkash situation had, by and large, emerged from the period of Prince Bedar Bakht's subedari.

The peshkash-i nizamat, an annual claim (peshkash-i harsala) came to be collected irregularly. A careful examination of the recorded expeditions led in prevailing circumstances of no expedition-no peshkash reveals that the expeditionary forces lacked comprehension of the time and space. To begin with, the


But the point in case of zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin may not be pressed too far. Some of them, particularly the ones whose possessions being situated in the area adjoining Ahmadabad were within easy reach, remitted the peshkash regularly, as late as, if not later than 1721-22 without having been forced by the expeditionary forces. Hawazna-i dehsala, dehat pangana haveli Ahmedabad 1127 to 1139 fasli, P.C.

3. An identical situation though on a limited scale, as seen earlier, had started emerging during Prince Mohd Azam's period of subedari.

185
expeditionary forces could not be led each year\(^1\) to realise the *peshkash* which, otherwise, was to be exacted every year. For instance, Prince Mohd. Bedar Bakht and Ibrahim Khan are neither reported to have led any *watangiri* expeditions nor shown to have levied *peshkash* during the periods (1705-8) of their *subedaris*.\(^2\)

Among the *zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi* the zamindar of Dungarpur faced the expeditionary forces thrice in 1709, 1711 and 1722; that of Bhuj only twice in 1720-21 and 1730-31; and the zamindars of Sirohi, Banswara, Ramnagar and Sunt each faced it only once sometime before 1721-22 during the course of 48 years (1702-50).\(^3\) They did not pay any amount during the rest

\(\text{1. Thus during the times of uncertainties at the imperial centre, wars of succession, internal strifes, transfer and forcible eviction of *subedar* from the office, mounting Maratha pressure, other internal engagements such expeditions were not led. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I. pp. 365-77; *Ibid*, II pp. 13-20, 23-4, 27-8, 37-9, 42, 103-6, 155-8, 164, 177-80 etc. Please see particularly, *Ibid*, II pp. 51-3, 58-64, 195-238, 269, 275-6, 397-8, when the expeditions could not be led due to the reasons stated above. The striking capacity of the *watangiri* expeditions might have been conditioned by the resistance put up by the zamindars and the presence and activities of the Marathas in and around the *subah*. The Marathas who had been making inroads into the *subah* since 1701, had become quite active, particularly in Southern Gujarat from 1715 onward. Excepting Shahamat Khan, Mubariz-ul mulk and Maharaja Abhay Singh no other *subedar* could lead expeditions into these parts of the *subah*.}

\(\text{2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I. pp 346-82.}

\(\text{3. *Ibid*, II, pp. 41, 112-3; *Account* ff. 105b,- 11b, 126b; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, Supplement pp. 226, 232, 234, 236, 266. Though the *matalba-i sarkar-i wala* in regards to Dungarpur and Banswada was assigned (1717) in the *tankhwah gagir* of a member of the house of Udaipur, but the *peshkash-i Nizamat* stood due and could not be realized. Later on, Sarbuland Khan (1722-23) forced the zamindar of Dungarpur to accept the payment of the *peshkash*. But in view of the intervention of Rana of Udaipur the zamindar was absolved of the responsibility. The exemption thus granted in the Rana's favour, was never revoked. *Account*, ff. 110a, 118b; *Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat* ff. 60-61; *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp. 45-6.}\)
of the period when expeditions were not led into their lands. As such the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi ceased to be an effective part of the empire before the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, particularly so far as the sharing of their revenues is concerned. 1

1. Thus zamindar of Dungarpur paid peshkash for the last time in 1711. Subsequently the zamindar was forced in 1722 but, as pointed out in the preceding note, the amount was not realized. Sirohi paid it for the last time sometime between the years 1713 and 1716. Ramnagar, Sunt and Banswara made their last offerings sometime before 1721-22. Account. ff. 105b, 110b, 122a, 126b-7a.

The zamindar of Bhuj made his last offering in 1720-21. In the year 1730-31, the territory was invaded again and the zamindar had also agreed to pay 10,00,000 mehmudis. But the nazim demanded more. After a long battle the subedar was forced to beat the treat empty handed. It happened to be the last attempt for realizing peshkash. Later he enjoyed virtual exemption.

It seems to be worth pointing out that the zamindar of Bhuj did not break off his relation with and continued to accept the suzerainty of Mughal empire. The zamindar of Bhuj is reported to have submitted arz-i ali along with 100 asharfis sometime between 1730-1733 during the subedari of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-1737). Raja Lakhpat, the next zamindar sent offerings which consisted of local specialities. He was favoured with the grant of a farman, a khilat and the title of Mirza-Raja. He had also hoped to get the subedari of Thatta which he was not favoured with. Account 1056, 11a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, II p.245. The said zamindar and his successors retained the title even during the British days as is evident from the documents carrying the epithet Mirza Raja Maharaao Shri...... available in the personal archives of the present descendent of the house. Please see also Sorabji Jahangir, Representative Men of India, London. 1887, p 29; For the similar offerings made on earlier occasion Murad's hasb-ul Hukm, May, 1657 op cit; Emperor Murad's farman, 20 Dec, 1658 Op cit; for the occasions when such offerings were to be made, Account, f. 856.
In the same way the *watangiri* expeditions could not be led into the territories of the *zamindaran-i ismi* on regular basis and, therefore, the *peshkash* could not be realized annually. Thus our sources do not mention any such expedition to have been led into their lands during the periods of *subedari* from Prince Mohd. Azam to that of Asad Khan (1702-12) and later on during the tenures of Maharaja Ajit Singh (1719-21, 2nd tenure), Nizam-ul mulk (1723-24), Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37) and during the post-Momin Khan period (1743-50). The other *subedars* who had actually led expeditions, could not manage it on a regular (annual) basis.2 Also, the *watangiri* forces, as and when led, could not march into the territory of each of the *ismis*.3

Putting the information *zamindar-wise* it would be seen.

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2. For example, please see *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; I pp 382-89, 401-13, *ibid*, II pp 39-47; and particularly *ibid*. II pp. 13-20, 27-8, 37-9, 275-76.


188
that the zamindar of Navanagar faced the *watangiri* expeditions on six occasions, that of Rajpipla on four occasions and the ones of Porbandar, Kesoj and Pharkar faced them twice each during the year 1702-50. There were still others who seem to have escaped attention of the *watangiri* forces all through the period.

The *ismis* seem to have ceased to share their revenues with the empire from 1725-26, excepting Navanagar who made its last offering to the *watangiri* forces in 1742. In this way they happened to be next only to the *zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi*.

The position of the *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* with regard to the offering of *peshkash-i nizamat* was not much different from the above discussed constituents of the Superior zamindars. An analysis of the information concerning the *watangiri* expeditions undertaken by the provincial authorities available in the pages of the *Mirat-i Ahmadi* and the details of zamindar wise *peshkash* exacted by *subedars* from the times of Prince Mohd. Azam (1701-4) to those of Nizam-ul Mulk (1723-24) reflected in the *peshkash* papers strongly suggests that the tribute was collected only irregularly. Thus, for instance, the zamindars of Sabarkantha region (*sarkar Ahmadabad*) are shown not to have paid


2. The zamindars of Fatehpur, Pol and Kukramunda are shown to have paid no *peshkash* during the period. *Account*. f. 113b.

3. For details please see the preceding and the following discussion.
peshkash during the periods of administration of Sarbuland khan (1712), Daood Khan (1713-15) and Maharaja Ajit Singh (1715-17) in the peshkash papers¹. Likewise these subedars are not mentioned to have led watangiri expeditions into the region.² Similarly the zamindars of Pattandeo (sarkar Soreth) did not pay peshkash to Ghazi-ud din Khan (1708-10), Shahamat Khan (1711) Sarbuland Khan (1713) and Maharaja Ajit Singh's naib Mehari Ali Khan (1719-20, second tenure).³ The Mirat too does not mention any expedition to have been led into the area held by them.⁴ To put the information briefly, it may be seen that none of the subedars from Prince Mohd. Azam to Nizam-ul mulk (1701-24) could exact peshkash-i nizamat from all of the 160 zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin details of whose offerings are available.⁵

Statistical analysis of the subedar-zamindar-wise information contained in the peshkash papers further clarifies the point under review. None of the 160 zamindars (taken as 100) paid peshkash to Prince Bedar Bakht, Ibrahim Khan and Asaf-ud dawla; whereas Shahamat Khan, Dawood Khan, Maharaja Ajit Singh, Khan-i dawran, Maharaja Ajit Singh (Second tenure),

Muizuddawla and Nizam-ul mulk could exact it respectively from 11 (7%), 5 (3%), 18 (11%), 91 (57%), 75 (47%), 3 (2%), 102 (64%) and 2 (less than 2 %) of the 160 zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin.\(^1\)

Moreover the subedars as pointed out earlier, could not lead expeditions every year and cover the whole of the subah even during the entire duration of their respective tenures.\(^2\)

The watangiri forces, as and when led, did not cover the entire subah and, as mentioned earlier, all the zamindars could not be forced to offer peshkash on every occasion. According to the information contained in the Mirat-i Ahmadi Ghaziuddin Khan led expedition into Sabar Kantha and some other parts of sarkar Ahmadabad; naib-subedar Sarbuland Khan and his naib could cover Chunwal, Sagwara, and Chorasi areas; Dawood Khan visited Sabarkantha, Kathiawar, Halar, and parts of Pattan; Maharaja Ajit Singh covered the zamindaris situated in some parts of sarkar Ahmadabad, Sabarkantha region, Soreth and Halar areas; Khan-i Dawran's naib could not go beyond Baroda, Sabarkantha and

\(^1\) Peshkash Docs, FC Op. cit.

\(^2\) For more information about the areas covered by the expedi­tionary forces please see discussion in the following pages.

191
parts of Soreth. As such all the areas thus covered by expeditionary forces put together, any of the Nazim could not cover whole of subah even during his entire tenure, much less every year.

From the evidence cited above it must, not however, be concluded that the watangiri forces would have succeeded in exacting peshkash from each zamindar of the parts of subah thus visited by them. For instance, Maharaja Ajit Singh led expeditions into Soreth region. But he could not levy peshkash on the zamindars of Dharai, Dhak and Junagadh parganas of the sarkar. Similarly, Khan-i Dawran's naib visited the same sarkar for collecting peshkash. But he failed to capture it from the zamindars of pargana Amreli, Bhimrad, Rajkot etc situated within the same sarkar. Likewise Muizuddawla had not been able to exact peshkash from the zamindars of pargana Ghoga, Baxra, Medra etc situated within the region visited by him. Also the watangiri forces could not necessarily exact peshkash from all zamindars of a pargana, much less of a sarkar, actually visited by them. For

instance, out of 14 zamindars of pargana Banswara (sarkar Soreth) Maharaja Ajit Singh and Khan-i Dawran exacted peshkash from seven zamindars each but Muizuddawla could succeed in capturing it from six only.¹

Out of the eleven zamindars of pargana Ranpur (sarkar Soreth) the above mentioned three subedars could levy peshkash from three, two and nine zamindars respectively.² Likewise out of the 15 zamindars of pargana Pattan, Dawood Khan, the Maharaja, khan-i Dawran naib and Muizuddawla could exact peshkash respectively from 11, 13, 12 and 6 zamindars.³ Evidently coverage of watangiri forces was neither comprehensive and nor even intensive, a situation which must have provided the zamindars an opportunity to evade payment of otherwise a regular claim of Mugal State.

Instances of evading payment of peshkash and offering it only irregularly may further be highlighted by citing a few examples of representative nature for the years 1701-24. Holders of relatively large sized zamindaris in favourable geo-social setting far off the provincial seat of power, like those of Bhimrad, Palitana, Jagat and others (sarkar Soreth) could be forced to pay peshkash only once.⁴ Similarly the zamindars of Sonkhera and Sankhani holding lands in the hilly tract on the outskirts of

4. Ibid P.C. Nos p17- p20. Please see also the zamindars of pargana Laathi, Morwada, Santalpur, Chorwar bandar etc. for the same type of instances. Account. ff. 120b, 123a, 124a.

193
Sarkar Champaner could be oblized to pay it only once during the period. But the zamindars of mawza Limbda of pagana Chhad (sarkar Soreth) holding a small sized zamindari though in a far off area, was forced to surrender tribute four times during the same period. On the other hand, the zamindar of Lakhtar who held his lands in Jhalawad (pagana Viramgaoon) in close proximity to Ahmadabad but noted for its recalcitrant Jhala Rajputs, surrendered peshkash only once. But the zamindars who held their zamindaris in pagana Ahmadnagar, an area by and large plain and relatively within easy reach from Ahmadabad, paid it from there to five times. More particularly mention may be made of the petty zamindars of pagana haveli Ahmadabad who offered peshkash regularly as late as 1723-24, subsequently surrendering it only irregularly under the pressure of arms. It was, evidently, not merely the element of irregularity in leading military expedition that counted but also, and quite prominently the zamindars' own resourcefulness that went a long way in deciding the chances of evading payment of peshkash.

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4. For instance see Bhimji and Ajab Singh, the zamindars of mawza Kaher; Dayal and Ajab Singh of mawza Karaadi; Jassa and Jiwaji etc. holding zamindaris in the pagana. P.C. No. p8.
5. For example, the zamindar of mawza Anwarsej and that of Muzaffarpur paid it the same way. Nawazna-i dehsala dehat pagana haveli Ahmadabad, 1127 to 1139 fasli, P.C.
It may, therefore, be concluded that the collection of *peshkash* depended on leading military expeditions and the zamindars' capacity to resist and evade its imposition. The expeditions, moreover, were led only irregularly. Consequently, the *peshkash* could be exacted only irregularly. It follows that long before the Marathas' emergence as a serious contestant for power on the provincial political scene from 1722-23, the *peshkash-i nizamat* (or, *peshkash-i harsala* as it was termed) which had been a duly established 'annual claim' of empire, acquired the form of a 'casual claim'.

During the post-Muizuddawla period, or for that matter after the Marathas' appearance as serious contender for power (1723-50), the capacity of administration for effecting assessment and collection of *peshkash* deteriorated further. Thus from the table given below it would appear that
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of Subedar</th>
<th>Number of the expeditions led into the parts of .......... led during the tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nizam-ul Mulk¹</td>
<td>Jhalawar (Sarkar) Ahmadabad: one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1723-24)</td>
<td>Sarbuland Khan² (Sarkar) Ahmadabad: six</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                  | (1724-30) Sarbuland Khan² (Sarkar) Bhaucha: three 
|                  | (Sarkar) Soreth: three 
|                  | (Sarkar) Pattan: two 
|                  | (Sarkar) Baroda: one |
| Maharaja Abhaya Singh³ (1730-37) | Sarkar Ahmadabad: one |
|                  | Sarkar Baroda: one |
| Momin Khan⁴ (1737-43) | Sarkar Ahmadabad: five |
|                  | (Sarkar) Pattan: two |
|                  | (Sarkar) Bhaucha: two |
|                  | (Sarkar) Soreth: one |
| Muftakhar Khan⁵ (1743) | Pargana haveli Ahmadabad: one |
|                  | (Pargana haveli) Bhaucha: one |
| Jawanmard Khan⁶ (1743-53) | Sarkar Ahmadabad: four |
|                  | (Sarkar) Pattan: two |
|                  | (Sarkar) Soreth: one |

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 143-4, 183,192-93. Even these expeditions were led to chastise the Marathas and a rebellious noble. The Subedar failed miserably against the Marathas and withdrew from the subah, leaving the affairs in the hands of his naib. During this period the task of collecting peshkash was assigned to leading nobles on ijara. They could not make a headway. For references, please see discussion in Chapter IV below.
5. Ibid. II pp 285-6, 298-9.
The *watangiri* forces could cover much less parts of the areas thus visited by them. Also the *watangiri* expeditions could be led much less frequently during the period (1723-50) as compared to the earlier period (1701-22), presumably due to the internal strifes, activities and presence of Maratha forces that kept the Mughals on a tight rope and the increasing resistance put up by the zamindars.

As compared to the other two constituents of the category of the Superior zamindars, the *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* continued to surrender *peshkash* more often and even after the others had ceased doing it. But more resourceful amongst them could not be forced after the close of the third decade of the century. Withdrawal of this section from the imperial net was a bit slow and gradual.

That the capacity of the provincial authorities to effect collection of *peshkash* from the Superior zamindars had considerably eroded even before the appearance of Marathas as a worth reckoning political power in the *subah* may further be highlighted by examining another piece of information --- zamindar wise amount of *peshkash* which was actually paid. A study of the amount may possibly clarify whether the irregularly levied exactions were inclusive of the dues of the period when the collection had not been effected. It may also be of some use for ascertaining the pattern of ongoing change concerning the magnitude of state demand on zamindars.
On the basis of statistics available for the zamindaris of Durgarpur and Kutch it may be inferred that the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi paid the peshkash which, in comparison to the others happens to be minimal. The zamindar of Dungarpur who had not paid matalba-i sarkar-i wala calculated against the jamā (1,60,00,000 dam) at least during the years 1702-17, paid a total of Rs.200,000 as peshkash-i nizamat during 1702-50 i.e. for a period of 48 years. The annual average (200,000/48) comes to Rs.4166/- as against the required minimum of Rs1.00,000/- per annum i.e. he paid 4.02% of what he was under the obligation to pay.\(^1\) The zamindar of Bhuj surrendered 600,000 jamī (1702-50) which comes to 12500 jamī per annum as against the required minimum of 6,79,440 jamī per annum, he thus paid less than 2% of the what was due.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Account, ff. 79b, 105b, 126b; Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos. 8, 10-12, 14, 16, 10-9, 20,25, 33-4, 37; Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 45-6, Ibid, Supplement pp 226, 234, 238, 266. Even if we donot take into account the period (1722 onward) when (1722) the claim was written off in favour of Rana of Chittor, the zamindar paid Rs. 2 lacs for a period of 20 years i.e. @ Rs1.0,000/- per annum which comes to 10 % i.e., less by 90% of the amount due for the period.

\(^2\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, II 112-13; Account ff. 110b-11a.
Collectively both the zamindars paid 800,000 i.e. 8 1607 (21.13%) as against the required sum of 7,77,440 per annum, paid 21.3% of what was due.

A similar position emerges in regard to the zamindaran-i ismi also. Of the 15 ismis of whom detailed data are available for five1 thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zamindari</th>
<th>Peshkash</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Average per</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>muqarriri-harsala (1701-50) paid</td>
<td>payment</td>
<td>per annum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navanagar</td>
<td>1,50,000</td>
<td>6,77,000</td>
<td>13540</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pol</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunawara</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>1,67,000</td>
<td>3540</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kesoj</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>13,400</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharkar</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>2,77,800</td>
<td>8,66,900</td>
<td>17336</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As compared to the zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkashi who paid 21.3%, the ismis paid 6%. Though both the sections paid much


It must be kept in mind that Navanagar and Lunawara had also captured mal-i wajib paying lands (references follow), and the lands of Pol were located not far off the provincial seat of power.
less than they were under the obligation to pay, the *ismis* bore a little more burden in comparison to the zamindars of *peshkash* sarkars.

From the data of *peshkash* which is available for 160 out of 518 zamindaran-*i* mhain-o kahin\(^1\) it would appear that they too bore much less burden during the years 1704-22 as compared to the first few years (1701-4) of the century. But they bore a greater burden as compared to the other two sections of the category of Superior zamindars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarkar</th>
<th>Prince</th>
<th>Firoz</th>
<th>Shaha-</th>
<th>Dawood</th>
<th>Maharaj</th>
<th>Khan-i</th>
<th>Maharaja</th>
<th>Muiz-ul</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td><em>ZAMINDARI</em></td>
<td>1701-4</td>
<td>1708-10</td>
<td>Khan</td>
<td>1713-5</td>
<td>Singh</td>
<td>1717-9</td>
<td>Singh</td>
<td>1721-2</td>
<td><em>exacted</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>@ per</em></td>
<td>1715-7</td>
<td>1719-21</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
<td><em>exaction</em></td>
<td><em>years</em></td>
<td><em>Total/18</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>annum</em></td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1719</td>
<td>1715-7</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be pointed out in particular that among the representative cases cited in the text we have included only those zamindars who, on their own volition, had remitted *peshkash* during 1701-4. Such zamindars who did not pay *peshkash* either during 1701-4, or else during 1708-10 are not included, as this period is taken as the one when *peshkash* was fixed in accordance with the set procedure. Secondly the zamindars who did not pay at all during 1701-22 are also not included. Explanation follows.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>M. Azam</th>
<th>M. Jang</th>
<th>M. Khan</th>
<th>M. Ajit</th>
<th>M. Dawran</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12AMINDA</td>
<td>1701-4</td>
<td>1708-10</td>
<td>1713-5</td>
<td>1717-9</td>
<td>1721-2</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1715-7</td>
<td>1719-21</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1715-7</td>
<td>1719-21</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
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<td>Amount</td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1715-7</td>
<td>1719-21</td>
<td>1705-22</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Sarkar   | 5. Maqbulabad  | + 6900 | 7000 | 26000 | x | x | 36000 | 45000 | 120990 | 6722 |
| Bharuch  | 6. Gora | + 7000 | 10000 | x | x | x | 17000 | 134000 | 1899 |
| Pargana  | 7. Kakoli | + 230 | 230 | x | 270 | 500 | 1682 | 1682 | 93.4 |
| 8. Raner | + 490 | 490 | x | 490 | x | x | 1000 | 1980 | 110 |
| 9. Mehlol | + 2978 | 3000 | x | x | x | x | 3000 | 3000 | 500 |
| Pargana  | + 6000 | x | x | x | x | x | 6000 | 12000 | 667 |
| Champanar | + 30088/18 | 217202/18 | 12007 | 140 | 140 |

<p>| Total/18 | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pargana(s)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chhad</td>
<td>11. Chhad : 5620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultanpur</td>
<td>12. Sultanpur : 3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranpur</td>
<td>13. Ranpur : 937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastni</td>
<td>14. Hastni : 938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chowk</td>
<td>15. Chowk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangrole</td>
<td>15. Mahyari : 540-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghoga</td>
<td>17. Ghoga : 1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18413</td>
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<td>38501</td>
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<table>
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Above are tabulated representative instances of *peshkash* exacted during 1701-22 from the *zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin* whose possessions were located in central (*sarkar Ahmadabad*), northern (*sarkar Pattan*), southern (*sarkar Bharuch*), eastern (*sarkar Champaner*) and western Gujarat (*sarkar Soreth*). From the data tabulated above it may be inferred that:

Prince Mohd. Azam and Firozjung apparently exacted the same amount as *peshkash*, but in reality the latter's exactions constituted only a fifth of the former's, for the *peshkash* was not exacted during 1705-7 and, therefore, under Firozjung the exaction was to be levied for a period of five years (1705-7 and 1708-10). Also Firozjung could exact *peshkash* from a much lesser number (eight) of the zamindars in comparison to the number (13) of them under the prince.

1. *Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos.* 8, 10-12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 25-6, 32-4.

2. It must be clarified here that the prince had managed exaction on annual basis whereas under Firozjung and his successors the exactions by and large happened to be a one time affair regardless of the duration of tenure of a given *subedar.*
Secondly, it would also appear that after Firozjung almost every subedar, barring a few exceptions realized more amount than their immediate predecessors. As compared to the first recorded (as also the duly fixed) exaction of the century, the hike in subsequent years ranged between 0.7 and 544 percent. Amongst the different subedars Muizuddawla whose tenure extended to almost a year, exacted the maximum of amount, viz. 0.7 % to 544% more (serial no.5)1.

1. As compared to the first exaction, Muizuddawla levied more from 12 (serial Nos. 1-3, 5-9, 14-17), less from one (serial no. 13) and equal from two (serial no. 10-11) of the zamindars. Though some of his predecessors also exacted more than what had been exacted earlier, the hike under Muizuddawla in the context of duration of his tenure, was much more than under others. Also, Muizuddawla exacted peshkash relatively from a larger number of zamindars than any of his predecessors. The Mirat also speaks of the stiff attitude with which Muizuddawla had dealt with the zamindars. (Ibid II pp 43-5), the hike in the amount appears to denominate the same. Muizuddawla's tenure was followed by large scale Maratha penetration into the subah having paralysing effects on the wroking of the provincial administration. These developments, to a great extent explain the cause for acceleration in the recalcitrance and the armed resistance put up by the zamindars during the post-Muizuddawla period which witnessed withdrawal of imperial control from rural Gujarat. For references see discussion in the following pages.
But the hike noted above is more deceptive than real. A closer view of the evidence suggests that the net burden of *peshkash* on the zamindars had rather declined during 1705-22. A comparison of the amount of *peshkash* for the period 1701-4 (column no1.) with the average per annum amount (column no1.0) paid during 1705-22 clearly suggests that each of the zamindars paid less during the later years. Thus the zamindars of Maqbulabad (serial no.5) and Ghoga (Serial no.17) proportionately paid the largest sums. But these zamindars too paid less, Maqbulabad paid less by 4% and Ghoga paid less by 59% i.e. they respectively paid 96% and 41% during 1705-22 of what they had paid earlier (1701-4). The rest of the zamindars paid much less, viz., 11% to 58% of the amount paid earlier.

A *sarkar*-wise analysis of the *peshkash* figures suggests that the highest amount was exacted from *sarkar* Bharuch (63.6%) followed by *sarkar* of Ahmadabad (32.6%) Pattan (28.25%), Soreth (21.8%) and Champaner (13%). But if we exclude the *peshkash* exacted from the highly vulnerable towns of Maqbulabad and Ghoga, then Ahmadabad (32.6%) replaces Bharuch as the highest paying *sarkar* and Soreth takes the position of the lowest paying. In other words, the nearer the area to Ahmadabad, the higher the amount of *peshkash*, and the further off the area, the less this amount.

1. Maqbulabad, a town and trading centre was located in plain area and had no fortification. It was within easy reach from Ahmadabad. Ghoga happened to be a port town, situated in a highly vulnerable position.

2. Thus zamindars of Bharuch *sarkar* paid only 27% and those of Soreth 9.3% if the *peshkash* levied from the towns is excluded.
A comparison of the amount levied from the zamindars of sarkar Soreth (21.8%) a difficult region, with the one levied from the zamindars of mainland (40%) also suggests that the zamindars of the former region paid less by 78.2% and those of the latter by 60%. Elements of proximity to the provincial seat of power and accessibility of the area presumably constitute the reason for the difference.

On the whole the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin could be forced to pay 36% during 1705-22 which is less by 64% in comparison to the preceding years of the century. Thus this section of the Superior zamindars paid more than the zamindaran -i sarkarat-1 peshkashi and the zamindaran-i ismi. The burden of peshkash came to be associated in reverse order—higher the status and more the resources of a zamindar the lighter the burden of peshkash actually borne and vice versa. True, the data on which this general statement is based pertains only to about a third of the total strength of the class of Superior zamindars, one might yet tentatively, and perhaps speculatively, extend it to the entire class.

Some idea of the way the amount of peshkash came to be determined, may also be formed from the available information.

During the closing years of Mughal rule the amount came to be

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1. Please also see the zamindars of sarkar Champaner, paying only 13%. Reason is not far to seek - it was difficult from the point of view of access and located in a distant part, holding a position identical to that of Soreth in this regard.
fixed in accordance with the exigency of time and the nazim's own strength (b'mutaqaaza-i waqt w quwwat-1 nazim) as different from the zamindar's capacity.¹ For instance, the zamindar of Bhuj who was required to pay 6,79,440 jami annually, agreed to pay only 600,000 jami when pressed in 1720-21.² Later on (1730-31) the zamindar agreed to surrender 10,00,000 jami, if the subedar was agreeable not to march on Bhuj. But the subedar demanded more. The zamindar, then, resisted the very imposition of any amount, successfully forcing the subedar to return empty handed.³

From amongst the ismi zamindars Dawood Khan could persuade the Jam of Navargar (1714) to offer a meagre sum of Rs.77,000/- as against Rs1.,50,000 which had been fixed during former days.⁴ The zamindar fought Maharaja Ajit Singh (1717) for several days with guns and cannons "due to the demand of a large sum of money", finally agreeing to pay Rs.90,000/- only.⁵ Five year later (1722) the amount was fixed

1. Account. ff. 15a, 74b; Mirat-i Ahmadi i.p 174, ibid, Supplement, pp 225, 229; Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat f 69
2. Account ff 110b-11a
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, ll, pp 112-3. According to a local legend which is still current in the region, the Bhuj Army captured the mahi-o maratib and the Nazim's drum during the fight. These are preserved at district museum Bhuj. Similarly the zamindars of Ramnagar and Sunt paid a reduced amount which was settled on the spot. Account, ff 110a,127a.
4. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1, pp 409-10; Akhbarat. No. 2489, 7th Shoban, 3rd R.Y Farrukhsiyar ibid. No. 2519, 5th Shawwal, 3rd R.Y. Farrukhsiyar. The Subedar had also helped the zamindar against a family member contesting for the gaddi.
5. Mirat-i Ahmadi, ll, p 11; Account, f. 105b; Peshkash Docs P.C., No. 39 b.
at Rs. 60,000/- which the subedar collected peacefully. 1 Later in the year 1724 the Jam who could reoccupy gaddi with the help of subedar volunteered Rs. 300,000/-, the highest sum ever paid by the zamindar during 1700-50. 2 During the year, it may be seen, the subedar commanded a large army which was specially financed by the imperial centre, and therefore could collect peshkash to his "heart's content". 3 The following year (1725) the same subedar who had, in the meantime, suffered considerably in strength could exact Rs. 1,00,000 from the same Jam. 4 On the last occasion (1742) the zamindar resisted impositions of peshkash and after giving a battle for 20 days agreed to surrender Rs. 50,000/- only which amount the subedar willingly accepted due to "exigency of time". 5

Some information on the ways of determining the peshkash exacted from the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin is also available. From the extant evidence it would appear that the

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 44; Peshkash Docs, P.C. No. 39 b.
3. Ibid, II pp. 54, 79-80, 94.
4. Ibid, II p. 98.
5. Ibid II p. 276. Likewise, the Subedars had to be contented with a meagre of Rs. 500 (1716) and Rs. 1500/- (1721) which the zamindar of Phakar agreed to pay as against the previously assessed amount of Rs. 15,000/-. Also, the Zamindar of Porbandar who had captured mal-i wajib paying lands paid, on different occasions @ Rs. 2,500/- mehumudis which amount he was required to pay in addition to rendering military service. The position in regards to other ismis was almost the same. Account, f 113a; Peshkash Docs, P.C. 16, p 19, p 25, p 33; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p 248; Ibid, II pp. 11, 98-9.
assessment of tribute involved hardly any calculation based on
the paying capacity of the zamindars; the amount in their case
also, was often the outcome of the Nazim's and the zamindars' evaluation of each other's strength.

During the first few years of the century, necessary exercise in calculation seems to have been undertaken for determining the amount of peshkash. The zamindars had remitted the duly assessed amount through routine administrative channel during prince Mohd. Azam's period of subedari (1701-4). Khan Firozjang, the next subedar (1708-10) to levy exactions, collected almost the same amount which was fixed under the prince. Also, there are a few instances showing some of the succeeding subedars as collecting the amount which had been fixed during the preceding years. The observation of the Mirat-i Ahmadi that the nazims extorted "befitting" and "suitable" peshkash in accordance with the capacity of each (zamindari) unit (farakhor halat-i har makan) presumably relates to the seventeenth and the early years of the eighteenth century.

But the position concerning the mode and method of assessment gradually showed signs of deterioration. Dawood Khan's laxity allowed the rebels to go unpunished, and the zamindar...

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1. Please see serial no. 3-4 and 7-9 in the table above, and Peshkash Docs, P.C. no. p8, p10, p12.


dars to pay less than they had volunteered under the preceding nazims. Under the Khan and his successors the amount came to be increasingly fixed and realized in round figures: Muizuddawla (1721-22) who had earned the reputation of a tough man during his tenure as diwan-i subah (1715-17) and naib-subedar (1717-19) fixed and collected peshkash, particularly on the mainland, with a stiff attitude. He seems to have applied the sword and fire recklessly, if and when a zamindar ventured to resist. It was under him that the administration, as noted earlier, fixed and exacted the largest amounts which are, by and large in round figures. But the amount fixed as peshkash-i muqarrari-i harsala (i.e. peshkash-i nizamat) under him, could not be realized under his immediate successor and when it was realized it was much less. Sarbuland Khan the next subedar, settled and realized peshkash "according to his heart's content" during the first two

1. Ibid I pp 412-3; for a comparative position of the amount, please see table above and the references concerning Navanagar cited in the preceding discussion. See also Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos. p12 and p30.

2. See the table above and for further references, Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos. p10-p12,p15,p18,p28-9 etc.

3. For instance, see Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 9(Palitana), 10(Munjpur), 17(Antrasma), 41(Pethapur), 43-9(Dabhali), 5! (Petlad and Dhawan) etc.

4. See the table above and the discussion based on it in the preceding pages. For more references, please see also Peshkash Docs, P.C. Nos. p8-10, p12, p14,p20, p25-38.

years (1724-6) of his administration. But later (1726-30) the subedar had to face stiff opposition put up by the zamindars. During the subedari of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37) rebellious elements could gather enough courage to attack subedar's army, and sneak into the provincial capital. During his administration the state officials who had contracted peshkash on ijara failed to effect assessment and collection of peshkash and consequently suffered losses. Momin Khan, the next subedar (1737-43) had to lean heavily on the support of the Marathas and some locally

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1. Some idea as to how the subedar dealt with a defiant zamindar (1725) for settling the amount may be formed from the incident of Wadhawan (sarkar Ahmadabad). Zamindar of the place put up armed resistance with the help of his tribesmen and the Kolis. Having not been able to dissuade the determined Nazim, he negotiated peace. The Nazim decided to charge not less than rupees three lakhs as penalty for he had stood on the trench for three days. The zamindar helpless as he stood, agreed to surrender the dictated sum in addition to the unspecified amount of peshkash. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 93-4. The author of Mirat-i Mustafabad (p. 151) adds that the zamindar had already expelled thanedar and occupied the thana for himself. It may here be clarified that the authorities were empowered to collect "whatever booty may be collected from the recalcitrant zamindars". Q. Ahmed, "dastur-ul amal-i salatin", Proc. I.H.C, XXI, p. 353. Despite his efforts to extract more from the zamindars, and encroachments upon the paibagi khalsa and jagir lands, the subedar could hardly collect sufficient funds. He found it hard to pay salaries to his soldiers, Mirat-i Ahmadi; II, p. 113.

2. For instance, Mirat-i Ahmadi; II, pp. 93-4, 96, 102-4, 108.


4. Ibid, II, pp.172-73; the subedar continued to retain the Khalsa, paibagi and jagir lands which had already been encroached upon. Still he complained of sharp decline in the income of the subah B N Reu, "Some more farmans of Maharaja Abhay singh of Marwar regarding his Gujarat campaign," Proc, I.H.C, 1948, p1.12. The Mirat-i Ahmadi also states (1737) that most of the parganas had turned zortalab, ibid, II. p1.64.
influential nobles for effecting assessment and collection of peshkash. The zamindars appeared to be all the more determined to fight before agreeing to pay. The subedar, therefore, could assess peshkash "according to exigency of time" and collect only "more or less" (kam-o besh) amount. Then, during the subedar of the last Mughal Governor, Jawanmard Khan Babi (1743-53), in particular and the post-Muizuddawla period (1723-50) in general exactions were commonly determined and levied in accordance with the "exigency of time", "exigency of situation" and the "Na-zim's own strength" as distinct from the zamindar's capacity to pay.

As such the peshkash was more a matter of bargain than one of conformity with the established rules. The mode of collecting it is remincent of the one adopted for zortalab zamindars. Also the line of distinction based on service and peshkash, the basis and mode of its calculation and collection that had existed during the heyday of Mughal rule, had almost become extinct. The shade of distinction based, particularly, on the varying degree of autonomy seems to have vanished. Moreover, the

2. Ibid, I, p. 258. In the year 1742 the same work (ibid, I, p. 253) describes all the mahals "incomeless" see also, Ibid, I, p.261; Rasmala, p.360.
4. Later, the British found that the (superior) zamindars enjoyed complete autonomy, independent of outside interference and the possessions were subject to the payment of a nominal quit rent.
zamindars, whether *ismis* or the *mahin-o kahin*, endeavoured to transform the nature of imperial claim from *mal-i wajib* to *peshkash*, for a considerably large number of them surrendered a single amount which was reflected as *peshkash*.1 As such the *ismis* and many *mahin-o kahin* zamindars acquired the status which otherwise was enjoyed by the zamindars of *peshkashi* sarkars.

The next step of the Superior zamindars was to seek to destroy the symbols of Mughal administrative machinery; the *thananas*, the head quarters of the *faujdars* and the check-points. As these symbols of imperial control were gradually erased, the zamindars felt ever more free to choose their path of action.

The zamindars of *peshkashi* sarkars were spared even this effort for no *faujdar* was maintained in these zamindaris.2

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1. The exacted amount from all the *ismis* is reflected either as *peshkash* and penalty, or simply *peshkash* in direct contrast to the earlier practice of reflecting the same as *hasil* and *peshkash*. Similarly the levies exacted from the *mahin-o kahin* zamindars in considerably a large number of cases, are shown as *peshkash* only, or else *peshkash* and *khichri* (i.e., amount levied from the *raiyati* portions which were otherwise subject to the payment of *hasil* but had been encroached upon by the zamindars. *Account*, ff. 109a-11b, 126b, 127b; 241a, 275a, 277a, 300a, 304a, 367a; *Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat*, ff. 60-1, 69-80; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, pp 41, 45-6, 98-9, 112-13, 258. *Ibid*, Supplement p 205-6, 227, 230-33; *Peshkash Docs*, *P.C.* Nos. p 28-30, p33,p36. As such the distinction based on *mal-i wajib* and the *peshkash* got blurred and in a number of cases vanished completely.

2. The empire made an unsuccessful attempt to appoint a *qiledar* at Ramnagar *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, p.41. The *waqai-nigar* could not be maintained at Dungärpur after 1701. *Account*, f. 26a. But the land revenue grants made in favour of a Jain trader at Mt. Abu (*sarkar* *Sirohil*) by Aurangazeb survived the fall of Mughal empire. For references, please see Revenue Grantees, Chapter V below.
Their refusal to render military service followed by their successful endeavour to evade payment put them on an almost equal footing with the provincial authorities. No reference is available to suggest any effective link between them and the provincial authorities during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, except an unsuccessful attempt to levy *peshkash* from the zamindar of Kutch in 1730-1.

The *Zamindaran-i ismi* also appear to have endeavoured to overthrow the symbols of imperial control. The zamindar of Navanagar sought to retrieve to his earlier status of a *peshkashi sarkar*. Soon after the death of Aurangzeb the zamindar reoccupied Navanagar, the headquarter of *faujdar* and, formerly, the seat of *gaddi* and raised strong fortifications around it. He is reported to have expelled the *faujdar*, *Qazi*, *muhtasib*, *amil*, *amin* and other officials like *tehsildar*, *darogha* of mandis; the officials posted at the mint and the pearl fisheries. Sometime after 1716-17 the zamindar encroached upon *jagir* lands of imperial *mansabdars* and the *paibaqi* lands situated within the *sarkar*. But the zamindar did not deem it either necessary or

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2. The document entitled *yad dasht: Jâma pargana haveli Islam-nagar waghaira, fasl-i kharif, 1128 fasli*(P.C. Nos. p3 and 39a) specifies the *mehsul* from the *paibaqi* and the *jagir* lands for the year 1128-fasli/1716-17 AD. Therefore the observation of the *Mirat-i Ahmad* that the Jam occupied the lands soon after Aurangzeb's death may not be taken literally. *Ibid*, 1, p. 285; *Ibid, Supplement*, p220.
possible to overthrow all symbols of subordination. According to the Mirat-i Ahmadi what is left of the former regulations is this: that a permit of goods despatched to Islamnagar (Navananagar) is accepted in its mandis. The traders are not molested for taxes.¹ The Nazims who led watangiri expeditions into Navanagar donot seem to have pressed for his eviction from his unauthorised acquisitions. Similarly the ismi zamindars of Rajpipla, Mohan, Lunawara, Atlesar and other places expelled the faujdars and either occupied the faujdari head-quarters or razed them to the ground.² Also the zamindar of Porbandar expelled Mughal officials from the port and the fort and occupied them for himself sometime before 1724-25.³ The zamindar of the place (Rana of Porbandar) also acquired the thanas of Ranavao, Adwana, Miani, Navi (a port), Gariadhar and Madhopur.⁴

¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p.286; Ibid, Supplement, p.220. Moreover the zamindar does not appear to have succeeded in re-establishing his control over all the members of his family who in their capacity as zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin paid peshkash directly to the watangiri forces as late as, if not later than 1721-22 Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash waghaira, zamindaran-i subah Gujarat, P.C. Nos. 39-40.


⁴ Tarikh-i Soreth, pp. 52, 86, 252; Wilberforce, History of Kathiawad, p .152.
Vikramjit who succeeded to the gaddi of Porbandar after his father's death in 1728, conquered the isolated thanas of Kutiyana and annexed to his principality.1

Like the ismis, the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin also sought to destroy the symbols of Mughal administrative machinery. Attributing the cause of this development to the weakness of nazims and want of military discipline the Mirat observes that the zamindars gradually demolished the thana-fortresses, or else they captured the places and settled down as residents there.2

According to the detailed information available in the same work zamindars of Prantij, Bhel, Harsol, Aseelnagar, Palitana and some other places destroyed thanas and strongholds of faujdars.3

The thanas of Pethapur, Piplapur and Sadra were occupied and converted into shops by the zamindars.4 The zamindars of Kathiawad, Jhalawad, Ahmadnagar, Jagat, Talaja, Chorwarbandar (Port), Tarkeshar, etc. pulled down, or else occupied the administrative fortresses located within their respective zamindaris.5

1. Tarikh-i Soreth, p. 86; Mirat-i Mustfabad, pp 298-9; Bombay Gazetteer, VIII. pp. 302. For a general view of the zamindars' acquisition of forts etc. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1. pp 173-74.


other hand, the zamindars of Gariadhar, Chhad, Talaja (a port) and Oplota instead raised fortifications.\(^1\) The zamindar of Sehore founded (1717) and developed a new fortified port town, Bhaonagar, occupied Lollyana— the most important Mughal outpost of the region, called doorway of Soreth.\(^2\) Some of the faujdars and thanedars are also reported to have left the places, other

failed to reach the place of their charge and some of them were bullied down by the zamindars and still other assumed independence.\(^3\) As a result most of the thana - fortresses passed into the zamindars' hands.\(^4\)

Some of the zamindars raised fortresses and fortified their watan towns and villages on the pretence of defence


\(^1\) Ibid, Supplement, p. 218; Account, ff 124b, 126a; Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, pp 296, 301.

\(^3\) Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, p 302. Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 152-58. The latter work notes that Asad Ali Khan (d. 1726). faujdar of Soreth, had lost control over the outlying thanas - Mangrole, Kutiyana, Una, Deluda, Solapara and Samna. They had become independent. The more distant thanas of Mahua, Doretha, and some others in the central peninsula had long been independent of the faujdar. The work further remarks that the thanedars not merely disobeyed the faujdars but also opposed them and even fought against them.

against the Marathas. Still others enterenched themselves behind strong fortifications even without such a pretence, Bahadur Khan (d.1728), faujdar of Soreth is reported to have permitted the Kathis to build a fortress at Jaitpur. Evidently the imperial policy of demolishing and occupying the zamindars' forts and fortresses and instead raising its own strongholds to keep them within bounds, was virtually reversed and its achievements were accordingly undone.

Besides, the empire seems to have been wanting in providing necessary security to the zamindars. Simultaneously it


3. Tarikh-i Soreth, p. 82.

4. The principality of Ramnagar was attacked twice in the year 1672 by the Marathas who succeeded in capturing it in the second attempt. Ramdeo II, the son and successor of the exiled zamindar Raja Somdeo (also known as Somshah), managed its recovery with the Kolis' help in 1679-80, after he had failed to seek help from the Mughals. J. N. Sarkar, Shivaji and his times, pp. 186, 219; G.S. Sardesai, New History of Marathas (1600-1707), I, 2nd print, 1957, pp '103, 208, 226, 229. Occupation of Ramnagar by Marathas gave Shivaji a safe and easy route from Kalian to Surat and laid that part helplessly open to invasions from the South. Please see also, History of Administration of Dharampur State (prant Dharampur), From 1262 to 1937, pp. 15-17. Sometime before the year 1745 the zamindari was again occupied by the Marathas and only its part was restored to the zamindar in 1758-59. R. Bahadur Ganesh, Chimanji Vaid, (ed.) Selection from the Satara Raja and the Peshwa Diaries, III, Balaji Bajirao Peshwa, Vol. I, Bombay, 1907, Doc. No. 99 of 1758-59, p. 73. Similarly, Marathas attacked Dungarpur and Banswara in 1728-
could not effectively govern inter-zamindar relationship and apply a restraining hand. Therefore, the extent of sway of zamindars' rights came to depend on the ability of the zamindar himself.

A change in the ways and means of acquiring and extending sway of rights thus becomes increasingly evident during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. With no effective power to keep them within bounds the zamindars turned against their brethren. Consequently the zamindaris of some of them were eliminated and some of them came to acquire a sub-ordinate position thus giving rise to sub-infeudation. But before analysing the process of relegation of some of the zamindars to a sub-ordinate position in a free for all situation it seems worthwhile to ascertain its existence during the days of relative stability.

Evidence suggests the presence of a zamindar as an independent holder of makan-i zamindari and of a dependent zamindar belonging to another caste within the same makan even during the opening years of the eighteenth century. The zamindari-makan of Roopram of mawza Amod (pargana Kadi) consisted of

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29 forcing them to pay Rs. 113000 and 50,000 respectively. RBG. Chimanji Ved, & DB ' Paranvis (ed.) Selection from the Satara Raja And the Peshwa Diaries 1, Shahu Chhatrapati, Poona; 1907, Doc No. 219 (1728-29), pp. 101-2. The zamindar of Banswara was again humbled to surrender khandni (security money) in 1748. Selection from the Peshwa Raja and the Peshwa Diaries-III op. cit, p. 26. For further references see discussion in the following pages.
six villages which are specified in the document.¹ One Akraj (Koli) held mawza Santhanl in the same makan.² However, Roopram was treated as the zamindar of the makan while Akraji held only a dependent position within the zamindari, presumably under the zamindar.³ Similarly, one mawza Lakhpatt out of 34 villages forming one makan-i zamindari of Amar Singh zamindar, was held by Abdul Khan the same way as described above.⁴ The mawza Kel too is shown as the talluqa-i Musalmanan within the zamindari of Ajab Singh.⁵ The three subordinate holders of the villages within the zamindari makans (also called talluqa-i zamindar) held by "zamindars" were not recognized as zamindaran-i mhin-o

1. P.C. (Kadi) No.4.
2. Ibid. The entry is made as under:
   Taalluqa-i Roopram Mawza Amod
   6 villages
   Amod, Palaj, Kankadan, Mankaj, Sathal, Manknos,
   Akraji.
3. The document entitled yad-dasht: Peshkash-zamindaran (R. No.66, Pune) dated 1705-6 records the remittance of peshkash in the following way: Roopram, zamindar mawza Amod, Six villages : Rs. 2750/-, -az mawza Santhal Rs. 390/-. Apparently, Roopam remitted the total sum of peshkash(2750/-) due from his zamindari. He paid Rs. 2360/- on (6-1) 5 of his villages while the rest (Rs. 390/-) was contributed by dependent Koli, holding the 6th village.
5. Ibid.
kahin nor their possessions counted as separate makans.¹

How and when did the above mentioned developments take place? Our sources are completely silent on the matter. However, from prince Murad's Nishan and emperor Shah Jahan's farman concerning the zamindari of Dantiwara it would appear that the imperial government could place the zamindar of one makan under the zamindar of the other. The zamindari of Dantiwara (one makan) was granted to the zamindar of Sirohi on condition of ensuring safety of passengers and traders passing through the former territory.² Likewise, emperor Aurangzeb had granted 12 zamindari villages of pargana Kutyana (sarkar Soreth) as "ina'm b' tariq-i zamindari" to the brother of one Sheikh Md. Hafiz for suppressing a rebel (mutamarrid...mufsid) perhaps the rebellious zamindar, and maintaining specified contingents to serve the faujdar-i sarkar.³

Some of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin could be placed under some noble favoured with the position of watandari (?). Masum Quli Khan, naib-faujdar of pargana Rajkot was granted watandari

1. Ibid. Nos. 1 to 7; Account ff 121a, 309b. The two sources do not count the holdings of sub-ordinate zamindars as separate makans, particularly the latter work which lists all the makans of pargana Kadi, does not mention the these sub-zamindars at all.

2. See texts of the Nishan and farman in Vir Vinod III pp. 1102-4.


221
of the same pargana in recognition of his appreciable act of
eliminating the leading zamindar of the place during emperor
Shahjahan's reign. Likewise, Jawanmard Khan Babi (senior) was
granted watandari of (pargana) Radhanpur during Emperor Farrukhs Syar's reign. Later on Jawanmard Khan Babi, (the Junior)
was favoured (1731) with the watandari of pargana Badnagar
by maharaja Abhay Singh, the subedar designate, for assisting
him against Mubariz-ul mulk, the dismissed defiant Governor.
What kind of rights did the watandar enjoy is not known. However
they seem to have been placed over and above the zamindars of
the concerned area, and were themselves required to pay pesh-

kash.

But the mode of extending the area of influence and
acquiring additional rights is distinct during the eighteenth from
that of the seventeenth century. Thus the zamindar of Bhuj en-
croached upon the Waghela's possessions in the adjoining sarkar
Pattan, occupying pargana Tharad, some villages in parganas of

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4. At the time the Babi chief was granted watandari of Radhan-
pur some reduction(tatkif) was made in the jama of the
pargana, presumably to adjust the watandars rights. Ibid, 
Supplement. Pp. 202-3. The Babis continued to hold the
watandari possessions for the rest of the period. For the
watandar paying peshkash, Ibid, 11, P. 144.
Santalpur and Morwara beside the lands in the adjoining subah Thatta sometime before 1720-21. The subedar who visited the zamindari (1720-21) at the head of a strong wاطangiri force, did not bother the zamindar to vacate the un-authorised possessions which he continued to hold. Similarly the zamindar of Sirohi continued to hold 60 villages in pargana Deesa which he had occupied in a likewise manner around the year 1717. On the other, the zamindar lost part of his lands to the house of Jodhpur. In the same way zamindar of Sunt lost his valuable possessions i.e. plains to the ismi zamindar of Cheharmandvi. The territory of Sunt shrunk to the immediate surroundings of the capital city.

Likewise the ismi zamindars of Lunawara that of Porbandar extended their area of control. The Rana of Porbandar took Kutiyana from the Qasbati zamindars of the place. He bribed the desai of Mangrole and took hold of Madhopur and its depend-

1. Account, ff. 110a, 111a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 226-7; For a similar act on the part of zamindar but followed by quick action leading to his eviction from the unauthorised occupations during Akbar's reign, please see Akbarnamah, III, pp. 524, 530; Tabqat-i Akbari, II, pp. 386-7; Account f 110b.

2. Account, f 110a.


5. Tarikh-i Soreth, P. 86.
ent villages in 1725. The Rana is reported to have acquired all the villages between Madhopur, Chhaiyan and Porbandar. The zamindar of Rajpipla expelled the imperial officials from Nadot (1729) and brought the area under his control.

The stronger ones among the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin too did not lag behind in the ongoing process. Some stray pieces of information suggesting, though indirectly, the existence of a zamindar holding sub-ordinate positions under others, are available for the third decade of the eighteenth century. In contrast to the usual practice of reflecting a zamindar zamindari-wise amount of peshkash, the Account sometimes brackets a number of zamindari makans together as having been assessed on all the zamindaris thus bracketted together, but collected from a duly specified zamindar. The peshkash document, in a likewise manner, brackets eight maken-i zamindari together along with the peshkash noted separately against each of the makans but, then, the sum total of the peshkash is reflected against zamindar Dayal.

1. Ibid, pp. 84-86; Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 151-2.
2. Tarikh-i-Soreth, Pp. 52, 92; Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, pp. 115. Between the year 1723-33 the Jethwas, tribesman of the zamindar of Porbandar, are reported to have acquired territories adjacent to these zamindaris. Ibid, VIII, p. 298.
4. Account, ff 11b, 117b, 366a, 368a -69b.
and other who held zamindaris amongst them. According to another document the zamindar of Wadhawan, Arjun Singh, paid peshkash to Dawood Khan (1713-15) on his duly specified zamindari, i.e. Wadhawan. But during Muizuddawla's period the peshkash from the zamindaris of Karanpur (Rs.75/-) and Bans (Rs.225/-) along with from Wadhawan (Rs.9700/-) was collected through (ma'rfat) Arjun Singh only. It suggests that the zamindars who paid peshkash on behalf of other zamindars also, had acquired some authority over them and this seems to have carried the state's approval.

Some specific information showing the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin turning against each other is available in the works of a little later date. Bhao Singh, the zamindar of Bhaonagar, is reported to have encroached upon the territory of parganas of Ghoga, Dholqa and Dhandoqa, forced the zamindars of the places to pay him tribute (1739) and, finally expelled them from their respective possessions. Some of the zamindars of

3. The Mirat-i Ahmadi, a contemporary work, does not specify particular zamindars involved in the acts of encroachments. But the work does mention the zamindars in general making illegal exactions and extending sway of their rights. Ibid, I, p. 174.
Ghoga became tributary to the Kathi zamindars of Kathiawad.\(^1\) The Ahirs, Kolis and Bareas of Kathiawad are reported to have enlarged their possessions at the expense of their neighbouring zamindars during Farrukhsiyar’s reign.\(^2\) The zamindar of Bhaonagar did not spare even his own bhayads and occupied Tarpat, holder of which had been in direct relationship with the state.\(^3\) He also took away zamindaris in pargana Santalpur from their Koli zamindars and harassed the zamindars of Laathi.\(^4\) Likewise a brother of the zamindar of Halwad established his authority over the Khanwad (Kathi) zamindars of Saela. Subsequently he established himself at the place as a raja, independent of Halwad. Sometime during the fifth decade of the century he successfully brought his brother Gaj Singh of Halwad under his control.\(^5\) During the same decade Nagar Brahmans of Mangrole were deprived of their possessions by Maliks and Rajputs; the Waghelas also

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1. *Rasmala*, p. 146; *Tarikh-i Soreth*, p. 82.

2. *Tarikh-i Soreth*, p. 82, Hamilton Walter (*op. cit*, i, pp. 644-5) states that they acquired Dhandopur, Sudama, Chhotola, Mawar, Bewar, Channora and Arunpur.


5. *Tarikh-i Soreth*, pp. 98-9; *Mirat-i Mustafabad*, p. 251. Jawannard Khan Babi (Junior), the last Mughal Governor and founder of the Nawabi of Rahanpur, reportedly helped Gaj Singh regain Dharangdhara.
lost their zamindaris to the Kahtis around the same period.\(^1\)

Bhagat Singh Waghela lost Kalor in 1728. In his turn he captured Lambodra from Arjun Singh, a Koli and occupied the place for himself.\(^2\)

Some idea of the process and causes of the passing of the weaker zamindars under the stronger ones may be formed with the help of contemporary and near-contemporary evidence.

The process of passing of Dungarpur and Banswada into the tutelage of the house of Chittor suggests that even the imperial authority could itself be instrumental in letting the stronger zamindar establish his sway over the weaker one. Pursuing a carrot and stick policy towards the house of Udaipur during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the empire had used Dungarpur and Banswara as pawns for regulating Agra-Udaipur relationship.\(^3\) But with the assigning of the two principalities

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Rasmala}, p. 266; \textit{Treaties}, VI, p. 24.
\item Zamindars of Dungarpur, Banswada and Sirohi had, before their acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty, owed their allegiance to the house of Chittor, the relationship being based mainly on political affiliations and matrimony. Even after their submission to empire, their position was considerably influenced by the state of relationship subsisting between the Mughals and the house of Chittor. Thus in his apparent attempt at isolating Udaipur from its allies, Emperor Akbar singled out the three chiefs for doing homage. (1576-77) and married the daughter of the zamindar of Dungarpur, the strongest of the three. (\textit{Akbarnamah}, I, pp. 181-90, 195-96; Kr. R. A. Khan, \textit{op. cit}, pp. 32-6). Moreover, Rana pratap's brother Jagmal who had entered into imperial service was assigned \textit{jagir} in the zamindari of Sirohi, a step
\end{enumerate}
In the tankhwah jagir of a cadet of Chittor in 1717 and subsequently (1730-31) the writing off peshkash-i nizamat in favour of the Rana, the two principalities could never return to the imperial fold. Likewise the zamindari of Sirohi which was assigned in the tankhwah jagir of the zamindar of Jodhpur by emperor Farrukhsiyyar, passed out of the Mughal state for good.  

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seemingly pregnant with significant implications. (Tabqat-i-Akbari, II, p. 370; Akbarnamah, III, p. 413). Once Rana Amar Singh submitted, emperor Jahangir assigned (1615) Dungarpur and Banswada in the tankhwah jagir of Kunwar Karan Singh. (Text of Jahangir's farman, dt. May 11, 1615, Vir Vinod, 11, pp. 239-49). But when a rift cropped up during Shah Jehan's reign, the emperor deprived the Kunwar of jagir of two principalities which, instead, were assigned in the tankhwah jagir of the respective zamindaris of the principalities who were ennobled with mansabs. The two zamindars along with the one of Sirohi were obliged to do homage; and one of them, the zamindar of Dungarpur also favoured with the thanedari of Azamabad (Sarkar Ahmadabad). Rawal punja of Dungarpur and Rawal Samsi of Banswada were respectively awarded mansabs of 1500/1500 and 1000/1000. Being thus encouraged by the emperor the zamindars 'began to throw off Chittor's 'yoke'. Amal-i Saleh, III, pp. 205-213; Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnahamah, Asiatic Society, 1867, II pp, 304, 307; Vir Vinod, III, pp. 319, 369, 425-9, 430; p.Saran, op. cit, pp. 128-30. Presumably in recognition of the neutrality observed by the Rana of Chittor during war of succession, emperor Aurangzeb restored the two principalities in the tankhwah jagir of Kunwar Jai Singh, terminating the mansab of the Rawals of Dungarpur and Banswara. (Text of Aurangazeb farman of 1068 AH, Vir Vinod, III, pp. 425-28; as also Ibid, p. 430). During the Rajput wars (1679-80) the Mughal-Chittor amity again suffered a set back and, consequently, the two principalities were again taken away and the zamindar of Dungarpur, as under Shah Jehan, was granted mansab. The zamindari of Banswarah was restored to khalsa. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 305; Account, ff 108a-9b; Vir Vinod, III, p. 754.

1. Account, ff. 105b, 110b, 111b, 126b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp. 226, 234, 238.

2. Account, ff.111a, 126b.
This development may be attributed to the declining grip of the imperial centre which virtually helped a stronger zamindar-jagirdar to absorb zamindari-jagir. The Mirat, moreover, speaks of the use of force by the zamindars in their endeavours for extending the sway of their rights. The zamindar of Navanagar regained part of his possession under imperial control by applying force; the Rana of Porbandar made encroachments and re-occupied the directly administered portion of his zamindari while the faujdar had gone to southern Gujarat to resist Maratha pressure. The Rana bullied the local thanedars into vacating thanas in his favour. Also he bribed the desai of Mangrole so as to get the latter's consent for the occupation of Madhopur, a dependency of Mangrole.

Connivance of local nobles seems to have played its role. The zamindar of Sehore (and later Bhaonagar) had provided shelter to Sohrab Khan during the days of hardship. The Khan's

3. *Bombay Gazetteer*, IV, p. 301. The zamindar is also reported to have intrigued with the local officials.
5. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, pp. 155-6. The author of *Bombay Gazetteer* (*Ibid*, p.303) incorrectly mentions Sohrab Khan instead of Behram Khan, who, according to the *Mirat* was the person so sheltered by the zamindar and later on appointed by the state.
appointment as amin-amil-faujdar of Ghoga and surrounding areas in the vicinity of Sehore might have come as a boon for the zamindar. During his tenure the zamindar is also reported to have entered into a secret treaty with the Abyssinean commander, in-charge of Mughal fleet, who helped him encourage the traders to use the newly founded port of Bhaonagar. The possibilities of the Abyssinean's connivance with the zamindar in the acquisition of lands under the port of Ghoga may not be ruled out. The zamindar of Cheharmandvi took part in the internal strife at Surat by siding with Teg Beg Khan, the port officer, against the merchant prince (umdat-ut tujjar). In the strife the former emerged victorious. The obliged mutasaddi presumably turned a cool eye towards the zamindar who absorbed the surrounding thanas and the lands of sarkar Sunt.

Some of the zamindars made direct use of the Mughal-Maratha struggle. Some of them acted as mediators between them and were rewarded by both. The zamindar of Rajpipla took advantage of his treaty of friendship with the Marathas. The Maratha pressure in this part kept the Mughals at bay and the zamindar fell upon

1. Gazetteer of Bhaonagar, pp.434, 477; For similar instances of the zamindars extending support to defiant Mughal nobles, Mirat-i Ahmadi; II, pp 17, 170-1.
Mughals' land, and the thanas. Besides, the overall prevailing political condition must have generated the requisite atmosphere conducive to such acts of self aggrandisement on the part of the zamindars.

As regards the specific causes other than the ones which are implied in the preceding discussion of the passing of the weaker zamindars under the stronger ones, contemporary works are almost silent. However the works of later date cast some light on the point. It is suggested that the adventurers and the 'stronger' zamindars harassed their neighbours and compelled them to purchase their protection and forebearance at the price of surrendering a part of their share. The qirasias and the free booters

1. The Mirat-i Ahmadi does not explicitly report about the treaty. It, however, specifies that the Marathas when pressed hard by subedar Sarbuland khan took shelter in Rajpipla. *Ibid*, II, pp.60-5, 143-4, 108-10; *Rasmaia*, p.iii.

2. From the observations of the *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, (*Ibid*, i, pp.174-5) however it would appear that the helplessness of the weaker ones (i.e. inability to defend themselves in a situation when the Governors had themselves were too weak to extend protective hand) was the main cause.


According to the Bombay Gazetteer, (IV, pp.147) failure of the provincial authorities to shelter middle zamindars' from the raids of free booters and exactions of strong neighbours drove the "Owners", of many villages to seek protection of local 'chiefs'; the protection was sought in lieu of cession which was either in perpetuity (*aghat*) or for a number of years (*avad*). In almost all cases only a share of the produce and a subsistence was reserved for the original possessor.

231
reportedly caused havoc. Harassed by them the zamindars sought protection of those stronger than themselves.¹

There were, then, some Superior zamindars who could not maintain the unity of their zamindaris, particularly due to the challenges that came from within.² The bhayads in particular appear to have been restive under the control of the head of the family.³ Thus brothers of zamindar Arjun Singh who held mawza Barod within his zamindari makan, broke off their relationship

1. During 1770-90 the British noted that the villages in peninsular Gujarat were generally fortified. There they also noted the high towers which were used to notice the arrival of kathis and their ilk and warn the inhabitants. Hamilton Walter, op cit. I, p.653. The Mirat also speaks of particular arrangements made for controlling the Kathis and their ilk who used to create disturbance if they noticed a slight slackness in the administrative control Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp. 174-5, 211. The gradual decline of garrisons in the interior and on the important points might have encouraged such element to go about their job with impunity. For the presence of such element in the subah, please see Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 173-75; Ibid, II, pp. 244, 247, 249, 259, 266, 276, 500; B N Reu, * Some imperial farmans addressed to the rulers of Jodhpur,* Proc. I.H.C.; 1952, p.353.

2. It may be recalled that the empire had sought to dismember and weaken some of the stronger zamindari, like the one of Navanagar, by entering into direct relationship with the vassals and the junior members of the family of ruling zamindars. Later (1721) subedar Muizuddawa also entered into direct dealing with the bhayads and other vassals of the Chief of Bhuj. But the two zamindars, strong as they were, succeeded in putting their respective houses in order again. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 11, 98, 110-3; Tarikh-i Soret, p 258; Account ff. 110a-11a, 122a. Obviously even the gains of the policy which was pursued within its logical limits, could not be preserved, if and when the zamindar happened to be strong enough.

3. It is worth pointing out that on the death of a junior member of the family, the grant reverted back ot the head of the family who, according to the rule of inheritance, was the sole successor to such lands.
with the head of the family by paying peshkash to the subedar (1721) directly. Likewise one Gangadas broke off his relations with the head of his family by entering into direct transactions with subedar Ghazi-ud din Khan (1709) and, later on with Muizud-dawla (1721). Moreover, sons of Veroji and Vesoji (Mahikantha) are reported to have enlarged their possessions at the expense of the head of family from whom they had broken off their relationship. Some of the Bhayads in northern and peninsular Gujarat who had severed their links with their families and assumed independence were later on found in possession of a few villages; one of the bhayads who held village Barkoora, had assumed the title of raja. Works of a later date observe that the bhayads pressed hard by the Kathi freebooters, girasias and sometimes even by the heads of respective families sought protection of a stronger zamindar, of the one other than their immediate head.

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1. Peshkash Docs, P.C. No. 30 read with Account, f.116b.
2. Peshkash Docs, P.C. No. 10 read with Account, f. 115b.
4. Treaties, VI, pp. 9-10; Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, p.115.
5. Treaties, IV, p.59.
the protector and retained only a share as jiwaee. The process might have created a new section of zamindars out of the existing zamindaris and enhanced the position of those who could extend protection by virtue of possession of a striking force.

It would appear, then, that some zamindaris changed hands and some new hands came to acquire the status of Superior zamindars whereas some of them lost their independent status. A drastic change in the caste composition of the category of Superior zamindars is not discernable. But the relative exclusiveness of the caste-blocks as noted in the preceding Chapter, might have been further affected, though only marginally, by the entry of a new group of people, viz; Mughal officials and jagirdars who could transform their official positions into hereditary ones.

Still the Rajputs and the Kolis seem to have continued to hold leading position, with their caste-bastions constituting as before, the main source of their power.

It would appear from the preceding discussion that the

2. For a detailed view of the representative cases transforming official positions into hereditary nawabi, please see Chapter VII. below.
3. Later on the British also noted the same castes as holding, numerically, the dominant position among the Superior zamindars with a hold at the grass roots level. Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, pp. 115, 117, 160, 162, Ibid, IX, pt.1, pp.123-5; Ibid, (Kaira), pp. 37, 80-1, 217; Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 10-8, 100-08.
Mughal - zamindar relationship underwent a drastic change during the period. A qualitative change in the Mughal attitude which is indicated in the preceding discussion may be summarised as under:

Although in theory the very act of abstaining from service on the part of zamindars amounted to rebellion, the Mughals however made no serious attempt to enforce this rule. No action is reported to have been taken against any of the zamindars abstaining from service.

The virtual alternative to military service as we have noted above, came in the form of extorting peshkash. As the collection of peshkash also required actual use or show of force, it is evident that the tribute was not offered willingly and regularly. On many an occasion the zamindars put up resistance and refused to pay even under the pressure of arms. As per the available evidence only two of the defiant zamindars, viz; Dantiwara and Halwad were confiscated for a while.¹ No other example of confiscation is traceable in our sources, though in a few cases the authorities resorted to the extreme acts of massacring the zamindars' supporters, putting fire to their possessions and

exact heavy amounts by way of penalty. Numerous incidents of withholding payments and putting up armed resistance are spread all through the pages of available sources. But in all other incidents of the sort the zamindars either paid the tribute, offered securities or hostages, or agreed to pay the amount at the very arrival of watangiri forces; or they (particularly the more resourceful ones) resisted the imposition, put up armed opposition but agreed to pay the bargained amount before the final result of military action. More and more instances of military resistance are reported from the period of Dawood Khan's subedari (1713-15), though the tendency to evade payment considerably had emerged much earlier. Gradually rebelliousness came

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 396; Ibid, II, pp. 10, 41, 43-4, 51, 102. Such immoderate actions were taken against relatively smaller and more vulnerable zamindars.

2. For instance, Ibid, I, p. 392-4, 396; Ibid, II, pp. 9-11, 41, 43, 51, 89, 93-4, 107, 212, 244, 247, 257-8, 262-6, 276 etc. In all the struggles one common feature emerges, that in the end the amount of peshkash was bargained and settled. Zamindari of none of these zamindars where resistance has found mention, was confiscated. It makes clear that the zamindar first refused to accept any claim and when they saw that resistance was unavailing they purchased forebearance. See also Hamilton Walter, op cit. I, 642. But the zamindar of Bhuj, as noted earlier, had been able to resist its imposition successfully. Also a number of them evaded payments all through the period.

to be accepted as a *fait accompli* and all the zamindarīs came to be designated as *mehwas* (refractory) and the zamindars as seditious (*mufsīdan*) and leading ones among them as *Mehwas-i umda*.

i.e. the recalcitrant and the excessively recalcitrant zamindarīs. The blanket treatment thus given to them all and their categorisation based on the degree of recalcitrance not only speaks of the wholly changed attitude of the zamindars but also indicates the helplessness of the Mughal State which could not even react effectively, much less to take the initiative which had virtually been seized by the zamindars.

It would, therefore, appear that Mughals did not care much for the acquisition of military service, or were unable to do so. In case the zamindars paid *peshkash* peacefully to the *watangiri* expeditions they were not disturbed in their possessions. 2 Some

2. The Mughal's attitude in this regard becomes clear from the incident of Porbandar. On the arrival of the *subedar* near Porbandar, the zamindar abandoned the forcibly occupied fort and port and fled, obviously to avoid payment of tribute which had been due for a long time. The *subedar* captured the fort. In order to press the zamindar to come back and offer *peshkash*, the *Nazim* ordered the demolition of the fort. The action could not bring the desired results. In the end the *subedar* ordered repairing of the demolished parts of the fort and declared his intention of appointing a *faujdar* and retain the fort i.e. to restore status quo ante. The news brought the zamindar back to the place of action. As the zamindar paid *peshkash* and penalty, the order of appointing the *faujdar* was withdrawn and the zamindar was left in possession even of his unauthorised acquisition. The *Nazim*’s action totally legitimated the zamindar’s action. *Mirat-i Ahmādi*, II, pp 98-9; *Tarikh-i Soreth* pp 84, 86; *Mirat-i-Mustafabad*, p.152.
of them who put up resistance were in some cases not so much opposed to the imposition of peshkash as to the amount dictated. However some of them first opposed the very imposition of peshkash and when they saw the futility of resistance they agreed to pay the dictated or the bargained amount. More commonly the resistance proved to be a tactic meant to put the zamindar in a bargaining position. Neither the Mughals nor the zamindars brought the matter to an extreme for, it seems, the latter were basically interested in retaining their possessions while the former's interest was mainly in obtaining the peshkash quickly and, preferably, peacefully. Under the circumstance the administration adopted a compromising attitude leading to a sharp fall in the amount collected and gradually in the very capacity to effect collections. The administration could not come out of the vicious circle.

It is possible that the negligence on the part of Mughal officials was due to their pre-occupation with safeguarding their interests vis a vis one another and the Marathas which also affected the efficiency and strength of the empire. The Mughals, for whatsoever reason, virtually had lost control over the Superior zamindars and punishing the rebels as they had done during the heyday of the empire. The Mughals had adopted virtually a non-punitive attitude towards the rebels. Hardly any of
the zamindars was forced to vacate his unauthorised acquisition of faujdari-strongholds, the thanas, the ralyati and the other zamindars' lands.\textsuperscript{1} Exacting peshkash on irregular basis survived as the only interest as also the point of contact of the Mughals with the Superior zamindars. Moreover peshkash which was a well established claim, duly calculated on the basis of paying capacity, came to denominate not so much the zamindars' subordination as much the price of forebearance determined on the basis of evaluation of each other's strength and surrendered only casually.

A change in the attitude of provincial authorities towards the matter of succession is evident from the evidence coming for Navanagar. Hardolji had killed his elder brother, Jam Rai Singh and usurped the qaddi. Son of Rai Singh left for his aunt, the Rani of Kutch - sister of Rao Pratap Singh of Halwad. The Rani is reported to have requested her brother to manage installation of the legitimate successor on the qaddi of Navanagar. The zamindar of Halwad entered into matrimonial alliance

\[1. \textit{Subedar} Dawood Khan is, however, reported to have forced the Kolis of Baroda region to vacate the villages which they had captured by force and the fortress which they had raised was also pulled down. \textit{Akhbarat}, 2505, 3rd Shohan, Farrukhsiyar's 3rd R.Y. For the Nazims not seeking eviction of zamindars from their unauthorised acquisitions, \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, II, pp. 11, 41-2, 45-6, 57, 93, 96, 98, 99; \textit{Tarikh-i Soreth}, pp 84-6; \textit{Mirat-i Mustafabad}, pp 152, 154; \textit{Bombay Gazetteer}, VIII, pp. 296, 301. Also there is a solitary instance showing the subedar re-establishing a thana, \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, II p. 266.\]
with Sarbuland Khan, then *subedar* and Salbat Mohammed Khan, an influential Babi chief. The *subedar* along with the Rao of Halwad and the Babi chief attacked Navanagar, expelled Hardolji and restored the *gaddi* to Jam Rai Singh's son. The new Jam offered *peshkash* and three villages which the two Mughal officials sold to another zamindar. In order to finance the project, the Jam had taken loan from the zamindar of Kutch by mortgaging the *mahals* of Balambha and Amrah. At Balambha, the zamindar of Kutch built a fort (1736) and subsequently annexed the two *mahals*.\(^1\) Again, the Jam was killed (1734) by the zamindar of Wadhawan, Karan Singh Jhala. But our sources are silent as to what happened subsequently. However members of the same ruling family continued to rule the zamindari.\(^2\) It, thus, becomes clear that the intervention in the matter of succession does not appear to have been considered a matter of established state policy. It was rather a matter of personal interest of the provincial authorities if it suited their purpose. It may, thus, be seen that

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2. *Tarikh-i Soreth*, pp. 256, 258; *Mirat-i Mustafabad*, p. 151. L.F. Pushbrook William (*Jarnagar, Sketch of its rulers And its administration* P.4) notes that struggle for succession was a 'rule' in the house of Navanagar until nineteenth century.
the Superior zamindars had successfully replaced the Mughal authority with the one of their own, emerged stronger out of the strife-ridden phase (1700-50) in the history of the region.
CHAPTER III

INTERMEDIARY ZAMINDARS

(On the eve of the eighteenth century)

Like other parts of Mughal Empire the intermediary zamindars held a significant position in the revenue administration as well as agrarian society of Mughal Gujarat. Though the intermediary position was not exclusive of the rights enjoyed by Superior and the Primary zamindars, it was, however, distinctly different from them. 1 Modern scholars have identified and discussed various holders of intermediary positions in different parts of the Empire. 2 Of them the desai, patel (muqaddam) and the ijaradar who find description in the contemporary sources, may be discussed as intermediary zamindars of Mughal Gujarat.

A - THE DESAI:

The desai who held a position identical to the chaud-


242
rado of North India, finds frequent description in the official documents and other sources of information of the period. During the reign of Emperor Akbar the desais, according to the Mirat, were appointed in all the mahals of the subah by Raja Todarmal who is reported to have introduced them in the Mughal revenue administration. During the course of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century desais are noticed in all the kharaji

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1. For the position of chaudhari, S. Nurul Hasan, Thoughts on Agrarian Relations, p. 32; Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp 231, 235, 252-5, 291-4; N A Siddiqi, op.cit, pp 17, 41, 90-1; Irfan Habib (op.cit, p 291) without citing any evidence in support of his contention, identifies desais with the chaudharis. But B.R. Grover opines that the desai can't be identified with the chaudharis as both of them find references in the contemporary sources. It may be clarified here that emperor Jahangir issued a farman (dt. 14th Mehrmah, ilahi year, Baroda, 14, unindexed; Hereafter Baroda farman), appointing Trangdas and Kishandas as the chaudharis of pargana haveli Baroda. The Mirat too (I, pp 262, 287, 292) refers to the chaudharis. But on a closer view of the available evidence it would appear that each available reference to the chaudhari is found in the documents which were prepared at the imperial centre. The references in the Mirat appear only when its author cites imperial orders. On the other none of the available document which was prepared in the subah refers to the chaudharis, much less in addition to or alongwith the desais. Further, the Baroda farman's chaudharis Tarangdas and Kishan das - are listed as desais in the document entitled faharii mawaze' tara-f daren desaiyan pargara haveli, Baroda, R No. 49, Pune. It seems the North Indian terminology penetrated, surreptitiously, into the drafting of the documents at the imperial court.

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement; p 228.
sarkars of the subah. The imperial administration maintained, or else endeavoured to maintain desais in the zamindari makans of the ismis and the mahin-o kahin zamindars, evidently to keep a watch on their revenues.

The desai was an intermediary zamindar of pargana level. In the available documents they are described as the desai of pargana unlike the muqaddam who is identified with a village. In other cases the desai could be identified with a taraf i.e. portion of a pargana comprising a group of specified villages.

However the sway of a single desai's right did not necessarily extend to cover the entire pargana, for more than one persons could hold the desaigiri in one and the same pargana. Thus emperor Akbar had appointed Jewraj, 


2. Please see also, Rasmala, pp 302, 340, 345-6, 353, 447, 456 and references in the following discussion.


5. Ibid.

Kishandas and Kalyan as the desais of pargana Mangrole (sarkar Soreth) in 1603. It is seen above that emperor Jahangir had also appointed more than one persons as the desais (chaudharis of the farman) in pargana havell Baroda. There are references available for the entire seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century specifying more than one desais for one and the same pargana.

It will be however wrong to assume that the jurisdictional authority of every single desal, or for that matter every desai-family, was invariably confined to the limits of a single paragana. According to a parwana (1687) Govardhan Das, Bethldas, Dhanwi Rai and Raghoji held desaigiri in 34 parganas of sarkar Soreth, each of them enjoying a share of fourth in the rights consequential upon the position.


2. Junagadh, SC No.688 Ex. Nos. 8/3, 8/4, and 8/5 (mahal Junagadh); Ibid, SC No. 104 (mahal Sutrapara); Account, ff 163a, 167a, 169b, 173a, 174b, 183b, 203b, 210b, 213a, 214b, 218b, 223a, 230b, 241a. There was no pargana in the entire sarkar Ahmadabad having less than two desais. Moreover, the desaigiri so held jointly was generally shared by the members of the same family.

3. The document (dt. 1099 AH) specifies the parganas as under; Pargana havell Junagadha, parganas of Batwa, Medra, Oplota, Dehrawal, Ranpur, Bakra, Belkha, Jetpur, Lathi, Jhao, Gariadhar, Terwa, Bhimrad, Daulatabad, Rajkot, Dhak, Gondal, Sultanpur, Deoli, Kutiyan, Babra (i.e. Babaria), Mandvi, Palitana, Hastnichowk, Dharai, Porbandar, Navibandar, Dhatrod, Ralgaon, Artacha, Mahokheda (?), Jagat and one more parguna name of which
would, thus, appear that the territorial jurisdiction of desai ranged between wide limits and, likewise, their social status and economic position too would be at variance from one another.

Since more than one persons could enjoy desaigiri in one and the same pargana, or group of parganas, at the same time, it necessitated divisioning of income, or else, the source of income itself. In some cases the territory under joint jurisdiction was held collectively and share of each of the desai in the benefits consequential upon the position was defined proportionately. In other cases the territory was physically delineated, each such division (taraf) represented, though not necessarily, proportionate share of each desai who, in such case, was termed tarafdar i.e. holder of...
Desai's position was by and large hereditary. But the succession necessitated, every time, imperial approval. It has been suggested that the desai's succession was confirmed, as also the fresh appointment was made by the provincial authorities who issued necessary parwana to that effect. But the available evidence does not subscribe to B.R. Grover's view. Jeewraj, Kishandas and Kalyan were confirmed in the position of desai on usual basis (b'dastur-i sabiq) by virtue of an imperial farman issued by Emperor Akbar. Likewise Emperor Jahangir confirmed Kantha, son of Harjiwan desai in the desaigiri of pargana Uplota etc. and Tarangdas and other in the desaigiri (chaudhrai) of pargana

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1. Account, f. 82a. The villages of pargana haveli, Ahmadabad, sometime during Aurangzeb's reign were divided into seven tarafs in the following way: taraf Bethaldas (consisting 34 specified villages), taraf Mukandas (33 villages), taraf Gopidas (15 villages) and so on. Village Patri Kochrab which was held jointly is described as 'majmua -i desaiyan'; Fahrist mawazi taraf-dar desaiyan, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, R No 42, Pune.


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Junugadh, S C Nos. 1025 and 1170 (mahal Balagam), op.cit.
havelī Baroda by issuing farman.¹

Likewise the parwana (1687) confirming Govardhandas and other in the desaigiri of 34 parganas as mentioned above, was issued in accordance with the imperial farman (b' mujib-

î farman-i a'llshan).² It may, therefore, be seen that the desais were appointed and confirmed by the imperial centre. The provincial authorities issued parwanas as a matter of follow up action. The revenue department of the subah maintained pargana - tarafr-majmua' - wise details specifying area of jurisdiction of each desai for official purposes.³

On every succession the incumbent had to offer tribute(peshkash) to the Emperor. The offering being a stipulated sum of money and described as peshkash-i sarkar-i wala was to be recovered on installment basis.⁴ In some cases exemption from paying the required peshkash-i sarkar-i wala could be granted by the Emperor.⁵ It may be pointed

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1. The Baroda farman reads: chaudrai pargana Baroda b'aba-o ajdad mutalliq ast b'dastur sabiq, b'Tarangdas w awlad-i oo mugarrar o mufawwaz ba'had.,, Junagadh, SC No. 389 Ex. No.2 (Mahal Junagadh).
3. Account, ff. 17a, 82a.
4. Ibid ff. 80b, 163a, 164a, 167a, 168ab; Emperor Jahan-
5. Jahanigir's Baroda farman, (op.cit.) grants the exemp-
tion; see also Account, 352a.
out here that the amount of peshkash thus offered differed from desai to desai and ranged between wide limits. Thus, for example, the desais of Viramgaon sometime during the opening years of the eighteenth century were to pay Rs.68386/9 annas and those of Piplod only Rs.550/- 1. Taken as a denominator, the amount of peshkash suggests vast variations in the socio-economic positions of desais within their own group. 2

The desaigiri was most commonly held by the Nagar and Andrawala Brahmans who are reported to have "followed the professions in which penmanship" was required. 3 Some of the desais also belonged to the Mehta and Khatiri castes. 4 Members of these castes are found amongst the persons who went for higher education and were well versed in Persian during Mughal age. 5

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1. Account, ff. 218b, 230b.
2. Please see also Ibid ff. 173a, 174b, 183b, 213a, 214b, 241a.
3. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f. 23, SH Desai's private collection Nos. 14 (6)/14 of 1110 AH; Junagadh, SC No.780, Ex. No.4/3 (mahal Sutrapara); Rasmala, p 57.
4. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f.23; Rasmala, p 57; The collector of Surat to Revenue Commissioner No.54, dt. 13th November, 1846; Report from NA Peddar, C.S., President of the Gujarat Watan Commission, No. 18/143, dt.19th April 1865.
5. M A Qureshi, Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat (1277-1758), Baroda, 1972, pp 231-9, 253-6.
The desais occupied a leading position in the administrative set up of revenue machinery. The desai was basically responsible for effecting assessment and for fixation of jama in accordance with the rules and regulations. They were required to be well versed in the rules and regulation concerning revenues, the destur-ul amais and their application. The advice of desai was to be given due weightage in the affairs concerning revenues and allied matters. Assisted by the state officials and the muqaddams the desai had to visit every cultivated plot for the settlement of revenues. Services of desai were required in the settlement of revenues in such areas also as followed the system of ghalla bakhshi, known also as bhagwatai.

The desais also supervised collection of revenues which at the village level was effected by the muqaddams and state officials. Emperor Akbar had ordered the diwan-i subah to

1. Account, f. 17b.
2. Ibid, ff. 17ab.
3. Jahangir's, Baroda farman, op.cit.
5. For example, the desais as pointed out earlier, were there in sarkar Soreth. From the period of Isa Tar Khan's period, the sarkar was put under the system of bhagwatai. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I pp 217-8; Corpus inscriptionum Bhavnagri, New Delhi; 1971, pp 47-9.
"collect revenues through the *desais* and *muqaddams* both in *khalsa* and *jagir* lands.¹ Likewise Emperor Jahangir had directed that the assessment and collection of revenues be effected with the approbation (*b'istaswab*) of the *desais*.² The *desais* along with the *muqaddams* were to sign *tamassuk* undertaking the responsibility of collecting and remitting the assessed revenues.³ Moreover the *desais* had also to explain the cause of difference, if any, between the amount assessed and actually collected.⁴

Functions of the *desais* were not confined to the sphere of assessment and collection of revenues alone. The *desais* had to maintain accounts also. According to the *Baroda farman* the *desai* was to maintain year to year detailed account of *jama-o kharj* of the area and furnish the same to the imperial centre (*b'daftar-i khana-i humayun*).⁵ The imperial court used to depute mace bearers to collect such

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2. Jahangir's *Baroda farman*, op. cit.
3. *Naql tamassuk* for the period of Mukarramat Khan PC No. 63. Later on the British also noted that the *desais* were appointed to 'superintend the collection of revenues.' Mr. Asst. Collector Pyner's *Representation on Balasinor*, 1827; Bombay Gazetteer, II, pp 214-5.
5. *Baroda farman*, op. cit.
detailed accounts from the desais. 1 The desais along with the quanungos were also required to approach the Diwan-i Subah for submitting the awarjah, details of taqsim and mawazna-i dehsala. 2 In this enormous task of account keeping the desais were assisted by their respective gumash-tas at village level. 3

The desais were also responsible for the advancement of the taqvi (agricultural loans) to the deserving raiyat and its subsequent recovery in instalments in accordance with the established practice. 4 The desais were, moreover, supposed to enforce the state regulations for trade and commerce. 5 They were also required to make 'sternous' efforts in 'promoting' the prosperity and the flourishing condition of the area and the 'welfare of the inhabitants'. They were also instructed to ensure that more and more land

1. Account, f 17a, The Mirat (I p.327) notes that Sheikh Muhammad Fazil, the mace bearer, came to procure the details of hal-i hasil, of parganas and mawazna-i dehsala of the Subah sometime during Aurangzeb's reign. The nazim and the diwan had to make arrangements for reproducing desais because the jagirdars "practised indifference in producing the desais".

2. Account, ff 17ab, 180ab.

3. S H Desai's private collections, No.14 (6)/14 op.cit. The gumashtas were allowed a share out of the desai's income. Ibid; chaknama, dt. 10th Sho'ban 1111 AH, PC No.268.


5. Ibid.
was brought under cultivation and the jins-i kamīl (cash crop) was increasingly cultivated.¹

There were, then, some other duties assigned to and still other performed by the desais on their own volition. Emperor Aurangzeb asked the desais, sheths, quanongos of every chakla in the city of Ahmadabad to point out ways for levying additional taxes assuring them a share in the income therefrom.² The desais were regarded as reliable witnesses by the zamindars for substantiating their plea before the State for regaining the zamindari lost to some miscreants.³ The desais of pargana Dholqa helped the muqaddams and the riaya of Chatrasan and other villages (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) in settling inter-village boundary dispute arising out of the changing course of river Sabarmati during Aurangzeb's reign.⁴ The desais of sarkar Soreth during closing years of Aurangzeb's reign reported to the bakhshi of the subah that the miscreants attacked and plundered villages finding the place without a faujdar. The desais were accordingly empowered to raise specified troops for meeting

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1. Baroda farman, op.cit.

253
the challenge. It was in addition to the customary staff of horse-men and foot-men which the desais were provided with for the proper discharge of the routine duties. 2

SHARE

The desais were hereditary recipients of a share in the revenues actually collected from the riaya. The share was given in cash at a specified rate out of the collected revenues and in the form of land grants. The share in cash was called 'dastur-i desai, 'desaigiri', haq-i desai' or majmuaedari'. The lands given were described as 'pusaita' or pusaita-i desaiyan. 3

According to the author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi Emperor Akbar determined the desai's share in 1590. Accordingly the desais were to get 2.5% of the revenues collected from the khalsa and jagir lands. 4 During the reign of the same emperor half (1.25%) of the dastur was resumed by Khan-i Azam Mirza Aziz Kokaltash, then subedar. The same work notes that the desais were further deprived of the half (.625%) of the remaining half (1.25%) in favour of diwani and thus they were allowed .625% of the collected

3. For references please see discussion in the following lines.
revenues by way of desaigiri.\(^1\) Whether the same rate was applicable for the entire subah during Akbar's reign is not known. Emperor Jahangir's farman issued in favour of Kanhají and other desais of pargana Junagadh (sarkar Soreth) allowed the desaigiri @ 5% i.e.; a rate much higher than the one granted by Emperor Akbar.\(^2\) The desaigiri for the desais of pargana Viramgaon and Dholqa (sarkar Ahmadabad) was calculated @ 1.5 percent during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb and later also.\(^3\) In the absence of detailed evidence it is difficult to ascertain if the rate of desaigiri was modified during post-Akbar period, or else different rates were simultaneously applicable in different parts of the subah.

Besides the desais were allowed to enjoy revenues of the pusaita lands which they held in addition to, and, over and above the desaigiri allowance discussed above.\(^4\) The

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1. Ibid.
2. Junagadh, SC No. 880 (mahal Junagadh).
3. Account, ff 229b, 288a.
4. According to Emperor Jahangir's farman (Junagadh, SC No. 880, (mahal Junagadh) the desais were to enjoy the desaigiri @ 5 out of every 100 mehmudi and arazi-i pusaita: desaigiri pargana mazkurha fisad ki panj mehmudi-o arazi pusaita ; According to the parwana (1099 AH) issued to confirm Govardhandas etc. in the desaigiri cited above, the desais were to enjoy the dastur, the pusaita and ina'm possessions (dastur-o pusaita - inam dehat) as before (b'dastur sabiq). Cf, B.R.Grover, "The position of desai..." op.cit.
pusaita grants were actually held by them on the mainland as well as on the peninsular Gujarat.\(^1\) It is interesting to note that the pusaita lands were fragmented considerably in a large number of villages unlike the madad-i mash lands which were consolidated in specified areas. Emperor Jahan-
gir's farman speaks of the pusaita lands of Kanthaji and other desai in every, (dar har mawza) if not each village of the concerned parganas.\(^2\) According to a parwana (1723) the pusaita lands of Pragji, Jiwan, Ranchhod and other desais of pargana Junagadh were located, since some time past, in qasbah Delwara (60 bighas), villages of Mahta buzurg (55 Bigha), Amodra (45 bigha) Patri buzurg (15 bigha), Shekhwapur (30 bigha), Anjar buzurg (15 bigha), Dandi (15 bigha), Khajodra (25 bigha), Ver buzurg (15 bigha), Upodra (25 bigha), Sheikhji buzurg (15 bigha), Sonkhera buzurg (15 bigha), Belkhar (25 bigha), Bahrampur (10 bigha), Chakher (10 bigha), Gangasar (50 bigha), Hansoj (25 bigha) and Una (50 bigha), thus in all 500 bighas of land were spread over eighteen villages.\(^3\)

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In addition to their customary claims as discussed above the desais were also recipients of the ina'm and additional pusaita rights given as a special favour. Emperor Aurangzeb granted (1660) mawza Hanmethi (pargana Ranpur) to Dwarkadas desai by way of ina'm.\(^1\) The same emperor granted (1688) villages of Ojwai, Tonki, Uchde and Reshala in addition to mawza Hanmethi to desai, son of Dwarkadas desai by way of ina'm.\(^2\) The same desai also held the villages of Piparia (pargana Baxra), Tankatoda and Nehrwaia (pargana Amreli) during the same period, however granted earlier by way of muafi.\(^3\) The same emperor also granted (1703) a well (chah) alongwith the land associated with it, by way of pusaita out of kindness (az rah-i-inayat) to Ajit Rai desai of pargana Mangrole (sarkar Soreth).\(^4\)

Besides, the desais were also given similar grants by the jagirdars and other state officials.\(^5\) Prince Muhammad Azam Shah who held sarkar Soreth in jagir\(^6\) granted (1700 AD) 50 bighas of barani and chahi lands in mawza Amodra by way

\(^1\) Ibid, SC No.800, Ex. Nos.1,3, 7/5, (mahal Junagadh).
\(^2\) Ibid, Ex. Nos.7/6.
\(^3\) Ibid, Ex. Nos. 7/4.
\(^4\) Ibid, SC No.194 (mahal Seel).
\(^5\) Account, f. 14a.
\(^6\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp.306-7.
of inam-o pusaita to Malji and other desais of pargana Una (sarkar Soreth).¹ The prince also granted them eight anna (neem rupia) as daily allowance (rozina) out of the revenues of the town of Delwara.² Later (1704) the prince granted 200 bigha of chahi (irrigated) and barani (un-irrigated) lands to Mohanji and Nana Raghunath, desais of pargana Una as an act of benevolence (az rah-i inayat-o meherbani).³

Though the pusaita lands were by and large held rent-free however in some part of the subah the desais had to share its revenues with the state. In a number of parganas of sarkar Ahmadabad the desais were not required to pay any part of the revenues accruing from pusaita lands to the state.⁴ But the desais of pargana Mundah (sarkar Ahmadabad) were required to surrender a half of the revenues of the lands during the kharif season to the state whereas the other half of the revenues expropriated from the raiyat was retained by them.⁵ The state made no such demand during the

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1. Junagadh, SC No. 688, Ex No. 8/3 (mahal Una).
2. Ibid, Ex No. 8/5.
3. Ibid Ex No. 8/4; Ibid, S C No.517 Ex No.2 (mahal Derawali).
4. Dastur-ul amal (Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb and Muhammad Shah's reign), PC Nos. 22, 26, 51; Account, ff. 182a, 350a. These lands are declared as muaf (not assessed for paying revenues to the state).
There is evidence to show that the dastur and pusaita-i desaiyan were subject to the payment of a cess, called peshkash-i dastur-i pusaita which was levied by the Nazim-i subah. During the reign of emperor Aurangzeb (Mukhtar Khan's period of subedari) the cess on the pusaita was abolished and excluded of the jama also.

But the dastur-i desai was not entirely expropriated by the desais who had to offer an unspecified portion of it to the Nazim-i Subah throughout the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century. The offering called peshkash-i harsala, peshkash-i dastur-i desaiyan, peshkash-i nizamat of desais, peshkash-i desaigiri or simply dastur, was paid annually to the Governor of the province.

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1. Ibid.

2. Dastur-ul amal, for the period of subedari of Isa Tar Khan and Prince Dara's naib Ghairat Khan, PC Nos. 35, 58.

3. Ibid. After his succession the Emperor abolished it along with the other prohibited cesses (abwab-i-mam-nua) but it continued to from a part of the jama. Later, on the desais' request for its exclusion from the jama and stopping collections, was acceded.

4. Account, ff 173a, and Ibid, ff 164b, 167a, 169a, 175a, 203b, 213b, 216b, 218b, 223a; For its actual collection during the eighteenth century, Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 236-9.
tion from its payment could also be granted. 1

It would thus appear from this discussion that a considerable part of the desais' share which varied from place to place, was taken away by way of peshkash-i sarkar-i wali and then as peshkash-i desaigiri. Even then, the net income of the desais must have been substantially large. More so, the sources of their income were not confined to the desai girl allowance, pusaita lands and ina'm and mua'fi possessions. They had other means, both legal and illegal, for enhancing their income.

At times with his (official) position the desai felt tempted to misuse their authority to coerce the raiyat and make money. The desai of pargana Supa (sarkar Surat) were reported not to have made proper assessment and contrary to the practice had done only summary assessment on the villages based on part records in 1594. The desai had also illegally realized the village expenses (maiba) and arrested 22 persons. He had also omitted the assessment of his own cultivated lands. 2 According to another parwana (1678) the desai of pargana Bisrai forced the raiyat of some villages

1. Emperor Jahangir's Junagadh farman provides that (peshkash-i desaigiri ke sahib-i subah.....migirafte marfu-ul qalam daniste).

to cultivate his own lands for himself. The *muqaddam* of one of the villages who happened to be a member of the desai's caste (*birathrei*), also lent him support. Then the desai evaded assessment of his own cultivated lands.¹ According to yet another *parwana* (1693) the desai of pargana Harsur (sarkar Ahmadabad) assessed the *pusaita-i muqaddaman* at full rates (*amal-i bilmanasta*) in violation of the *amal-i dastur* which provided for complete exemption of their *pusaita* lands from assessment.²

The desais seem to have had some kind of relationship with the seths and mahajans i.e. the men of capital and money lenders.³ According to emperor Aurangzeb's *farman* (eighth regnal year) the *seths* and *desais* of many parganas of the subah did not allow other persons to purchase fresh food grains on its arrival in the *mandis*. They purchased good quality of grain and allowed the merchants to buy 'rotten and wasteful corn.' Moreover, they forced the

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¹ *Parwana*, dt. 19 Safar, 1089 AH, R No.36, Pune.


³ Emperor Jahangir's Baroda *farman* asks the mahajans of Baroda to take note of the person appointed as desai. According to the *Mirat*, the *gumashta* of the *amin-i jizyah* had reported that the *zimmis* of pargana Mehmudabad did not pay *jizyah* for two years (1697-99) and they were bidding time for payment with the support of local desai and seths. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, 1, p. 339.

261
merchants to pay the price of good stuff. If the desais purchased lands, cattles and houses, the state granted them exemption from paying customary tax on such transactions. The desais contracted ijara rights and thereby might have made money. They are also reported to have collected prohibited taxes from a certain section of the riyaya during Aurangzeb's reign. As such the desaigiri was quite a lucrative position and its possessors would have, naturally, enjoyed a respectable social position.

A few pieces of information casting light on some other activities of the desais and their relationship with other members of the ruling class are also available. Perceiving the rising strength of imperial power, Somji desai persuaded the Gohel chief of Sehore to offer port of Ghoga by way of nazrana to Akbar when the Emperor conquered Gujarat. For this, Somji was rewarded by a grant of some villages and an increased allowance while the Gohel chief was allowed to retain his rights in all the harbours of Gohelwad. Later

5. JW Watson, "Historical Sketch of the town of Ghoga," The Indian Antiquary, op.cit, p 283.
6. Ibid.
during Shah Jahan's reign the desai of pargana Idar acted as an intermediary for bringing about a rapprochement between the Rathor zamindar of the place and the provincial authorities.\(^1\) Mehraji, an imperial desai at Lolyana (sarkar Soreth) made capital out of the strife ridden ruling family of Sehore sometime during Aurangzeb's reign. The desai succeeded in getting his son, Ranji Mehraji, appointed as a pattawat there.\(^2\)

The relations between the desais and other zamindars were not necessarily cordial all the time. The zamindar of Rajpipla had killed the imperial desai during Akbar's reign but had spared the qazi and the news-writer.\(^3\) Likewise the zamindar of Cheharmandvi killed the imperial desai during the reign of the same emperor.\(^4\) It has been mentioned above that the desai of pargana Supa and Harsur had encroached upon the privileges of the muqaddams by illegally realizing the village expenses and assessing the pusaita lands. The patel of Verawal (pargana Somnath-Pattan, sarkar Soreth)

1. Rasmala, pp. 344-45.
2. Ibid, p 353. Ranji Mehraji's son, Damji, was also appointed in the same capacity there. He became very powerful and annoyed the then ruling chief, Bhao Singh who killed Damji. Ibid.
killed the desai for some unspecified reason sometime during Aurangzeb's reign. The deceased desai's son was therefore favoured with pusaita grant by the court and he continued to hold it during later years.¹

But, then, the desais seem to have maintained satisfactory working relationship with the jagirdars. Any reference suggesting differences between them is conspicuous by its absence. On the other the jagirdars and other local officials are reported to have favoured them with pusaita grants and ina'm which they made out of their jagir revenues.² The Mirat has also reported that the jagirdars "practised indifference in producing the desais" of their respective areas before the imperial officials deputed from the centre to collect revenue-records from them. The provincial authorities had, therefore to make special arrangements for ensuring the availability of the desais before the deputed person.³ It seems the desais had an inclination to

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3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, l. pp 326-7, it may be pointed out here that the Mughal officials who established their independent principalities in the subah during the first half of the eighteenth century maintained the desais, assigning them high administrative positions under them. In their new capacity they were designated as 'diwan or karbhari', the incharge of affairs.
hold back the required information and were handed in gloves with the jagirdars.

The desais undertook some such activities which signify their socio-economic position and were meant to earn name and fame. Mahasom, the imperial desai at Ghoga, built a temple of Kalka-Mata in the year 1615. Mathuradas and Samaiji, desais of pargana Badnagar, built a stepwell for public use at the town of (pargana) Petlad (sarkar Ahmedabad) during the opening years of the eighteenth century.

The desaigiri seems to have acquired the form of property before the close of the seventeenth century. It is not precisely known if the desaigiri could be sold and purchased. But it is certain that it could be mortgaged. According to a mortgage deed (May 1699) Mahadji, Madanji and Anandji, the sons of Ganpat desai of pargana Somnath-Pattan (sarkar Soreth) mortgaged their share in the majmue'dari (majmue'dari hissa khudha) with Gangaram, Damodar and Bhimji, sons of Ram Krishna - a physician (Tabib) for 252 mehmudis. The mortgagors (maraahoons) as per the stipulated


2. M R Majumdar, "A Triangular inscription on a stepwell in Petlad," Journal of the University of Bombay V No. 10, pt. IV, May, 1937, pp. 147-8. The stepwell was constructed during the subedar(1701-4) of Prince Azam who is duly mentioned in the inscription.
conditions, got entitled to enjoy the consequentia rights
and perform the related duties. Another document (Feb.
1700) records that a woman (musammat) named Kobra (?),
wife of Gobindji (son of Sarangdhar) possessed a share in the
desigiri in pargana Somnath-Pattan (sarkar Soreth). The
woman-desai mortgaged her share for 350 mehmudis with Damo-
dar, the son of the same physician, Raikishan Nagar.

It would appear from the preceding discussion that the
desaigiri was by and large held by educated members belong-
ing to upper castes, particularly the Nagar Brahmans. The
desaits appear to be wealthy people having links with the men
of purse. That the desais enjoyed a position of power and
significance in the revenue matters and the ruling hierarchy
is well evident. Whether they had an equally strong social

1. S H Desai's private collection, rahn-namah dt. 14th
Zilhaj 1110 AH, No. 14(6)/14.

2. This is the only available reference to a woman holding
desaigiri. Whether the right was purchased or inherit-
ed is not known.

3. The preceding and the present documents are bilingual
one. The Gujarati version terms the rights thus being
mortgaged as deshaigiri in both the documents. Whereas
the Persian text in the first document calls it maj-
mue'dari and in the following document names it the
desaigiri. The two terms thus being used alternately
as also interchangeably seem to have denoted the same
rights. Both the deeds, it may be mentioned, were
registered with the office of the qazi.

4. S H Desai's Private collection, rahn namah, dt. ?
Ramadhan, 1111 A H, No.14 (6)/19. The Tabib was rece-
pienent of madad-i ma'sh lands also.
base is not borne out by the available evidence. In all probability the desais depended more on the administrative backing than on their social base which, in any case, does not appear to be as strong as that of the muqaddams.

B - MUQADDAM :

The muqaddam, also called pate1 was an important intermediary zamindar of village level. A leading member of the village community he acted simultaneously as the representative of the village under him and watch dog of imperial interests in the village.2 The position of muqaddami was hereditary and could also be bought and sold.3 In the Mughal Gujarat emperor Akbar is reported to have confirmed the muqaddams in their positions and accordingly accepted their share in the revenues.4

The presence of muqaddams is noticeable in all the kharaji sarkars of the subah during the seventeenth century. From the

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1. Baroda, 27. The bilingual document describes the person named therein as muqaddams in its Persian text and pate1 in the Gujarati version. In another Persian document (Ibid, 57 and 83) the named persons are called patels (patelan). Please see also, Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p. 129n1.


detailed list of the villages of paragana Kadi (sarkar Ahmadabad) it would appear that the muqaddams were there in both kinds of villages, the raiyati as well as the zamindari.\(^1\) They were there in the villages lands of which were divided on bantha-talpad lines and also in the ones areas of which were not likewise divided.\(^2\) Their presence is also noticeable in the zamindari makans, including the watan possessions of the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin.\(^3\) discussed in a preceding chapter [1(2)].

But it cannot be taken to mean that the muqaddam was necessarily there in each of the villages. Of 282 villages in paragana Kadi the muqaddams were there in 211 villages i.e. 74.8 per cent of the villages had their own muqaddams. The remaining villages, 72 in number and forming 25.2 per cent of the paragana were without a muqaddam (muqaddam nadard).\(^4\) As such the sway of muqaddam's right did not cover the entire country side.\(^5\)

Like the class of cultivators that mainly consisted of

\[\text{-------------------------}\]

1. Account, ff. 309a-38a.

2. Ibid.

3. Account, ff 309a read with Ibid ff 311a, 314a, 315a and dehat-i paragana Kadi, PC No. 3 to 7.

4. Account, ff 309a-38a

5. Irfan Habib (Agrarian System, pp 128-31) also notes the villages without muqaddams.
the *kameja* (*khudkasht*) and the *paikashat*\(^1\) (*uprawaria*), the available documents speak of two classes of *muqaddams* also, viz; *muqaddaman-i kameja* and *muqaddaman-i paikashata*. In a *dastur-ul amal* of emperor Aurangzeb's reign rates of assessment have separately been furnished for the *paikal-cha-muqaddaman* for the *pargana* *Pratlj* (*Prantij*), *sarkar* Ahmadabad.\(^2\)

The *paikal-cha muqaddams* are also referred to in the *dastur* of a newly founded (*naw abad*) village of the same *pargana*.\(^3\)

Another document specifying area statistics of the actually cropped lands in *mawza* *Mahej* (*pargana* haveli Ahmadabad) mentions the *muqaddaman-i kameja* amongst the various holders of land, however as a separate category of land holders.\(^4\) The available evidence however does not help us to precisely ascertain if the *muqaddams* were themselves non-residents (*pais*) or there were separate *muqaddams* for the *paikashtas*, or both. It may also be mentioned that the

\(^1\) The *kamejas* or the resident cultivators were the ones who held and cultivated the lands by themselves; the *pahl*, meant "the peasant (*ralyat*) in one *mauza* and is subordinate to one zamindari and carries on cultivation in the zamindari of another zamindar". For a detailed view, Satish Chandra "Some Aspects of Indian Village Society in Northern India during the 18th Century -(The position and Role of the *khudkasht and pahi kasht*", pp 245-56).

\(^2\) *Account*, f. 202b.

\(^3\) *Ibid*, f 202a.

\(^4\) *Mazruat mawza Mahej P C No.* 209 a.

269
muqaddams were holders of lands in their own right, independent of the muqaddami. They could be the khudkashtas as also held lands which were cultivated by other cultivators (muzarian) of unspecified description.¹

The muqaddami was, by and large, confined to the most important section of the village community and the muqaddams were the superior members of the populace.² But the the muqaddami doesnot, by and large, seem to have been enjoyed by a single individual in a village.³ Excepting mawza Shahbari (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) we donot come across any village which had only one muqaddam.⁴ From a document dated 1699 A D (1111 AH) it would appear that there were not less then Three patels in village Santhal of the same pargana.⁵

1. The muqaddams held lands in talpad (raiyati) as well as in the bantha portion of a zamindar. Mazruat-i-mawza Khatar, 26 R Y Aurangzeb, P.C. No.161; Mazruat-i-mawza Dhamanwan, 1140 fasli; Mazruat-i-mawza Mahej, 1146 fasli; Mazruat-i-mawza Majhol, 1151 fasli, P.C. Nos. 91,93; see also P.C. Nos 278-79 of 1709-10 A D.


3. In its description of the muqaddams of the villages of pargana Kadi the Account invariably suffixes the expression ' and other' (Waghaira) after naming the muqaddam of a village. In case the work does not specify the name and simply puts the caste, it likewise puts them in plural - Rajputan, Baqqalan etc; see also Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p 129.

4. For more references, please see discussion below.

5. Yad-dasht girasia waghaira mawza Santhal amla pargana haveli Ahmadabad, R.No.37, Pune.
Another document (1702 AD) specifies as many as nine *muqaddams* in mawza Deoli, *pargana* Chorasi (*sarkar* Surat).¹ Evidently sway of each *muqaddam's* right would extend to a portion of the village, or else to a part in the revenues thereof. The situation, it may be postulated, would also lead to intensifying the *muqaddam's* hold over the *raiyyat*.

As regard caste-composition of the *muqaddam* some valuable information is available in the pages of *Account* which furnishes detailed list of the *muqaddams*, their caste or community for the villages of *pargana* Kadi (*sarkar* Ahmadabad) for the first quarter of the eighteenth century.² As mentioned earlier 211 of the 282 villages had *muqaddams*. The caste wise composition of the specified 211 villages having *muqaddams* may be summarised as under:

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1. *Yad-dashat maqaddaman mawza*, Deoli *amia pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, R No. 37, Pune.

CASTE/COMMUNITY-WISE BREAK UP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kunbis:Rajputs:Baqqals:Zannar:Badaro:Other:Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>:--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percentage:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(211=100):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is thus evident that the cultivating class (kunbis)\(^1\) formed the majority (70\%) of muqaddams in the pargana. The remaining positions were held by others, presumably the non-cultivating section of the society. Of them the Rajput-muqaddams enjoyed a predominant position. But their overall proportion (18.4 percent) in the muqaddami is significantly much less than their proportionate share in the

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1. According the Lughat-i-Gujri 'Kunbi' was a Gujarati equivalent of al-muzare' i.e. the cultivator (p.229); The Rasmala (p. 542) also describes them as the most industrious cultivators of the region. This work don't specify their castes and they find description as cultivators regardless of their caste. It is also a well known fact that high caste Hindus did not cultivate lands directly with their own hands. Also see, Baden Powell Land System of British India III, Oxford, London, n.d, p.336.) who says that the kunbi is the most numerous land holding caste. They are "almost certainly a mixed race". But in the modern day Gujarat the 'Kunbi patels' are counted as Rajputs.
zamindari of the known villages in the same pargana. More significant to note is the presence of baqqals i.e. petty traders and money lenders, whose proportion which being 4.3 per cent is not very high. However it suggests the penetration of trading class into the ruling section of land magnats. The Charans & Bhats (badfaroshan), the Brahmans (zannardaran) and the Muslims had also made inroads but their over all proportion (3.33%) was, significantly, not very high. It is however evident that the muqaddami was not necessarily monopolised by any single caste or community and it seems to have been enjoyed by, relatively, a wider section of the society. Finally the majority of the muqaddami position being held by the Kunbis the differentiation between the muqaddams and the cultivators was not much wider and moreover both of them had, in their common positions as cultivators, identity of interests also.

The contemporary evidence does not help us to precisely ascertain if the muqaddami belonged to the castes that enjoyed predominance numerically or in terms of area of lands or both. The British, later on, noted that in the

1. Of 211 muqaddami villages we have definite information about the castes of zamindars of 154 villages. Of them (154) 140 (90.9%) were held by the Rajputs, five (3.5%) each by Muslims and the Bhats; one each (.65%) by Charans and Brahmans and two (1.3%) by the Kolis. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi PC Nos 3 to 7 read with Account ff 307b-8a.
villages of aboriginal tribes the patels belonged to one of the above tribes; in Koli villages a headman was usually a Koli. In other villages he was either a Kunbi, Rajput, Bhatela, Brahman, Malik, Muslim or a Salyed.¹

The present piece of information may also be utilised to ascertain relationship, if any, between the muqaddami and nature of the village i.e. zortalbi and the raiyati which is duly specified. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of villages:</th>
<th>Total No. = 282</th>
<th>Villages with muqaddam = 211</th>
<th>Villages without muqaddam = 71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raiyati: Zortalab</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raiyati: Zortalab</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raiyati: Zortalab</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raiyati: Zortalab</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage: 96.1 3.9 98.1 1.9 90.14 9.86

The proportion of zortalab villages in the pargana being 3.9 out of hundred does not seem to be very high. Of the raiyati villages, 98.1 percent were the ones having muqaddams whereas the percentage of the zortalab village having muqaddams being 1.9 percent was relatively less. It is evident that the proportion of the non-muqaddami zortalab villages (90.14 per cent) was relatively high in comparison to the proportion of the zortalab villages which had muqaddams.

dams (9.86 per cent). It is however difficult to suggest whether the presence of muqaddams influenced, or else was itself influenced by the feature of zortalbi. It is however evident that the zortalbi and the muqaddami were necessarily neither the corollary of and nor even consistent with each other.

As regard co-relationship, if any, subsisting between the caste of muqaddams and the zortalb it would appear that 75 per cent of the zortalb villages having muqaddams, were held by the kunbi muqaddams; remaining 25 percent were held by the Rajput muqaddams. It suggests that more Kunbi-held muqaddami villages were prone to the zortalbi. But when viewed in broader context, it would appear that:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Muqaddam's caste} & \text{Kunbi} & \text{Rajput} \\
\text{and the villages} & 148 & 22 \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Nature of villages: raiyati} & \text{zortalab} & \text{raiyati} & \text{zortalab} \\
\hline
\text{Number of villages:} & 145 & 3 & 21 & 1 \\
\hline
\text{Percentage} & 97.08 & 2.02 & 95.45 & 4.45 \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

: the proportion of the Kunbi held muqaddami villages (2.02 per cent) was comparatively less than the Rajput - muqaddami villages. It may however be pointed out that the muqaddami and zamindari of the single zortalab village was held by different persons but both of them happened to be Rajputs.
The available evidence may also be utilised to examine if the muqaddam was usually chosen from among the Primary zamindars and, for that matter the Superior zamindars also. The Account, as mentioned above, specifies 211 villages which had muqaddams. Of them 197 muqaddams have been duly named. The document entitled 

Yad-dasht dehat-i pargana Kadi specifies banthadaran (Superior and Primary zamindars) holding zamindaris in these villages. Besides, the Account also furnishes list of zamindars holding zamindaris in the same pargana during the same period of time. A comparative study of these sets of information reveals that none of the person holding muqaddami find description among the zamindars. Another document, though not dated however coming for the first quarter of the eighteenth century, specifies both the muqaddams as well as the qirasias (i.e. Primary zamindars) of mawza Santhal (pargana haveli Ahmabad). Again, the qirasias and the muqaddams appear to be

1. S. Nurul Hasan, Thoughts on Agraian relation, p. 31.
2. It is evident that the villages without muqaddams had zamindari lands. (Account, ff. 311a, 312b, 313a, 314b, 315a, 317a, 318a, 319a etc.). In these villages the muqaddami was not held by the zamindars also though they were very much there.
3. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi, op.cit.
5. Account, ff 308a -8b.
different persons.\(^1\) Similar information which is available for other parts also suggests that the zamindari and the muqaddami were held by different persons.\(^2\) Nevertheless, the possibility of muqaddams holding makan-i zamindari and giras rights may not be ruled out.\(^3\) In the light of the evidence cited above it would however appear that the muqaddami and the zamindari (i.e. Primary and the Superior one) were generally held by different persons. However the conclusion may not be pressed too far.

The available evidence though very limited in quantity and scope however suggests that the muqaddami and the desaigiri were generally, if not necessarily, held by different persons.\(^4\) The desaigiri of pargana Kadi was held by the persons who do not find mention among the duly named muqaddams of the pargana.\(^5\) Names of the muqaddams and the

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1. Yad-dasht muqaddaman-o girasia waghaira mawza Santhali amla pargana haveli Ahmadabad. R. No.37, Pune. The document names Detha, Rewa and Harkaran as the muqaddams; and Banji, Bheraji, Pethoji, Sahaji, Akraj and Jassaji as the girasias of the village.

2. Rasmala. pp 350-1, 431; SH Desai's Collection Nos. 14/1 (5); Baroda, 87 and 99.

3. Only two instances each showing the muqaddams as holder of a zamindari makan and giras lands are available. Account, f. 101b, P.C. No. 278.

4. Account, f. 17b.

5. Ibid, f 308a read with Ibid, ff 309a-38a.
desais also appear in the chaknamas. They are also duly named in a case of dispute on the inter-village boundary.

In all these instances the two sets of persons were different people. But it may not be emphatically asserted that the desais and the muqaddams were invariably different persons for the documents sometimes add the suffix "and other" (Wghaira) after a duly named muqaddams and, or, desais or both.

The muqaddam in Gujarat, like else where, was required to perform various duties as an intermediary between the state and the village under him.

The muqaddam, to beginwith, was associated with both the stages of revenue collections, viz., assessment (tashkhis) and collection (tehsil). From Aurangzeb's farman addressed to the then diwan-i subah Gujarat it would appear that the muqaddam was to be associated with land survey, presumably to make it acceptable and preclude the possibili-

1. See, for example, PC Nos. 40 of 1040 AH and 286/41G/Bha. of 31RY Aurangzeb's reign; Baroda, 57, 83.

2. The two available documents (PC Nos 88 and 271) mention Mathuradas as the desai of pargana Dholga. The muqaddams of specified villages of the pargana were Kashi-das, Gangadas, Jeewa, Manohar, Keso, Banarsi, Bhaoji Lakha, Sobhji and Reewadas. Another document (PC No.277), likewise mentions both of them. They are again different persons.
ty of complaints as had happened in the past.\(^1\) Detailed account of the surveyed lands was also to be prepared in co-operation with the muqaddams.\(^2\)

The *dastur-ul amals* appear to have been enforced through the *muqaddams*. Isa Tar Khan (1642-4) who is appreciated for his acts of "conciliations of the raiyat"\(^3\) is noticed to have furnished the detailed rates of assessment before the commencement of the sowing operation to the *raiyat* through the *muqaddams*.\(^4\) Alongwith the assessees - cultivators.

1. Please see Aurangzeb's *farman* (text) dt. 25 Rabi I, 25 RY, *Account*, f 24a. The *Mirat* reports that during Akbar's reign Shahabuddin Ahmad Khan had to 'survey the cultivable lands of *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad and other *parganas* a second time' due to complaints of the *raiyat* against the results of the first survey which was undertaken by Raja Todarmal. (*Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, p.141.). The *Account* (f.23a) identifies the *muqaddams* as the compliants - "*muqaddaman pargana mazkur..... nalish namude ki raqba dehat dar zabit Raja Todarmal zyada amde asti". It seems *muqaddams* were not involved, at least effectively, when the first survey was undertaken.


3. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I, p.217. Prior to Isa Tarkhan's act of conciliation which are not duly specified, Azam Khan had successfully subdued the rebels. But he had paid no heed to improve the condition of the *raiyat* and, as a result the *raiyat* had taken refuge under zamindars (i.e. rebel ones) of distant places. (*Ibid*, I, pp. 215-6). Isa Tarkhan is reported to have introduced *bhagwatai* (*ghalla bakhsi*) as the mode of assessment and collection and put the affairs in right order. Whether the present act of issuing the *destur* and *ganwat* in the above mentioned way was an improvement on, or simply act of re-inforcing the established practice is not precisely known. *Ibid*, I, pp 215-7.

4. *Dastur-ul amal* (Isa Tar Khan's period of subedari), a *naql*, PC No.41-5.
tors (muzarian) the muqaddams gave, before hand, their acceptance of the rates whereas the latter also undertook the responsibility to assess and collect the revenues as per agreement (ganwat). The muqaddams seem to have regarded the issuance of the ganwat through them as their privilege. For the administration, it would be an expedient way out.

Subsequent to their acceptance of the rates of assessment the muqaddams along the desai and revenue officials were involved in the fixation of jama. Following it he undertook the responsibility to collect from every assessee, the revenues fixed in accordance with the dastur-ul amal (mawa-fiq-i dastur-ul amal) under the supervision of the desai. The muqaddam's involvement in the process of collecting revenues was, under the Mughals, made during the reign of Emperor Akbar who had asked the diwan-i subah to collect

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1. Ibid.

2. Wajib-ul arz-i fidwi Metha, muqaddam mawza Faizabad urf Shahbari, P C No.36. It records : ganwat-o qawl o qarar b riaya -o muzarian ma'rifat banda az sarkar marahmat shawad.

3. The above quoted request is followed by the expression 'accepted'(manzoor ast). Another piece of information suggests that the work of assessment because of some disagreement on the rates of assessment, could not be carried on without active involvement of the muqaddams. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p 104-5.


5. Ibid.
revenues 'with the consultation of desais and muqaddams. 1

Emperor Jahangir had also directed the muqaddams of pargana haveli Baroda to collect revenues in consultation with the desais whose appointment was to be taken note of by them. 2 Isa Tarkhan’s ganwat deed of Shah Jahan’s reign specified muqaddams’ acceptance for collecting revenues. 3 A tamassuk (1077 fasli/1669-70 AD) records that Rs.3,25,072/- was assessed as the revenues on pargana haveli Ahmadabad for the kharif season. The document reflects the desais and the muqaddams undertaking responsibility of collecting the revenues. 4 In the parts of the subah which followed the system of bhagwatai the muqaddams saw that the harvested crops were carried to the threshing-floor of the village and heaped there properly until the state had taken, or assessed its share. 5

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2. Baroda farman; Junagadh, SC No.880 (maha) Junagadh).

3. P.C. No. 41.

4. Naqi tamassauk-i Nawab Mukarramat Khan, op cit. Beside being held responsible for explaining the cause in the fall in revenues, if any, the muqaddams were also required to realize 0 Rs.2/- per bigha of such lands which were tilled during the preceding year but left uncultivated during the year in question.

See also PC No.63a wajib-ul arz, cited above.

Besides, the muqaddams were also required to extend area of cultivation and promote the cultivation of cash crops.\(^1\) The muqaddams enjoyed the right for allotting the cultivable waste to such ones as wished to till.\(^2\) Also he pursued the aggrieved cultivators (kunbis) to undertake cultivation at right time.\(^3\) He was also to make arrangements for preventing migration of the ri'aya from his village.\(^4\)

Muqaddam's jurisdiction over the village was not exclusively confined to revenue matters.\(^5\) Though the state posted its own men- (swara-o-piyadah) in villages, the muqaddams could request for providing additional number of footmen to serve in the village under him.\(^6\) The British

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1. Please see tamassuk, ganwat deed and the wajib-ul arz cited in the preceding notes.

2. Geleynsen observed that "anyone who wants to cultivate any land goes to the headman of the village and asks for as much as he wants at place which suits him. This is rarely refused but always granted". Geleynsen, JIH, IV, pp 78-9 cited in Bombay Gazetteer, II, p 215 and 16. The chaks of the lands granted as madad-i ma'sh were also marked in consultation of and agreement with the muqaddams (b' razamandi or b' ittefaq).

3. Rasmala, p 544; Bombay Gazetteer, IV p. 147.


also found that muqaddam was held responsible for any crime committed within or near his village and he was answerable for the track of all thieves.¹

In his capacity as the chief representative of the village community the muqaddam seems to have played the role of village-host. As per the contents of the wajib-ul-ärz referred to above the muqaddam had requested the state to grant him eight bighas of land by way of pusaita to meet expenses on the entertainment of respectable person (mard-i abroo) and travellers(Kharj-i musafir).² Moreover the muqaddam also represented the village for settling the inter-village boundary disputes.³

1. Bombay Gazetteer, II. PP. 215 227; Ibid, VIII, 171-3. Also see Mr. Asstt. Collector Pyane's representation (1827, on Balasinor) regarding muqaddams' position in the Nawabi territory of Balasinor. According to it, the patel "collected rent from different cultivators, saw that the land actually in the possession of each cultivator agreed with what he ought to hold and bore the crops stipulated in the engagement, helped the tallati (patwari) to make out the cultivator's agreement, encouraged fresh cultivators to resort to the village, brought its waste land under tillage and acted as an officer of the police.

2. Wajib-ul-ärz, op.cit. It was accordingly granted.

3. PC Nos. 88 and 271. Accordingly to the British officials the patel 'governed' the village, 'managed' the village affairs and settled disputes. In religious and social matters he took the lead. He had the privilege of dignity and precedence on ceremonial occasions. Bombay Gazetteer, II, p 382; Ibid, (kaira), p. 91; Baden Powell, Village community, pp 10-1; Land system, I, p.153.
Share:

The *muqaddam* like *desai* was entitled to a share in the revenues taken from the *riaya* as state's claim. Share of *muqaddams* was fixed at 2.5 per cent of the revenues collected from the *khalsa* and *jagir* lands during Emperor Akbar's reign. Since no change is reported during the subsequent days it would therefore appear that the rate remained unchanged. From the document reflecting actual revenue returns and disbursement thereof, it would appear that the *muqaddam* was not given the share out of the salami or *pesh-kash* extorted from holders of the *bantha*. His share was calculated out of the revenue proceeds from the *taipad* portion only. As such the *muqaddam's* interests were confined to the *taipad* i.e. his interests were not consistent with the *bantha-dar*.

Besides, the *muqaddams* also held *pusaita* lands which were assessed at concessional rates or were wholly exempt from paying revenues.

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2. See for the year 1692-93, *Jama-o Kharj pargana* Petlad, *Sarkar Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif... 1105 fasli* R.No.29, Pune.

3. *Ibid*, If the portions of (*taipad*) lands were held as *madad-i ma'sh* the *muqaddams* enjoyed his share. *P C* No.60.
The *pusaita* possessions of *muqaddams* could be there in the *talpad*, the *bantha* as well as in the villages lands of which were not divided on *bantha-talpad* lines.¹

*Muqaddams' karinda* nature of whose rights and obligation do not find description, are also noticed as holding *pusaita* lands beside *muqaddams*.² The *pusaita* lands were cultivated by cultivators (*muzarian*) of unspecified description. Since these cultivators are duly specified amongst the *assessees*³ it would therefore appear that *muqaddams' entitlement* was qualified and he does not seem to be absolute owner of lands held as *pusaita*.

As regard the revenue proceeds from the *pusaita* lands the state claimed a share, proportion of which could vary from time to time and place to place. The earliest available *dastur-ul amal* specifying rates for the *pusaita* lands of *muqaddams* dates back to *isa* Tarkhan's period of *subedar* (1642-4).⁴ The *dastur* records the state's share as

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1. Please see *muzruat* documents, *PC* Nos. 161 (26th R.Y. Aurangzeb), 278-9 (1113 *fasli*, *kharif*), 93 (*kharif* 1136 *fasli*) and the ones available in R. No. 37, Pune, particularly for the years 1117, 1119, 1127, 1131, 1133, 1137 *fasli*.


'less by one-third' (Sayoom hissa kam) i.e. two-third of the revenue was to be taken by the state and the remaining one-third was to be retained by the muqaddam. But later Prince Aurangzeb (1645-6) adopted harsh attitude, attaching whole of the revenues of the pusaita in favor of state. Later Ghairat Khan (1648-50) reverted back to the rates which were

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1. Destur-ul amal of Shahzada Aurangzeb, FC No 51. As such the prince disallowed the muqaddams from enjoying any share in the pusaita lands. It may be added that the prince had, likewise, disallowed all the non-serving sections (i.e. Brahmans, Bhattas, Charans, Kolis and others) from enjoying any share in the pusaita lands. Ibid. His action which did hurt their interests must have annoyed the socially influential people.

The Mirat notes that subedar Aurangzeb "had collected a large number of servants for establishment of order and chastisement of rebels". Who the rebels were? It is observed that during his period of subedar "expenses were more than income" of the Nazim - (Mirat-i Ahmadi, I pp 219-21). Apparently because he had to maintain larger establishment of soldiers than was usually required under normal circumstances.

Aurangzeb stayed as subedar for less than two years (Ibid). Shaista Khan, the next incumbent "in spite of the mansab of 5000 sawars (2 x 3 h) and land revenue of an annual sum of 500,000 rupees for provision of 3000 sebandi sawars... failed to chastise and punish the rebels and kolis of the subah in a manner he sought to have done." (Ibid, I, pp 224).

Shaista Khan was replaced by Prince Dara who governed the subah through his deputy, Ghairat Khan. The khan restored the status quo ante and followed the desturs which were enforced under Isa Tarkhan. The khan ran the administration smoothly. He was replaced by Shaista Khan again. This time Shaista khan managed the affairs well without facing difficulties similar to the ones he was confronted with earlier. Whether Aurangzeb and Shaista khan (first tenure) had faced the problems and rebellions because of their harsh attitude towards the pusaita holders, is the question worth investigating into.
applicable during Isa Tarkhan's period of administration.\(^1\) The same rates were kept up in the *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad during the later period.\(^2\) The *muqaddams* *pusaita* in *pargana* Mundah were assessed on *bilmuqta* (lumpsum) basis.\(^3\) *Muqaddams* of some villages in the same *pargana* paid the state an amount which ranged between one to two and a half *mehmudis* per *bigha* of the *pusaita* lands.\(^4\) In some parts of *sarkar* Ahmadabad they paid it @ one rupee per *bigha*.\(^5\) In *pargana* Bheel of the same *sarkar* the *muqaddams* enjoyed entire revenues of the *pusaita* lands.\(^6\)

The *muqaddams*, moreover, contracted *ijara* rights during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb.\(^7\) Beside enjoying a share in the revenues and part or whole of the revenues of the *pusaita* lands the *muqaddams* were recepients of some other concessions also. The *muqaddams* enjoyed exemptions from paying required taxes on pur-

\[^1\] *Dastur-ulamal* P.C. Nos. 46-8.
\[^3\] *Account*, f. 339a.
\[^5\] *Ibid* f 350a.
\[^7\] *Mirat-i Ahamadi*, I p 292.
chase of cattles and houses.\(^1\) Also they enjoyed exemption from paying a cess levied on the occasion of Holi.\(^2\) However, the paikashta - muqaddams were required to pay half a mehmudi per cow maintained by them.\(^3\)

Information casting light on the relationship between the muqaddams and other zamindars is hardly available. From the available evidence it would however appear that muqaddams could come into clash with the desais as well as the two could join hands.\(^4\) As regard their relationship with other zamindars two pieces of information indicating two different state of relationship are available. Thus Kanji, a Koli zamindar of Chunwal - a region noted for its recalcitrance killed the muqaddams of Detroj for he had refused to 'pay obeisance to Kanji', the Koli chief.\(^5\) But the Patel of Gariadhar rendered valuable assistance to the zamindar of the place against his opponents.\(^6\)

\(^1\) Account ff 364a - 4b.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid. The muqaddams were also required to bear the two-third cost of the qaba-i kotwal to be offered every year. Ibid. f 364a.
\(^4\) For references and details please see discussion under 'desais' in the preceding part of the chapter.
\(^5\) Rasmala, pp 430-31.
\(^6\) Ibid p 350.
From the preceding discussion it would appear that the 

muqaddam being a man of the village and member of its commu-
nity, must have been quite strong a person, more so because 
he was vested with such administrative powers which brought 
him into active dealings with and further placed him over 
and above the villagers in general.¹ Though they enjoyed a 
position secondary to that of the desais but within the 
respective villages of their possessions the muqaddams might 
have been much stronger than the former.

C- IJARADARS:

Ijaradar was also an intermediary who collected reve-

nues accruing from a specified source, generally the land. 
By virtue of contracting ijara, the ijaradar was vested 
with the right of collecting revenues on behalf of the 
state, or its assignees for a fixed period of time. It was 
a time-bound non-hereditary contract-based position.² 

Important fact is that an ijaradar had to pay a * fixed 
amount in cash irrespective of the amount collected from the 

¹ The ballad, called "The koonbee's Grief" which was a 
favourite song of the kunbis' (cultivator's) women in 
Gujarat, records the resentment of the cultivators 
against the zamindars who "plunder us of the produce 
of our cows." But it does not speak against the patel 
who also finds mention in the song. Rasmaia, pp. 543- 
5.

² N A Siddiqi, op.cit, p.93; Irfan Habib, Agrarian Sys-
tem, p. 233.
peasants.\textsuperscript{1} The Mughal state did not regard \textit{ijara} as a sound revenue arrangement and, therefore, disapproved of it.\textsuperscript{2} However, the practice crept into both the \textit{khalsa} and the \textit{jagir} lands during the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{3} Consequently there emerged a new intermediary position.

As regard the seventeenth century Gujarat the available information is insufficient to form a tenable view. It however suggests that the \textit{ijara} was practised during the second half of the century. According to the earliest available piece of information coming for the 30th R Y of Shah Jahan's reign one Satidas Sahu\textsuperscript{4} held \textit{mawza} Sankhesh-

\begin{enumerate}
\item Irfan Habib, \textit{Agrarian System}, pp. 233-4. Very similar to them were the \textit{muqtal} who paid on their own lands a fixed amount' 'periodically assessed' on the basis of 'a fixed rate of revenue per bigha'. The \textit{bilmuqta} arrangement also signified a fixed revenue demand on the whole village', or a larger area. \textit{Ibid}, p.233.
\item \textit{Ibid}, pp. 234-5; N A Siddiqi, \textit{op cit.}, p.93.
\item Irfan Habib finds it difficult to say how widespread the practice of \textit{muqtal} and \textit{ijara} was during the period. \textit{Agrarian System}, p. 235. But N A Siddiqi opines that the \textit{ijara} had become quite widespread in the course of the seventeenth century. But his view is not duly substantiated. N A Siddiqi, \textit{op.cit}, p.93.
\item Satidas (Shantidas) was the principal representative of the wealthy and powerful Swetambor Jain community of Western India. He was also receipient of revenue grants from Shah Jahan and Aurangeab as will be seen in the following chapter. M S Commissariat, Imperial Mughal farmans in Gujarat' (Reprint), \textit{Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic society}, Vol. IX, Pt-1, July 1940, pp 12-7.
\end{enumerate}
war¹ (pargana Munjpur) in ijara on the basis of sanads of the imperial court (asnadi-i dargaati) and the former officials since sometime in past. The sahu paid Rs.1050/- inclusive of customary cesses, presumably on per annum basis to the jagirdars. The document further provides that the place be kept in ijara in Sahu's favour 'Intact in accordance with the (previous) practice and make no change or alteration' therein.²

Another piece of information which is contained in the pages of the Mirat, is the farman of Emperor Aurangzeb (1676) dealing with specific situation in Gujarat. It appears that the practice of farming out lands to the chaudharis (desails) and muqaddams in the province was reported to the Emperor. It was pointed out that the practice led to the injustice and caused oppression of the raiyat. The emperor disapproved of the practice and issued an order to put a check upon it. It prohibited the practice of ijara in khalsa and jagir lands. The farman makes it evident that


2. MS Commissariat "Imperial Mughal farmans", op cit, Plate No. XIII.
ijara as a practice lay under official disapproval in general and in case the ijaradar happened to be intermediaries or the revenue officials it was disapproved strongly.1 Evidently the practice had penetrated both into the khalsa and the jagir lands and the revenue officials as well as the intermediaries contracted ijara rights.

Practice of levying fixed sums of money for a given duration on a village would not really have been much different from the one of giving the revenues on ijara. In this and broader sense of the term, ijara was practised even after Aurangzeb's farman prohibiting the practice outright.

From the hasil figures available for a number of villages2 of pargana haveli Ahmadabad it would appear that:

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2. Jama mawazi', pargana haveli Ahmadabad, PC Nos.123-25; mawazna pargana haveli Ahmadabad, leaves Nos. 15, 19, 22, 44. The information for two or more consecutive years is available for 67 villages. No such fixed amount was realized from the remaining 52 villages for any number of years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Amount of hasil in rupees and years of receipt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1684-85) : (1685-86) : (1686-87) : (1687-88) : (1688-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Churasma: 3253/-</td>
<td>3253/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Darapur: 1653/10</td>
<td>1653/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lailapur: 974/12</td>
<td>974/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Koba: 1874/-</td>
<td>1874/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kochrab: 3749/-</td>
<td>3749/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Balhapur: 471/-</td>
<td>471/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Muzaffarpur: 2461/4</td>
<td>2461/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Nawapura: 2313/2</td>
<td>2313/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Heerpur: 189/11</td>
<td>189/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Banodra: 1562/8</td>
<td>1562/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Rahneb: 190/-</td>
<td>1201/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Dhamanwan: 6815/-</td>
<td>6990/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Dantali: 1746/-</td>
<td>1771/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Budhathal: 2510/-</td>
<td>2585/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fixed amount was realized from a number of villages, the duration of amount having remained fixed at the same figure, could range from two (sl. Nos. 9-11, 13-15) to five years.
(Sl.Nos. 1 to 4). Secondly the amount could be refixed. In such cases the volume of fixed-amount could be more than the one realized during the immediately preceding (Sl.Nos. 12, and 15) and the succeeding (Sl.Nos. 5, 6, 8, 10, 14 and 15) year. Likewise the amount so fixed, or refixed, could also be less than the ones realized during the immediately preceding (Sl.No.13) as well the succeeding (Sl.Nos. 7, 9, and 11) years. Also different amount could be fixed for the same village but for different sets of years (Sl.Nos. 10 and 14). Also the amount fixed for the next time (Sl.No. 10 for 1094, 1095 fasli, Sl. No.14 for 1095, 1096 fasli) could be less than the one fixed and realized earlier (Sl.No.10 for 1092 and 1093 fasli; Sl.No.14 for 1093, 1094 fasli). Finally, some exercise in calculations appears to have been made before fixing the amount which therefore does not seem to have been settled arbitrarily.

But the point remains as to who paid the amount so fixed? The practice of realizing fixed revenues existed there though it might not have prevailed everywhere: the information is available for 67 villages of which it is noticeable in the above mentioned 15 villages only.

From the preceding discussion it would appear that the jurisdictional authority of a desai extended to cover wider
areas as compared to that of muqaddams, sway of whose rights hardly extended beyond the boundaries of a village. However, the muqaddam having deeper roots in the village community commanded more power within his limited area of operation in his own right than a desai whose power base lay in the patronage extended to him by the Mughals. The desai emerges more as a representative of the Mughals whereas the muqaddam looks more closely associated with the community. Also the desais who were in direct communication with the centre also, seem to have developed better working relationship with the jagirdars as different from the muqaddam who emerge as espousing the cause of the revenue-payers. Similarly an ijaradar, an undesirable entrent imposed from above, seems to have had, in this capacity, no local power base.
CHAPTER IV

INTERMEDIARY ZAMINDARS

(1700 - 50)

The position and role of intermediary zamindars underwent a discernable change during the first half of the eighteenth century. The available evidence suggests that two stages of revenue arrangements, viz; assessment and the collection, by and large intermingled with each other. Accordingly, the position of the intermediary zamindars who were associated with the process of assessment and collection of revenues affected and in turn was affected by the emerging pattern which is well reflected the way the state demand was fixed and realized. Though the emerging process and pattern of change is well marked, it does not seem to have been uniform all through the region as also for both the intermediaries - the desai and the muqaddam.

Before studying changes and highlighting the position it seems worthwhile to briefly outline the developments which relate to the process of assessment and collection of revenues, the main sphere of activity of intermediary zamindars.

Declining administrative control over the countryside coupled with increasing recalcitrance and accentuation
of the centripetal forces rendered the working of revenue machinery quite difficult. 1

To allow its officials to combine powers, financial and executive, into one hand partly appears to be the imperial response to meet the challenge at local levels. 2 The attempt which seems to have met with some success initially does not appear to have proved a long lasting solution. 3 Particularly from the opening years of the fourth decade of the eighteenth century, these officials increasingly failed in the most basic task of effecting assessment and collection of revenues. 4

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1. For increasing recalcitrance and activisation of the centripetal forces please see Chapter VII, Introduction to the present study & Chapters II and VI.

2. For details and references please see Introduction and Chapter II above; also see please Mirat-i Ahmadi; II pp. 48, 94,103,105-7,117,145,147,165-6,188,192-3, 257, 264,284.

3. For the success please particularly see Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 94,165 and also ibid II, p 6 read with yad-dasht pargana Dholqa, op. cit, PC nos 14-7. But such officials also resorted to exploitation of the riaya. Mirat-i Ahmadi,II, pp. 94,105.

4. These officials had to apply force for effecting assessment and collection (Mirat-i Ahmadi ,II pp. 50,165-6). It has been pointed out earlier that the strength commanded by them was increasingly found insufficient to meet the challenges faced by them. To cite few instances of their incapacity to perform the basic duties: Himmat Dil Khan, the patrolling faujdar-amin and amil of pargana haveli. Ahmedabad failed (1733-34) to effect assessment and collection of revenues; Jawanmard Khan Babi could not effect assessment (1732-33) in the parganas under his charge; Safdar Khan Babi (1732-33) too "was not able to assess" revenues in the parganas under his charge" ibid II, pp. 105,107 172, 186;
Particularly from the fourth decade of the eighteenth century the very process of effecting assessment seems to have undergone a radical change. In the first place the expeditionary forces led by the Governor, or some other strong military commander came to effect assessment. Thought the expeditions were led even earlier, the Mirat speaks of the first such expedition which was led for the "assessment of parganas" in 1722 under the then Nazims' command. The Nazim who moved around various parts of the subah reached Patan for assessment and collection of revenues. Later on (1727) Mubarriz-ul mulk is also reported to have led military expedition for the assessment and collection of revenues, beside the tribute from zamindars. During the subsequent

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Also see please ibid II pp 246-8; Ahwai Gekwad MS. NO. 129 (By anonymous), Apparao Bhola Nath collection Ahmadabad, ff. 12-13; Rai Gobindas Kayath, MS No. 105 ap cit ff 37, 43-4 47.

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi specifies the expeditions which were generally led even earlier but for a different purpose—making administrative arrangements, establishing order, collecting peshkash from the noted recalcitrants and taking punitive actions and preventive steps. ibid. I. pp. 324(1688) 325(1690), 326(1691), 330(1694)381(1707) 383 (1708), 387 (1711), 394 (1712), 396 (1712-13), 397-98 (1713), 407 (1714), and passim.

2. ibid, II p. 45; for a similar expedition led by diwan-i subah ibid II . p 10.

3. ibid II p 46

4. ibid II p 93
years every Nazim had to lead expeditionary forces for the "assessment of mal-i wajib" from "malkuzars", beside collection of peshkash at the "time of harvesting season". It thus shows that the local machinery of revenue administration had failed to carry out its duties, obviously in the face of opposition put up in the countryside. It may particularly be mentioned that the Nazim had to visit "every pargana" for assessment purposes.

Secondly, the other zamindars, on a large scale, emerged as intermediaries between the villagers and the state. The banthadarans as pointed out elsewhere occupied talpad and raiyati lands. The Mirat states that "whenever the Nazim of the subah leads an army the banthadaran who utilize talpad present by way of peshkash worthy of that place (i.e. talpad and bantha). As such the holders of bantha not only changed the nature of revenues from mal-i wajib to peshkash but also stepped into the shoes of the

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1. Ibid, II, pp 98-9 (1727), 110 (1729), 243-44 (1736), 246-47 (1737), 248 (1738) 257 (1739), 258 (1739-40), 262 (1740-41), 265 (1741), 279.
3. For a detailed view please see discussion in the Chapters II and VI.
4. For details please see discussion in Chapters II and VI.
intermediary zamindars.¹

Thirdly, the basis of assessment (i.e. capacity to pay) also appears to have been replaced by the capacity to extort. The *Mirat* observes that the *Nazims* led military expedition to capture revenues, the amount of which was determined "in accordance with his own strength and the exigency of the situation".² It may be appreciated with reference to the timings of leading expeditions (i.e. at the time of harvesting season) which would indicate that the earlier practice of calculating the state's share at the time or soon after the sowing season had, apparently been abandoned.

Thus the power of state to collect revenues increasingly deteriorated. It has been discussed in the Introduction that the productivity of the soil had not eroded but the volume of the revenue-receipts reaching provincial capital dwindled and each *Nazim* from the period of Sarbuland Khan onward was confronted with the difficulty of the paucity of funds. Further the revenues of *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad

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2.

3. But it was not invariably the case. There were villages in *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad where the *banthadaran* had not been able to bring whole area of the village under their control. Thus see for instance, *Mazruaat* documents for the villages bof Balad (1141 *fasli*) Palri kochrab (1142 *fasli*) *Tarah* Rachyal buzurg (1143 *fasli*) *Tarah* Nazriat (1144 *fasli*) *Tarah* Daryapur (1144 *fasli*); R No 21 Pune Rachyal Khurd (1143 *fasli*), Runhasan (1137 *fasli*) Dantyal (1148 *fasli*) Dantiyali; (1149 *fasli*) Khoranj (1153 *fasli*) R Nos 22, Pune.

dropped to Rs. 2,34,734/- in 1727 and then to Rs. 49,134/- in 1743 from Rs. 50,7134/- in the year 1714. 1

Another set of information indicates a fall in the area actually cropped in mawza Rakhyal buzurg, (pargana haveli Ahmedabad) between the years 1717-18 and 1742-43 for which the information is available. 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years cropped area (Rabi and kharif)</th>
<th>Total years cropped area</th>
<th>Total revenue receipt</th>
<th>Rise (+) and fall (-) in base year = 1717-18</th>
<th>Average amount/ bigha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1717-8</td>
<td>673-10</td>
<td>4827 4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718-19</td>
<td>630-7</td>
<td>4722 2</td>
<td>93.6 (-6.4)</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1721-22</td>
<td>703-18</td>
<td>2401 0</td>
<td>104.6 (+4.6)</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1729-30</td>
<td>411-0</td>
<td>2023 0</td>
<td>62.6 (-37.4)</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1742-43</td>
<td>359-0</td>
<td>668 0</td>
<td>53.3 (-46.7)</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Mawazna subah Gujarat fis sinwat sarkar Ahmedabad, paragana haveli 1122 fasli to 1135 fasli; Yaddasht jamabandi dehat pargana haveli Ahmedabad, 1151 fasli amal Renkoji Pandit. The last document furnishes income of the villages under Marathas and other titled the same way furnishes details of income of the villages under Momin Khan, the Mughal Subedar. P.C.

2. Mazruat mawza Rakhyal buzurg, pargana haveli Ahmedabad, fasli-i kharif 1126,1127,1130,1148 and 1151 fasli, P.C. Nos 110-29, 135; Ibid for fasli-i rabi for the same years R.No 37 Pune; Mawazna subah Gujarat fis-sinwant sarkar Ahmedabad, pargana haveli Ahmedabad 1122 to 1137 fasli; Jamabandi dehat pargana haveli Ahmedabad, fasli-i kharif-o rabi 1148 fasli; yaddasht mal-i wajib, Rakhyal buzurg 1151 fasli P.C.
Barring 1721-22 the area under actual cultivation fell every year so much so that it fell by 46.7 percent in 1742-43 as compared to the year 1717-8. But the fall in the cropped area may not be taken on its face value. It is because of the fact that the recorded information was furnished by the muqaddam for the last two years (1729-30 & 1742-3) and not by the patwari who furnished the same for the first three years.¹

But, then, the volume of revenues actually received also fell by 86.3 percent in 1742-3 as compared to the year 1717-8. Also the per-bigha revenue collection which (calculated by dividing the amount by the area) comes to Rs. 7.16 per bigha (1717-8) fell to Rs. 1.81 per bigha only. Since no change in the crop pattern is noticeable, it may be taken to mean that the state's power to collect revenues even in the villages which were located in close proximity to the seat of provincial power, had deteriorated considerably i.e. the hold of the zamindars, and in the present and similar cases other intermediary zamindar, had considerably increased on the sources of revenue. The evidence in hand is too limited to indicate a general trend. However it suggests

¹. For a view of muqaddam stepping into the patwari's and desai's shoes please see discussion under 'Patel' in the following pages.

302
a sharper deterioration in the amount of revenues as compared to the noticed fall (even if the figures are taken on their face value) in the area under actual cultivation.

Not that the intermediary zamindars passed under the authority of the banthadaran who had forcibly occupied the talpad lands. The state itself superimposed over and above them another intermediary, the ijarahdar.

1jarahdars:

It has been noted in the previous Chapter that the ijarahdar exercised contracted rights over a specified source of revenue for stipulated period of time. Ijarahdar's income depended on the difference between the amount actually collected and the amount paid, the latter i.e. the contracted sum, generally happened to be a fixed amount which was determined in advance.¹ During the period (1700-50) some significant changes are noticeable in the role and position of ijarahdars.

In spite of remaining distasteful to the reigning emperor, the practice of farming revenues did continue

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1. Miraz-I Ahmadi; II pp. 56-7 103, 107, 135 145 165-6 172, 186, 248; N.A. Siddiqi, op.cit. pp 93-4.

303
during the period. Though specific information about the practice for Mughal Gujarat is not available for the first two decades of the century, the ijarahdari however seems to have been practiced even during these years. From the available information it would appear that ijarah came to be contracted on a larger scale, particularly during the third and the fourth decade of the century.

During the period new sources of revenues such as imposts on fords and passages, tax collection office of miscellaneous duties (city of Ahmadabad), offices of zakat, faujdari and mahal paibaqi in addition to land revenue (khalsa and jagir) inclusive of peshkash from zamindars came to be contracted by ijarahdars.

1. It is reported that strict rules and regulations for transacting business in all departments were disregarded since the reign of Jahandar Shah. Under his successor the entire administration was thrown into confusion. Continuation of ijarah on a much wider scale in the empire during the early years of Mohammad Shah's reign is attested by Nizam-ul mulk's proposal (1721) requesting the emperor to abolish the practice. But Wazir's scheme could not materialize and the practice continued even during rest of period. Muntakhab-ul Lubab, pp. 378-80; Sahih-ul Akhbar, Elliot and Downson, VIII p. 315; Irvine, Later Mughals. p.375 NA Siddiqi op.cit pp. 93-8.

2. According to the author of Mirat-i Mustafabad "the places situated far off the head quarter (of sarkar Soreth i.e. Junagadh) were farmed out" even during this period. ibid p. 379.

The *ijarah* was usually contracted for a specified duration but sometimes no such time limit was imposed. 1 *In view of the nature of source of revenue the *ijarah* could be contracted on daily basis, for a crop season and a year which, if agreed to, could be renewed for another term.* 2

A significant development of the period is that the adherence to the terms and conditions came to be depended on the relative strength of the contracting parties. Maharaja Abhay Singh (1733) terminated the *ijarah* contract with Momin Khan before its expiry as the *ijarahdar* had invited his displeasure and, therefore, the rights were transferred to another *ijarahdar* on similar terms and conditions. 3 The Maharaja's *naib* however failed to force another *ijarahdar* to surrender his rights which he continued to enjoy even after the expiry of the stipulated period. 4 Similarly Sher Khan

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1. The *faujdar* of Dholqa (*Sarkar Ahmadabad*) is reported to have given away villages on *ijara* to *girasias* in perpetuity (*b'tariq-i istamrari*) as a result "fertile places went into their possessions which implied sale to them". (*qiryat-i jeed b'tasarruf an ha raft k' dar ma'nî farokhtan bud.*) *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II p 97.

2. Office of miscellaneous duties was farmed out on daily basis, Jawanmard Khan Babi held a few *parganas* only for a year. Some other *parganas* which were held by one noble in one year, were farmed out to another the following year. For the same and similar references, please see *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II pp.103,106-7,115,141,167,183-4.


4. *Ibid* II pp 192-93
Babi managed to retain the office of Naib-faujdar (Sarkar-Soreth) which he held by way of ijarah against the wishes of the faujdar-ijarahdar at imperial court.\(^1\) One of the ijarah-dars, relatively a weaker person (peshkar), who failed to pay the contracted amount due to losses suffered by him, was imprisoned by the Subedar.\(^2\) But Safdar Khan Babi, a strong noble of the region successfully disregarded (1734-35) the terms of contract. He did not pay the contracted sum and escaped any action against him.\(^3\)

Territorial boundaries of ijarahdars ranged between wide limits. Extending from a specific source of revenue of a given place, or a portion of village, it could cover an entire village, group of villages, a pargana, group of parganas and even an entire sarkar.\(^4\)

\(^1\) Ibid II p 102

\(^2\) Ibid II pp 107-8

\(^3\) Ibid II pp 167,172,186; Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat, f. 63; Ahwal-i Gaekwad, f. 13. Safdar Khan Babi had on his own volition withdrawn before the expiry of the term, thus terminating the contract on his own.

\(^4\) Faujdar of Dholga had given villages on ijarah; Jiwan Chughal, a seth & money lender, had acquired parganas of Dholqa, Bharuch Jamusar and Maqbulabad on ijarah; Jawanmard Khan Babi, Momin khan and Safdar khan Babi contracted ijarah nights which extended from a single pargana to a group of paraganas. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 56 97 107 135 145 167 172 183-4 186 192-3; Document entitled mauziat-i ijarah pargana havell Ahmedabad fasl-i kharif-o rabi R.No. 21 Pune; Ibid R No 31.
Excepting Jiwan Chughal, a seth who had contracted 

ijarah for four parganas (1725) the ijara rights over vast 
tracts seem to have been contracted by influential nobles of 
the region holding the offices of Mutasaddi of port (Port 
officer), faujdar and naib- faujdars and commanding power.\(^1\) 
Initially the members of mercantile class like money lend-
ers, businessmen, petty traders also contracted ijarah 
rights over the revenues accruing from the sources situated 
in and around Ahmadabad.\(^2\) But the girasias, patels and some 
other zamindars appear to be more numerous among the ijarah-
dars, exercising the rights directly as ijarahdar or else, 
as sub-ijarahdars.\(^3\)

The income of the ijarahdars depended on the difference 
between the amount contracted (or paid) and actually col-

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 50 103, 107, 116,135,145 
167,172,183-4 186; Ahwai-i Gaekwad,f.13; Mukhtasar 
Tarikh-i Gujarat, f.83

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 56 97 141 145 PC No 279 Rasmala p 9; Mirat-i Mustafabad, p 136 Yaddasht-pargana haveli 
Ahmadabad ijarahdaran (1727) Pune R.No 37

3. Yad-dasht : pargana Petlad, R.No 57 Pune; Yad-dasht - 
ijarahdaran, Sarkar Ahmadabad R.No.67 Pune. On peninsu-
lar Gujarat the zamindars are reported to have acted as 
sub-ijarahdars ; Leading superior zamindars like the 
one of Bhaonagar and Chhhaïyan contracted such rights, 
towards the south of Ahmadabad (on main land Gujarat) 
desias were found to be the main beneficiaries of the 
practice. Rasmala pp 402-4 Mirat-i Mustafabad pp 123 
(Kaira) p 89 Gazetteer of Bhavnagar p 87; Baden Pow-
ell, Land System III pp 286-7.
lected. The *ijarhdar* would therefore endeavour to maximise the collections and, or minimize the remittance for making profits within the logical limits. Since the available sources do not specify the amount it is hardly possible to form a tenable view. But the fact that the same person could contract *ijarah* rights repeatedly suggests that the *ijarhdar* must have made profits. According to the works of later date the *desais* who had contracted *ijarah* right in southern Gujarat were found in a state of opulence. Some *patels* in the same region were found to have lost their positions to the *ijarhdar-desais* who had stepped into the shoes of village headman. Some *desais* and the *patels* later on claimed ownership rights over the lands which they had continuously held on *ijarah*. In *pargana* Dholqa *ijarhdars* seem to have virtually turned into land owners. As regards the impact of the *ijarhdari* emperor Aurangzeb had observed that "tyranny and oppressions are caused to *riaya* in various

\[\textbf{References}\]

1. N.A. Siddiqi *op cit* pp 93-4
3. *Ibid*.
5. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II p 97
ways*.1 But the nature, extent and magnitude of the oppressive acts are, however, not known.

But, then, the *ijarahdari* was not necessarily a profitable job for all the *ijarahdars* and for all the times. A *peshkar* of a Mughal noble retained the *ijarah* rights after his master's death. He "failed to pay the amount" and was consequently imprisoned.2 Jawanmand Khan Babi also ran into deficit towards *Naib-Subedar* Bhandari's men. He too failed to pay the contracted amount. He was therefore obliged to undertake the responsibility of paying salary to the soldiers of the *naib-subedar*’s establishment. The Babi chief tried to extort money from the Rathod zamindar of Ladar for liberating himself of the burden but failed miserably and could not absolve himself of the responsibility.3 Similarly Safdar Khan Babi "fearing and foreseeing heavy losses" withdrew his hands from the *parganas* he held on *ijara*. He too escaped any action.4

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1. *ibid* II p 292. For a different view, see *The Risala-i Zira’t* in Harbans Mukhia’s *Perspectives on Medieval History*, Vikas, 1993, pp. 272,277-80

2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II p 107-8


309
Causes of reported losses suffered by the leading 
_ijarahdars_ may be tentatively suggested on the basis of available evidence. The _peshkar_ijarahdar_ was not powerful enough to effect collections presumably due to his inability to force the revenue-paying sections of agrarian community to surrender the state's claim. 1 Jawanmard Khan Babi too had not been able to collect revenues, presumably due to his inability to subdue the concerned section of society for paying revenues under the prevailing situation. 2 Likewise Safdar Khan Babi failed even to assess the claim under the prevailing circumstances and particularly due to Maratha disturbances in and around the _parganas_ held by him on _ijarah_. 3

After the two leading nobles of the region had suffered losses (1734-35) any reference to the Mughal officials in regard to contracting _ijarah_ rights is conspicuous by its absence in the available sources. Their inability might have served as an eye-opener for others also. Moreover, the failure of officials-turned-_ijarahdars_, the strong and obvious representative of Mughal administration, further

1. _Mira_t-i Ahmadi II p 107
2. *Ibid* II pp 167, 172; _Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat_, f, 83
3. _Mira_t-i Ahmadi II p 186
attest to the increasing inability of the administration in dealing with the zamindars and the revenue paying sections of the agrarian society.

From this discussion it would appear that the state along with its official-ijara\textit{hdas was losing control over the sources of revenue. The administrative apparatus gradually lost its organizational cohesion and effectiveness which, for all practical purposes seem to have ceased to exist. As a corollary of these developments the established intermediary zamindars, the backbone of Mughal revenue machinery, came to assume different a position which came to be determined by their ability to survive the vicissitudes and manage their affairs in their own right. In the following pages an attempt is made to ascertain the emerging position of the established intermediary zamindars in the above discussed context which, to a great extent, speaks of general changes that had been taking place in their position.

The \textit{desai}:

It has been discussed in the preceding Chapter that the \textit{desai} was basically associated with the task of revenue assessment and also required to superintend the revenue-collection with the active assistance of \textit{muqaddam} who commanded influence at the grass-root level. The \textit{desais}, by
and large, were associated with the state and their main source of strength lay in the support the administration extended to them. Generally they belonged to the educated section of such upper castes which do not seem to have wielded arms.

The very fact that military expeditions had to be led for effecting assessment of revenues indicates that the desais position had been rendered ineffective. Since the revenues came to be determined 'in accordance with' the Nazim's 'strength' and 'exigency' of situation the position of desai would appear to have turned all the more meaningless. Besides, many Superior and the Primary zamindars had successfully captured raiyati and talpad lands and thus established their hold over the raiyat whose affairs otherwise, fell within the desais jurisdiction. In their attempts many a zamindars emerged as intermediaries thus replacing the desai by the authority of their own.¹ The available evidence suggests that a number of desais territorial jurisdiction shrank and even within the curtailed area of jurisdiction, their authority was rendered ineffective.

The available evidence suggests that some of the desais proved instrumental in the zamindar's endeavours to extend their sway. The Rana of Porbandar is reported to have

1. For details please see discussion in Chapters II & VI.
'bribed' the desai of pargana Mangrole (Sarkar Soreth) so as to get the latter's consent for the occupation (1725) of Madhopur - a dependency of Mangrole.¹ The desai of Junagadh had also assisted one Kunwar Vibhaji of Gondal in his attempt at taking possession of Bhajarvada (pargana Junagadh) in the year 1735.² The desais of Idar had helped the Rathod brothers, Anand Singh and Rai Singh in their endeavour to establish their personal rule at Idar.³ The desai of Bhaonagar assisted zamindar of the place in his moves for capturing Mughal lands around his possession.⁴

It may however be pointed out that the desai did not necessarily lose his position in such territories which passed into the control of the zamindars.⁵ Possibly the desai of such territories might have come to enjoy a subordinate position under the occupant zamindars.

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1. Tarikh-i Soreth, f 97
2. Ibid., f 103
3. For details and references please see 'Raja of Idar', Chapter VII below.
4. J.W. Watson. "Historical Sketch of the town of Ghoga" pp 284-5. The town of Mangrole was first captured by the Marathas who were later on expelled by the Qasbati soldiers. Finally it was occupied by the nawab of Junagadh. The desais however continued to enjoy their share all through these years. Tarikh-i Soreth, ff 52-3.
5. Tarikh-i Soreth. ff 59-60; Junagadh SC No 1042, (mahal See1).
But, then, all the raiyat areas were not occupied by the zamindars. The mazruat documents testify the continuity of the raiyat lands outside the sway of the banthadaran.\(^1\) Later the Marathas as well as the British found talpad lands which had remained outside the control of the holders of bantha lands.\(^2\)

But in the areas which continuously remained under the direct control of the provincial authorities the desais gave way to the muqaddams. According to the Account, services of the desais and the amins were dispensed with by the muqaddams who themselves, for all practical purposes, acted as the assessment authorities in their stead.\(^3\) The muqaddams, moreover, disallowed the desais to prepare and maintain the accounts which were to be furnished to the office of diwan-i subah and the imperial centre.\(^4\) Besides, the competent desais who were well versed in rules and regulations of the

1. Please see, for instance mazruat documents for the villages of Khoranj (1123 fasli), Rakhyal buzurg (1121, 1126, 1127, 1130, 1148, 1151 fasli) Mahej (1146,1149 fasli), Nawagam (1147 fasli) Baj hol (1151 fasli). PC Nos 91,93, 101, 110-30, 137-51, 153-9, 162-64, 205-18.

2. For references and details please see Chapter VI below.

3. Account ff 17a-7b It states that muqaddam-i parganat khudra amin qarar dade w anha ra dar salah kar-i tashkhis muattal karde and. During the post 1735 period references to the desais in ganwat deeds disappear. Naqil ganwat az qarar, dt.24 Jamadi I, 28 R.Y. (Muhammad Shahi),PC No.64.

4. Account, f 17b
state died and desaigiri in many places came to be held by incompetent persons, presumably by some new entrants.¹ The desais failed to furnish accounts of revenues to the administration.² A number of them could not get the desaigiri allowance and therefore they failed to pay the peshkash-inizamat and peashkash-i sarkar-i wala which stood in arrears almost against each of the desai of Sarkar Ahmadabad during the third decade of the eighteenth century.³ As such the desais appear to have lost their positions to the muqaddams at village level, particularly within the areas which could be retained by the Nazims under their direct control.

It may, however, be seen that the desais did not suffer similar set backs everywhere.⁴ As per the evidence available for the nawabi territory of Junagadh the desais continuously enjoyed the desaigiri, pusaita lands and ina'm positions.

1. Ibid f 17a.

2. Ibid f 17b Instead the information were furnished by the muqaddams. Yadasht haqlqat mawza Rakhyal khurd bamujib Navisanide Udal Karan muqaddam PC No 136

3. Account.f. 17a; for further details Ibid ff 174b 203b 213a,214b,218b,241a,274b 299b.

4. The desai of Viramgaon held the position of 'madar-j kar (chief of affairs) and his wishes were honoured in making appointments in the pargana. According to the Mirat 'dis-affection existed between the desai and Jawanmard Khan, the faujdar. As the desai was madar-i kar, the administrative matters became chaotic. The naib subedar, therefore, appointed Sher Khan as naib faujdar because he was in concord with desai. 'Mirat-i Ahmadi, pp 16, 166-7.
session which were granted to them from Akbar to Muhammad Shah and later on renewed by the Nawabs who also added extra favours. Similarly works of later date speak of their continuity in the nawabi territories of Bharaurch, Radhanpur, Palanpur and Balasinor (Barasinwra).  

The available evidence also suggests that some of the desais not merely managed their survival out of the fluid state of affairs but also made fortunes. 

Some desais contracted ijarah rights. Dayanat Ram desai (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) contracted the desaigiri and pusaita rights of another desai for a sum of Rs 41/ on annual basis for two fasli years 1138 and 1139 (1730-31 and 1731-32). Some other desais of the same pargana held mawza 

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1. Beside the references (Junagadh SC) cited in Chapter III under desai and in Chapter V under ina'm please also see Junagadh SC No 1042 (mahal Seel) SC NO 688 EX (8/8 mahal Una) SC NO 1195 ex 1 (mahal Babariawar) SC NO 148 EX 7 and 780 ex 4/3 (mahal Sutrapara) SC No 393 ex 12/4 and 369 (mahal Junagadh) SC No 1124 mahal Kutiyana.

2. Register (Jild) “Karparbhari" at Nawab's house Radhanpur. Bombay Gazetteer II pp 484-6 Mr. Asstt. Collector Pyne's Representation (1827) on Balasinor; Indian Economist, p.212; Bombay Govt Revenue selection III p 649 In the nawabi lands of Radhanpur and Palanpur the desais held the charge of revenue affairs and they were designated as karparbhari Gujarati version of Persian expression madar-I kar, the chief of affairs.

3. P C No 279
Tirwara and Faridabad (1729-31) in *ijarah*. ¹

The *desais* in pargana Viramgaon appeared to have withheld the revenues of the villages under them sometimes during the *Subedar* of Ghaziluddin Khan. The *Subedar* is therefore reflected to have collected *khichri* instead. ² The *desais* in some parts of *sarkar* Surat (which later on constituted the *nawabi* of Surat) remitted revenues as and when forced to do so. ³ Later on the British also noted that the *desais* in (the *nawabi* territory of) Balasinor 'exercised the functions of the *patel*. ⁴ Some of the *desais* of pargana

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1. *Yad-dasht haqiqat dehat pargana haveli Ahmaddabad dehat-i *ijarah* R No 37 Pune. Regarding the period 1760--1810 the British observed about south Gujarat that *desais* were more than a Government Servant* and were established as *ijarahdars* and had divided villages amongst themselves and all were called *desais* * Bombay Gazetteer* ii pp 57 215-18; The *desais* of pargana *Idar* and Viramgaon came into clash with the *qasbatis* of the place presumably because both of them acted as *ijarahdars*. *Rasmala.* pp 345-47. See also *English Documents*, p 8; *Tarikh-1 Soreth*, f.54; *Mirat-1 Ahmedi* ii p 114.


3. *English Documents* p 15 In this region the Marathas had acquired predominant position and the *desais* seem to have aligned themselves with them.

4. Mr Asst Collector Pyne's *Representation* (1827) on Balasinor. In Surat region many a *desais* had also grabbed *patelship*. According to the British findings the *desais* at times found the *patels* incapable of paying the arbitrarily enhanced government demand. Then the *desais* advanced credit (*manoti*) to the peasantry at exorbitant rates of interest and thus put aside the agency of *patel* between themselves and the peasantry. The *patels* were forced to sell out the *majmua* lands the symbol of their headship. *Bombay Rev Sen* iii p 649; *Indian Economist*, p 212 It must however be kept in mind that the English disliked the *desais* from the very
haveli Junagadh (Sarkar Soreth) turned "muqtai" and paid a fixed amount to Maharaja Ajeet Singh, the Subedar. The desais of pargana Mangrol (Sarkar Soreth) paid 75000 mehmudis presumably on the non-zamindari lands of the pargana under them during the Subedar of Mulzuddawla.  

Some information regarding the desai's relationship with other zamindars is also available. It has already been pointed out that the desais of Mangrol and Junagadh had helped the Rana of Porbandar and Vibhaji of Gondal against the imperial cause. But the desai of Viramgaon misrepresented the case of Arjun Singh, the zamindar of Wadhawan (pargana Viramgaon) before the subedar. The desais of Chitor had attempted to reinstall the ousted zamindar at the gaddi sometime during second decade of the eighteenth century. The desai of Bhaonagar mediated between the (nawab) mutasaddi of Surat, Subedar of Gujarat, Marathas and faujdar of

...Continued...

beginning of their rule in the region.

1. Peshkash docs PC No 31 cf. ibid PC No 13 Later on the British noted that desais in pargana Bharuch claimed the rights and position of 'zamindars'. The investigations conducted by them revealed that desais had utilized their position as "man of capital and government servants to bring into their hands large areas of valuable lands". Bombay Gazetteer II, pp 484, 486.

2. Peshkash Docks, PC No. 33; cf. ibid, PC No 16.


4. Rasmala, p 346
Junagadh and Rawal Bhaao Singh. The desai also assisted the Rao of Sehore in the foundation of the town of Bhaonagar and managed to obtain a grant of certain rights in the port of Ghoga.¹

There is evidence to show that the desais did not lend support to the Marathas, though it was not invariably the case. The desais of Baroda did not help the Marathas in the realization of revenues when ordered by a revel, Naib-Subedar Hamid Khan to do so.² Likewise the desais of Surat region (1735) were imprisoned by the Marathas on the ground of their non-cooperation with them.³ The desai of Viramgaon had first put up armed resistance against the Marathas on his own volition but when he lost trust in the Mughal Subedar he helped them capture the place.⁴

The desais appear to have made money by levying taxes and making encroachments. According to a complaint received by the Marathas (1753) the desai of pargana Bulsar (Sarkar Surat) expropriated revenues of the villages which Sadat

1. J.W. Watson, "Historical sketch of the town of Ghoga" pp 284-85
2. English Documents, p 3
3. Ibid p 15
4. Later on he expelled the Maratha garrison from the town and occupied the place for himself. For references and details please see discussion below.
Khan, a Mughal jagirdar, held in his jagir. The desai of pargana Baroda levied salami from the madad-i ma'sh possessions in the area. It seems the desais tried to make use of their position if and when it was found feasible.

Some of the desais amassed considerable amounts of money. Rawal Bhao Singh of Bhaonagar plundered the wealth and confiscated property of the desai who had grown very wealthy. Ratan Singh, Naib-Subedar under Maharaja Abhay Singh "since long had in view" Udai Karan desai's "wealth and riches". He is reported to have always waited for an opportunity to confiscate it. Sunder Wagji desai of Bulsar (Sarkar Surat) possessed not less than 13 domestic slaves (gharchi ghulam), a few villages and certain bighas of lands.

While the desais of some places protected and promoted their interests by rendering assistance to others, the desai
of Bairamgam (Viramgaon) acting independently laid foundation of his dynastic rule as a Superior Zamindar. The desai cashed upon the disorderly situation created by Maratha presence in the subah and utilizing his own sources of strength turned from the desai of pargana Viramgaon into the Thakur of Patdi.

Bhao Singh, the desai of pargana Viramgaon, was a wealthy and influential person holding a key position in the affairs (madar-i kaar) of the pargana. Ratan Singh Bhandari, deputy Nazim of the subah, with an eye on desai's wealth, deputed a special faujdar to bring the latter to Ahmadabad. While coming to Ahmadabad he came to know of Bhandari's intentions and with the cooperation of the sure-

1. Viramgaon was a pargana of sarkar Ahmadabad. It mainly consisted of the possessions of Jhala Rajputs and the Kolis. The town is situated in the north of Ahmadabad.

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II p. 116. Bhao Singh's family Kavda Kunbi by caste is said to have come from Champaner, settled at Viramgaon in the 16th century, first as patel and afterwards under Aurangzeb as desai rose to the wealth and importance. Bombay Gazetteer, IV, pp 348, 354n. According to Mirat-i Ahmadi, (II, p.64) the populace of Viramgaon while Rengoji put armed pressure, arranged on the advice of Udal Karan, the desai that the place should buy off the enemy with a payment of Rs. 3,50,000. The desai had, however, with much foresight secured from the people a contribution over and above what was required for the Khandni (the security money) and with the help of that surplus a fortification was built around the town for its protection. Strangely enough, Marathas did not take possession of the place at that time.
ties (bandharis) he secured his release.¹ The next year (1733), Ratan Singh appointed a Marwari as the faujdar of Viramgaon in place of Sher Khan Babi. But Bhao Singh distrusting the Marwari, sent a secret message to Damaji Gaekwad at Dholka, inviting him to take possession of Viramgaon.

The Maratha chief was admitted to the town while the qasbatis who were opposed to the desai and had also killed Udai Karan Desai, father of Bhao Singh, were driven out.² During the following months, in the year 1734, Ratan Singh Bhandari, Naib Nazim laid siege to the city but he failed to capture it.³

In the year 1740, Bhao Singh finding the Maratha garrisons troublesome, engaged a body of Arabs and Rohillas and expelled the Marathas.⁴ The gates were closed and provisions and war materials were collected for the city's defence.

Rangoji and the then Nazim Momin Khan having agreed to a

2. Ibid., II p. 186 also ibid, II p 116. Salabat Muhammad Khan was deputed by the Nazim to investigate the death of Udai Karan who had been murdered by a qasbati. But the Khan died of cholera while en route to Viramgaon. No action, even subsequently, was taken against the qasbati who like at Idar were at dagger's drawn with the desai.
3. Ibid., II, pp.188-9;Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II, p. 452.
4. Mirat-i Ahmadi(II,p. 261) states that "Bhao Singh was tired of the rascality of a batch of Marathas".
joint investment of Viramgaon proceeded with their forces to that town and the siege began. After a month's progress, Momin Khan left for collecting peshkash from the Subah. Rangoji had to carry on the operation alone. Meanwhile, the Arab and Rohilla mercenaries of the desai made demands for the arrears of their pay and Bhao Singh, being unable to satisfy them immediately, and fearing their desertion thought it advisable to bring the matter to an end. It was agreed with Rangoji that the fort of Patdi with several dependent villages on the Rann of Kuchh would be handed over to him while the town of Viramgaon with the rest of the pargana was restored to the Marathas.¹ From the year (1740) Patdi came under the Patidar family of the desai of Viramgaon where he ruled as Thakur.²

It may be seen that the desai who held a key position (madar-i kaar) in the affairs of Viramgaon and had defended the town even from the Marathas was forced by Ratan Singh Bhandari to befriend the ones i.e. Marathas, whom he had regarded as enemies. Again, as he could not pull on well with his new ally and the prevailing state of affairs per-


2. M S Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II pp.452 and n, 474. The rule of desai is reported to have lasted for 200 years or so.
mitted him, he turned against both, the Marathas as well as the Mughals. The desai purchased the services of mercenaries and put himself in a bargaining position. As a result, he was allowed to establish his authority at Patdi, a place though fertile but not as strategic as the town of Viramgao.

It would thus appear that the effect of changing political milieu had not been similar on all the desais of the region. Generally the areas which were carved out as nawabis from the Mughal empire and the areas wherein they had come to enjoy Maratha confidence, the desais appear to have managed their survival and putting the power of purse and their official position to effective use, they made fortunes. In these regions the desais also acquired patelhood. But in other areas where the Mughal authority had weakened and was not replaced by the Marathas or else by strong noble, the desais suffered set backs, particularly in the central parts of Gujarat and generally at patel's hands.

The Muqaddam:

Some significant changes in the Muqaddam's position vis a vis Mughal administration and the village community are discernable during the first half of the eighteenth century. The muqaddams' main strength lay more in their being the men of the village community than in their semi-official posi-
tion. In their capacity as representatives of village community they acted as check on and assisted the desais, amils, and amins in the sphere of assessment and collection of revenues. With a decline in the administrative control the position of desai and the state officials', was rendered vulnerable which the muqaddams seem to have capitalized on for combining the rights to assess and collect revenues into their own hands. But the pattern of change was not uniform everywhere and at all times. Many a muqaddam suffered substantially in his power and position at the hands of other zamindars. In the following pages an attempt is made to highlight the changes which originated or acquired momentum during the first half of the eighteenth century.

It has been discussed in the preceding pages that some of the desais acquired patelhood in addition to holding desalgiri in the southern parts of Gujarat - the region which formed part of the nawabis of port towns and also where the Marathas' control was firmly and finally established relatively from an early date. Also the patels seem to have suffered in the areas which passed out of direct

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1. For the nawabi areas please see discussion under Nawabs of Surat, Bharuch and Khambat, Chapter VII below; for Maratha dominance see discussion under Struggle for Supremacy, Introduction to the present study.
Mughal authority and were occupied by the zamindars. 1 For want of detailed information it is difficult to ascertain the Muqaddam's position in the areas which other zamindars had come to occupy. In all probability the muqaddams lost their independent position in these areas but appear to have continued in a subordinate position. 2

Some piece of informations indicating the muqaddam's sufferings at the hands of state officials are also contained in the pages of the Mirat-i Ahmadi.

The muqaddams and villagers of Dabhali lost everything, including their lives on account of a quarrel which took place (1721-22) between them and the Subedar's army due to 'transgression of some vagabonds' in the army. The Subedar put the village to fire and killed every one of them, so much so that 'there did not remain any trace of population. The Muqaddam's effort to avert the clash went in vain. 3

The muqaddams and the riaya of pargana Dholqa had to face 'rascality' of the amil-faujder. Alongwith the riaya

1. For the details of encroachments Chapters II and V;
2. As per the contents of the Kunbi song which was sung by the wives of cultivators (Kunbis) the muqaddam (mukhi) of the village used to call on the zamindar in connection with assessment and collection of revenues in the company of village patwari, known as taliati in Gujarat. Rasmala pp 543-5. Also see Mirat (II.p.94) for the revenues being paid by the zamindar himself during the Subedar of Sarbuland Khan.
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 44-5

326
they protested against the oppressive official before the Subedar (1726) Mubarez-ul mulk Sarbuland Khan.¹ The muqaddams and riaya of pargana haveli Ahmadabad abandoned their villages and fled into jungles (1728) in protest against the amil-amin-faujdar who seems to have demanded more revenues than due.²

In the instances cited above the muqaddams’ sufferings seem to have been linked with their position as representative of the village community. But the muqaddam of Padra (pargana haveli Baroda) had to save his skin from Maharaja Abhay Singh whose greedy eyes had fallen on his personal wealth.³ The muqaddam of Nadiad was arrested by the Subedar (1743) who badly needed money and suspected that the muqaddam had enough money.⁴ Likewise the muqaddam of Vasa (Baso, pargana Petlad) lost his wealth and life at the hands of the Subedar’s men who had grown jealous of his wealth and emi-

1. *Ibid* II p 94. The work does not elaborate the 'rascality' of the official.

2. *Ibid* II p 105. Though the oppressive official was replaced by another person who conciliated them by effecting proper assessment. But the Subedar came with an additional demand of Rs. 10,000/- even though 'there was no scope for an addition on the pargana. The demand was met forcibly. *Ibid* II p 106.

3. *Ibid* II pp.143-4

4. *Ibid* II p 284
Some other muqaddams also suffered as they refused to co-operate with the Marathas. During (the defacto Subedar') Hamid Khan's period of administration muqaddams of some places in south Gujarat were imprisoned by the Marathas for their refusal to pay the revenues demanded by them as ordered by the Khan.

The evidence cited above though limited in quantity and scope however indicates that the muqaddams was not a docile leadership for they did not obey command all the time. It would further appear from the following discussion that muqaddams strengthened their own hold over the countryside in consequence of their apparent endeavors to remove the watch dog of imperial interests in the villages, presumably with the support of their own power base.

It has been submitted above that the assessment of revenues gradually came to be effected by the expeditionary forces. Such a course of action seems to be the outcome of increasing and increased defiance on the part of intermediary zamindars, whether encroachers or legitimate, or both. Available evidence suggests that the muqaddams were amongst the defiants.

1. Ibid II pp 505-6
2. English Documents pp 3, 15.
Commenting on the general situation prevailing during the fourth and fifth decade of the eighteenth century, the Account states that the muqaddams of villages have ousted desais from their respective possessions. Besides they are also reported to have assumed the positions of amin and effected assessment on their own.¹

Though the evidence casting light on the ways the muqaddams grabbed the positions is not available.² However it seems that having lost the effective administrative backing the amin and desais failed to stand in their own right against the muqaddams who seem to have enjoyed support of the villagers under them.

Beside assuming the power to assess revenues in their own right the muqaddams also assumed the powers of desais'—gumashtas (agents) who were there to prepare and furnish detailed accounts at village level for furnishing the same

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1. Account f 17b For details showing muqaddams as assessment authority please see discussion in the following lines.

2. The muqaddam of Nadiad was assigned the task of assessing and collecting various illegal exactions in pargana haveli Ahmadabad (1739-40) without acquiring any other designation under the immediate authority of the Governor. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 260. Later on one Pani a muqaddam is noticed as holding the position of amin in pargana Petlad. Ibid II p 441.
to the desais for onward transmission. 1 Many a muqaddam refused even to furnish the accounts which had thus come to be prepared by them. 2

The muqaddams, it appears made a conscious effort to deprive the state of the knowledge of actual details of cultivation in the villages. But at times by stepping into the patwari's shoes and furnishing the details under their own authority, the muqaddams seem to have endeavored to replace him and place themselves as a direct link with the state. 3

1. Account f 17a. Some muqaddams are noticed as furnishing accounts in actual practice. Muhammad Iraj, faujdar-amin of Dholqa is reported to have produced muqaddams and desais for submission of accounts before Sarbuland Khan. (Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 94). Muqaddams of Petlad are also reported to have presented themselves for inspection of accounts when the same Subedar was leading a military expedition. Ibid II p 107. See also Ibid II p 259. Later on the British found the village patwaris (tallati) working under the authority of village headman. Bombay Gazetteer (Kaira). p 80.

2. Account f 17a

3. The mazruat documents for pre-1720-21 period mention the patwari as the source of furnishing the same but during the post 1721 period muqaddams are mentioned instead of the patwari PC No 132; mawza Balad (1141 fasli), Palri Kochrab (1142 fasli), taraf Rakhyal buzurg (1142 fasli), taraf Nazriat (1144 fasli) taraf Daryapur (1144 fasli) R No 21, Pune. But it was not invariably the case. Patwaris also continued to do so; Rakhiyal Khurd (1133 fasli), Runhasan (1137 fasli), Dantyal (1146 fasli), Dantiyali (1149 fasli). Khoranj (1153 fasli) R No 22 Pune. Keeping in view the changed attitude of the villages toward the state they had come to be categorized, noted the Britishehrs, into refractory (mehwas) and semi-refractory (rasti mehwas) villages. They found the proportion of the rasti villages much less than the rest in Kaira region. Bombay
From the discussion in the preceding lines it would appear that the *muqaddams* made a successful bid to grab all the powers of the state pertaining to the assessment of revenues. Another piece of information, an *amal-i dastur* (1745-46) brings to light yet another significant feature in the same regard. The dastur, as usual, records rates of assessment of land revenue and other exactions at customary rates. The document however specifies that the rates of assessment were furnished by Banarsi *muqaddam* of mawza Palri Kochrab to the provincial office\(^1\), a fact of singular importance, for the rest of the available *dasturs* were furnished other way round. But being it a lonely available piece of information any inference may not be pressed too far.

There is evidence to show that *muqaddam's* emergence as over-powerful persons in villages seems to have led to the discontinuation of the state's well established direct contact with the peasantry which, though not invariably, appears to have passed under their authority. The documents pertaining to assessment of revenues for a number of villages of *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad virtually present him as

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Gazetteer (Kaira) p 81.

1. *Amal-i dastur dehat pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, 1154 *fasli* bamujib Banarsi *muqaddam* mawza Palri Kochrab *PC* No 27.
a unit of assessment with no reference to relevant details which were determined as the revenues inclusive of abwab and other state demands in lump sum (bilmuqte) on Dev Karan and other muqaddams of mawza Behrampur for rabi and kharif crop seasons together for the entire fasli year 1154/1745-46 (hama jaht sal-i tamam). The muqaddams were required to remit the sum in instalments (b'mujib iqsat dar sarkar dakhil namayand). Likewise Bhavanidas and other muqaddams of taraf Daryapur were asked to remit Rs. 801/- determined the same way for the two crop seasons together for the same year. Similarly Jhanji, Goridas, Jiwanji Bhupatji and Mohanji, muqaddams of mawza Goha were informed that a sum of Rs 2171/- has been fixed as state demand in lump sum (hama jeht) for rabi and kharif seasons of 1154 fasli (1744-45) for the whole year (sal-i tamam). In the same way muqaddams of many other villages were informed of the amount so fixed


2. Naql az qarar batai b muhr Nawab Jawanmard Khan Bahadur 19th Ramadhan, 29 Ry Muhammad Shah PC No 79/A.

3. Not titled, date not specified, PC No. 79/J
and were ordered to remit the same to the Government. It would therefore appear that the state fixed the amount on the village, or a part thereof and demanded the same from the muqaddams who were apparently left free to decide with the cultivators as to how much each one was to pay.

But then muqaddams do not emerge as the only assesses and the only ones held responsible for remitting the revenues determined in the above mentioned manner. According to a parwana (1746) the Subedar assured Rabhji and other Rajputs along with Ranchhod and other Kolis (girasias) beside the muqaddams Gobindas and Shankardas and others that he would deal, exclusively, with them, and not trouble any other for the apparent purpose of paying revenues. Similarly another parwana (1746) issued by the Subedar gives same assurance to the girasia of Sankhej beside the muqaddam. Like these girasias there were others too who continued to be assessed directly by the state as will be seen below.

1. Naql ganvat qarar batai, dt 11th Shahwal RY 29, Muhammad Shah, Taraf Nazriat, PC No 263b, see also please Ibid, PC No 263a, dt 10th Shawwal; see also similarly entitled documents for the fasli years 1149, 1151, 1152, 1155-9, fasli(1761-65), for villages of pargana haveli Ahmadabad, R No. 21 Pune. All these documents do not refer to the crops or the cropped area as also the muqaddam's acceptance also is not reflected.

2. Naql parwana bandhari, dt 17th Rabi II RY 29, Muhammad Shah PC No 79/E.

3. Ibid dt 3 Ramadhan, RY 29, Muhammad Shah, PC No 79/E.
One Thangl, a Kunbi of mawza Tajpur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) was to pay Rs 8/- \textit{bilmuqte yekraqm} (in lump sum, all the state demands compounded together) for both the crop seasons of the year 1746-47. The \textit{muqaddam} of the village was likewise required to pay Rs 751/- the same way, obviously on behalf of the other cultivators of the village.\textsuperscript{1} Similarly the \textit{muqaddam} of Rakhyal buzurg was to pay Rs 301/- fixed the same way. The \textit{bilmuqte muzarian} of the same village were to pay @ Rs. 1/- per bigha on the cropped area during the two crop seasons of the same (1158 \textit{fasli}) year (1749-50).\textsuperscript{2} Then we come across the \textit{bilmuqte kashta, pai-bilmuqte kashta} in mawza Balad (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) for the first time in 1149 \textit{fasli} 1740-41.\textsuperscript{3} The \textit{bilmuqte kashta} were likewise required to pay a fixed amount which was determined on the basis of area under cultivation at a flat rate with no reference to the crops actually

\begin{enumerate}
\item PC No 236 (1155 \textit{fasli}) read with \textit{qistbandi mawza} Tajpur, 1155 \textit{fasli} R No 21 Pune.
\item \textit{Qistbandi mawza} Rakhyal buzurg, \textit{fasli-i rabi-o kharif} 1156 \textit{fasli}, R No 38 Pune. The \textit{mazruat} documents available for earlier years for the same village and cited on the preceding pages do not refer to the \textit{bilmuqte muzarian}. Obviously they emerged sometime between 1137 and 1157 \textit{fasli} i.e 1728-9 and 1740-41.
\item \textit{Qist bandi mawza} Balad. \textit{fasli-i Kharif-o Rabi}, 1149 \textit{fasli} R No 22 of \textit{Ibid} for \textit{fasli-i kharif} 1131, 1137, 1139 \textit{fasli}; \textit{Ibid} for \textit{fasli-i rabi} for 1132, 1135, 1137, 1139 \textit{fasli}, R No 22. In this village too the \textit{bilmuqte-kashtas} appear to have emerged sometime after 1139 \textit{fasli}.
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{PC No 236 (1155 \textit{fasli}) read with \textit{qistbandi mawza} Tajpur, 1155 \textit{fasli} R No 21 Pune.}
\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Qistbandi mawza} Rakhyal buzurg, \textit{fasli-i rabi-o kharif} 1156 \textit{fasli}, R No 38 Pune. The \textit{mazruat} documents available for earlier years for the same village and cited on the preceding pages do not refer to the \textit{bilmuqte muzarian}. Obviously they emerged sometime between 1137 and 1157 \textit{fasli} i.e 1728-9 and 1740-41.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Qist bandi mawza} Balad. \textit{fasli-i Kharif-o Rabi}, 1149 \textit{fasli} R No 22 of \textit{Ibid} for \textit{fasli-i kharif} 1131, 1137, 1139 \textit{fasli}; \textit{Ibid} for \textit{fasli-i rabi} for 1132, 1135, 1137, 1139 \textit{fasli}, R No 22. In this village too the \textit{bilmuqte-kashtas} appear to have emerged sometime after 1139 \textit{fasli}. 
raised. The *bilmuqte kashtas* appear to be the stronger section of the peasantry that could maintain its direct communication with the state in their own right, independently of the *muqaddams* who were obviously not in a position to subdue each of the cultivators of the village. Besides, the *girasias* (in the available cases, the *banthadaran*) also stood in their own right. Apparently the *muzaddam's* increased hold over the village remained confined to relatively not so strong a section of the community.

The state was not necessarily confident of getting the amounts which had been assessed or fixed on the *muqaddams* and therefore, it procured sureties, called *mal-i zamini* for ensuring remittance of the revenues. Interesting fact in this regard is that the guarantor, in each of the available cases, happened to be a Bhat (*baad farosh*).

The state demanded a summarily fixed amount (which, as pointed out earlier, declined every next year) from the *muqaddams* who seem to have developed positive apprehensions

1. *Qistbandi mawza Balad, fasl-i kharif-o rabi, 1149 fasli.* The *bilmuqte kashta* were to pay @ 2/- per bigha on 350 bighas of land i.e. Rs. 700/- only. No amount of revenue is reflected against rest of the *muzarian.*

2. *Qistbandi dehat-i pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif-o rabi, 1160 fasli, R No 21 Pune; Awarja jama wasulyabi dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif, 1167 fasli, R No 22, Pune. For the Bhats' interest please see discussion below.
against the authorities who could, as they actually did, come with additional demands. According to a document (not titled, 1744-5) which specifies the amount fixed as state demand on the muqaddams for the year 1154 fasli, the state gave a promise (gawl) and, for reinsuring its word furnished surety (bhandari) to them to the effect that nothing like bewra (a cess) would be levied and that no addition to the amount settled already would be made subsequently. In view of this guarantee the muqaddams were advised not to have any doubt and carry on cultivation. Another document (1744) issued under the Subedar’s seal records that the batai had been settled as the mode of assessment of revenues on the crops raised by Kameja and the paikashta cultivators of mawza Ghayaspur for the year (1744-45) and that the same had been settled with the muqaddams. The document adds that nothing in addition to the agreed share would be demanded. To make the promise worth believing, it is added that word of sarkar is the word of God! Yet another document, a parwana-i bandhari likewise communicates the settlement of the mode of assessment as accepted by muqaddams of mawza

1. For details and references please see discussion under Introduction and Chapter VI.
2. PC No 79/J For details about bandhari please see discussion in Chapter VI.
3. Naqli ganwat az qarar batai, dt 24th Jamadi I, 28 RY Muhammad Shah PC No. 64.

336
Aslali (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) and assures that bewra etc. would not be demanded. In order to make his word creditable the Subedar furnished two persons as sureties (bandharis).¹ To mention yet another instance of similar nature, the Subedar (1746) assured the muqaddams of mawza Behrampur that no addition would be made to the already settled amount for the whole year and the sureties were likewise furnished to ensure that the word would be honored.² It shows that the muqaddams had not only lost trust in the Subedar's word and credibility which apparently stood eroded, but also they had grown strong enough to force the Governor to furnish sureties which, otherwise, were like mai-i zamini, given by them. Since the muqaddams of pargana haveli Ahmadabad, the seat of provincial power, could extort guarantees from the Governor himself and were to pay obviously a nominal sum (total revenue receipts of the state declined) the situation persisting elsewhere may be assumed to have been equally good for them vis-à-vis the state.

It would appear from the evidence cited above that muqaddams were pragmatic enough to make necessary adjust-

1. Naqil parwana bandhari b'muhr. Jawanmard Khan Bahadur, dt. 22 Rabi II RY 29 Muhammad Shah PC No 79/D

2. Ibid, dt 15th Ramadhan, RY 29 Muhammad Shah, PC No 79/C, see also Ibid dt 19th Ramadhan PC No 79/A. For the similar guarantee given to the Primary zamindars, Chapter VI below.
ments within the community and respond accordingly to the state authority. They seem to have kept a watch on the changing political milieu, paying revenues to the one who commanded sufficient strength in the immediate vicinity of their possessions. The defiance on their part and their bargaining power vis à vis the state appears to have increased with the passage of time as would be borne out by the evidence cited below.

1. The muqaddams too were not necessarily at peace with each other. One Badridas of mawza Asarwa (pargana haveli Ahmedabad represented that his father, one of the muqadams of the village, had died due to the troubles inflicted by his compatriots. Badridas was also evicted out of his possessions by the same muqaddams. He therefore approached the Subedar through the muqaddams of mawza Rakhiyal buzurg PC No 85 of 1148 fasli/1739-40.

2. Renkoji, a Maratha chief defeated his rival Maratha sardar and the Mughal faujdar failed to resist him. Realizing his growing "impression" the muqaddams of round about place "came to him on their own" for settling the revenue matters. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 175; Ahwai-i Gaikwad I 14; Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat I 4. Later on with the successful march of Momin Khan II against the Marathas the "muqaddams on witnessing this state of affairs" 'learnt a lesson' and came for assessment of revenues gave hostages and (thereby) protected and defended their lives' and property 'Mirat-i Ahmadi;II p 449. The Mirat further observes that when Momin Khan's armies met success after success the Muqaddas' came forward at all places."Ibid;II pp 451-2. But the Muqaddams of Petlad acted more wisely for they 'satisfied' the Marathas as also agreed to pay 'with willingness to Momin Khan, a portion of revenues'. Ibid II pp 451-2. Once the situation started changing and Marathas pressed Momin Khan hard the muqaddams who had submitted before the Khan 'became anxious about evil consequences and future of their own' and therefore changed side Ibid II pp 504.
The *Muqaddams* used to attend the office as and when summoned during the earlier period. From the documents termed *tamassukat-i hazir zamini* it would appear that the *muqaddams* would not like to attend the office until and unless a proper guarantee was extorted from them. According to the earliest of such available (1729) documents one Ram Singh, a Bhat of Baroda stood surety undertaking responsibility of producing Ramdas, Bhagwadats, Kesoji, Premji and other *muqaddams* of *mawza* Khawa (*paragana* Kadi) before the *faujdar*. Similarly Dewraj, a Bhat of *mawza* Dhamanwan, is reflected (1744) as undertaking similar responsibility on behalf of Tarangdas, Harsendas, Manohar and other *muqaddams* of *mawza* Heerpur. From the 27 Ry of Muhammad Shah many documents of the type are available. In each case it is invariably a Bhat who is recorded as having undertaken the guarantee.

If the Subedar extorted guarantee for ensuring their availability, the *muqaddam* too turned bold and strong enough

1. To procure *hazir-zamini* - a guarantee to ensure availability of the person guaranteed - from the *muqaddams* appears to be a development of the period under review.

2. *Baroda* 99, Dt 20th Jamadi ll 1142 AH

3. *PC* No 269, dt. 13 Jamadi I, RY 26 Muhammad Shah

4. *Yad-dasht* *tamassukat hazir zamini dehat pargana haveli* Ahmadabad R No 37 Pune; *Awarja hazir zamini* 26 RY Muhammad Shah *ibid*
to demand similar bandhari which could accordingly be provided. According to a solitary piece of information Jawan-
mard Khan, the governor, issued a parwana-i qawl-o bandhari in favour of Khanji and Banarsi muqaddams of mawza Sankej (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) assuring them that the sarkar would not interfere in their (unspecified) affairs. The parwana which seems to have been issued to summon them to the provincial capital and remove doubts (barai rafai' waswas) furnishes sureties (bandharis) to ensure their safe conduct to and from the place they were to present themselves. 1 It seems the muqaddams apprehended ill treatment(?) That is why they demanded and got guarantees.

The muqaddams of some places came to be regarded as recalcitrants and treated the same way. The author of the Mirat mentions that reliable sureties were procured by the authorities but he identifies the Kolis or Rajputs as rebel-
lious people, the ones who were to furnish such sureties. From a tamassuk-i hazir zamini-o fa'il-i zamini (1729) it would appear that the muqaddams of mawza Khawa (pargana Kadi) were also obliged to furnish sureties ensuring their proper conduct along with the Kolis and Rajput-girasias of the village. The documents reflecting for the first time a

1. Naqli parwana qawl-o bandhari, dt. 3rd Ramadhan RY 29 Muhammad Shah
muqaddam as furnishing such a surety mentions Ram Singh, a Bhat acting as guarantor on his behalf. According to another document (1743) Lakhoji, a Bhat of mawza Kaloli undertook responsibility of right conduct of Narharidas Gopi and other, muqaddams of mawza Basonj (paragana haveli Ahmadabad) beside Rajputs and Kolis of the village. Likewise Raghodas Bhat of mawza Gotlej stood as fa'il zamin for Ranchhod and other muqaddams of the same village during the same year. There is a series of documents reflecting the muqaddams during 26th RY of Muhammad Shah as furnishing fa'il zamin who as per the available documents, invariably happened to be Bhats. It therefore seems that the state had to lean

2. Yad-dasht of afaa'il-i zamini dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad 8th Jamadi II, RY 26 Muhammad Shah
3. Tamassukat-i fa'il zamini dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, RY 26 Mohammad Shah, R No 33 Pune
4. Ibid Tamassukat-i fa'il zamini dehat pargana Kadi, R No 37 Pune; Tamassukat pargana Dholqa, sarkar Ahmadabad, R No 25 Pune. The muqaddams could also be assigned the duty of watch and ward (Chowki-o pehra) within their villages along the Kolis and others. Naql parwanajat, 20th Ramadhan, 20th RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79/f.
5. Further information about the Bhats, their strength and interests in serving as sureties is not available in the contemporary works. Later on the British also found out that the Bhats' services as sureties were generally required for connecting the mehwasi (i.e. zortalab) portion of the society with the government. Their strength lay in the belief of considering their person sacred and the threat of self-immolation could easily change the patels' mind who otherwise faced the threat
heavily on the assistance even of such *muqaddams* who were in the state of constant rebellion and distrusted the authority. To manage them the state's dependence on the feeble authority of Bhats all the more speaks of its helplessness.

**SHARE**  The share of *muqaddams* in the legal sense of the term seems to have remained unchanged.¹ There is evidence showing that the *muqaddams* continued to enjoy their *pusaita*

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...Continued...

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of being declared outcasle. The British too could not enquire into "the legality of their acquisitions (of lands, zamindaris and other privileges)" from the horror of self immolation which they threatened if it were attempted. Hamilton Walter *Op cit* I pp 609-11; Treaties VI p 5 & n; *Rasmala* p 340

The Bhats interest to act as sureties also finds reference in British works. They are observed to have got a fixed percentage of the revenues in case they acted as surety. Some of them were found to have charged as their remuneration upto 25 percent of the assured amounts. The British also noted that some of the sureties had been able to acquire lands, zamindaris and other privileges. Hamilton Walter *Op cit* I pp 609-641 *Rasmala* p 404 Bombay Gazetteer II pp 148 388 496 *Ibid* IV pp 46 146; *Ibid* X, pp 147-8. For them getting state's favour please see discussion under revenue grantees Chapter V below

¹ *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, as pointed out in the preceding Chapter speaks of fixation of their share during Akbar's reign. No change in the approved share is noticeable in any of the available sources for the later period.
lands as well as got fresh favours from the state. In actual practice their income must have been much different from the approved share. Because they would also appropriate the difference, in many cases, between what they actually collected from the peasantry and the amount paid to the state that fixed the revenues in lump sum. More so they encroached upon, as pointed out above, the positions of desais and amins and thus removed the administrative checks and acquired, relatively, a free hand. But because of non-availability of relevant information the position of their share in the villages where they suffered setbacks may not be ascertained.

The muqaddams managed to procure high administrative positions like those of faujdar, amin and incharge of affairs (madar-i kar) at pargana level. They must have made

1. Please see, particularly as representative examples the mazruat documents for mawza Aslali (1128 fasli), R No 21 Pune; mawza Mahej (1146 fasli), mawza Khatwara (1149 fasli) PC Nos 101b 162-64; mawza Adalej (1151 fasli), R No 22 Pune; dastur-ul amal dt 21 Shawwal, 1174 fasli, PC No 67.

2. In addition to the grants which they continued to hold as discussed in Chapter III above, please also see the following evidence pertaining to the grants made in favour of them during the period under review. Junagadh, SC No 225 of 1155 AH (mahal Junagadh); parwana dt. 17 Zilhaj 1156 AH; in favour of Banarsidas muqaddam of mawza Aslali (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) granting mawza Bastra by way of ina'm, R No 46; Mirat-i Ahmadi II p. 316.

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp 144-45, 441; Ahwal-i Gaekwad et al.
effective use of the high positions for serving their personal interests. The *muqaddams* were involved in the assessment and collection of illegal exactions like *bewra* and *khichri* alongside the authorities.¹

It is however not known if they were allowed any portion out of the collected amount.² But the *muqaddams* acquired other sources of income also.

The *muqaddams* contracted *ijarah* rights. As per the information contained in the document entitled 'yad-dasht-i jarahdaran'³ considerably a large number of *muqaddams* in the *parganas* of *Kadi, Birpur, Besailnagar* and *Dholqa (Sarkar Ahmadabad)* held *ijarah* rights in the villages of their respective possessions.

There were, then, the *muqaddams* who appear to have acted as *sub-ijarahdars*. *Momin Khan*, the *faujdar* held *pargana Petlad* in *ijara* during the year (1144 AH) 1731-32 AD. The

1. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 260; *Amal-i dastur dehat pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, mawza Kochrab, dt 1145 fasli PC No. 27; *Qistbandi dehat pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, mawza Muzaffarpur, R No. 21 Pune; *yad-dasht qabuliyyat-i bewrah*, 1151 fasli, RNo 33 Pune.

2. But the *muqaddams* appear to have got something in return. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 260, 316 Ahwai-i Gaekwad ff 31, 36.

3. *Yad-dasht-I jarahdaran* Sarkar Ahmadabad (for the *parganas* of) Kadi, Birpur Besailnagar and Dholga 1134 fasli R No 67 Pune. In all 107 villages in the *parganas* were held in *ijarah* by them. The document specified the villages and the *muqaddam ijaradars* with no other informations having been furnished.
available document reflects the Khan as *ijarahdar* of the *pargana* whereas a number of *muqaddams* are mentioned as holding villages on *ijarah* of the same *pargana* during the same year.\(^1\) Apparently the *muqaddams* might have been allowed to hold *ijarah* rights in the villages which seem to have been sub-farmed out by Momin Khan, the *ijarahdar* of the *pargana*.

Evidence suggests that *muqaddams* also made money by subduing holders of the *madad-i ma'sh* grants. According to a *parwana* (1737) of Momin Khan (1737-43) the *muqaddams* of *mawza* (*Tarafl* Rakhyal *buzurg*) had occupied *madad-i ma'sh* land belonging to one Sehuprasad during the period of *Naib Subedar* Ratan Singh Bhandari declaring that the grant had been resumed by the government. The *muqaddams* were therefore ordered to release the lands and pay back the revenues appropriated by them.\(^2\) According to an *arzi* (1751) *muqaddams* of *mawza* Kodra had been imposing Rs. 150/- on the *madad-i ma'sh* grants of a Saiyed on annual basis for sometime past.\(^3\) According to another *parwana* (1752) *muqaddams* of yet another *mawza* levied Rs. 151/- from the *madad-i ma'sh* lands of the

\(^1\) *Yad-dasht pargana- Petlad ijarah, Ijarahdar Momin Khan faujdar-i pargana dt 19 Muharram 1144 AH, R No 57.*  
\(^2\) *PC No 71, dt 19 Rabi I, RY 20, Muhammad Shah*  
\(^3\) *Arzi, dt 15th Muharram 1163 AH, R No 22 Pune.*
family of some Saiyeds. 1

For a proper appreciation of the way the muqaddams acquired wealth and rose into eminence during the periods of turmoil and chaos, and of the Mughal and Maratha attitude towards them the available evidence may be mentioned in some detail.

Dala, muqaddam of Padra (pargana havelli Baroda) was 'very wealthy' and desirous of assuming the position of chief of affair (madar-I kar) of Baroda by furnishing sureties (bandharis) of eminent nobles of the region with whom he obviously maintained good relations. On the other Maharaja Abhay Singh, then Subedar (1730-37) wanted to arrest him and confiscate his wealth. But the muqaddam was shrewd as also strong enough to procure sureties, which he did before presenting himself before the Subedar when summoned. The Maharaja could not lay hand upon him in the presence of sureties. He therefore decided to take the muqaddam into the fort of Baroda where he regarded him "as an esteemed kind of confection and flyless honey". But the muqaddam got suspicious and fled to his place. Having thus placed himself in security and obviously beyond the Subedar's effective reach the muqaddam told the Maharaja that if he appointed man of the headman's choice as Naib faujdar there would be stable

1. Parwana, dt 23 Jamadi I, 1163 AH, R No 22 Pune.
income otherwise not. Helplessly the Subedar had to leave
the position of faujdari in muqaddam's hands.¹

Dala seems to have enjoyed support of Kolis of Baroda
region. According to the Mirat as the Maharaja practiced
breach of promise with Dala and then failed to capture fort
of Dabhoi the Kolis became 'arrogant' and attacked the
Subedar's camp. The muqaddam on the other approached the
Marathas and helped them capture Baroda fort.² He had obvi-
ously no trust in the Mughal Subedar and had to ensure his
safety.

Similarly the muqaddam of Nadiad rose high in position
and acquired eminence which were apparently disproportionate
to the status of a village headmen. During the period of
Momin Khan's Subedari (1737-43) Balidas, the muqaddam acted
as chief negotiator on Momin Khan's behalf in his dealings
with the Marathas.³ Besides, he assisted the Subedar in the
task of levying bewra and fines on the rlaya of pargana
Nadiad.⁴ At the provincial capital he acted 'as guide to

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 144-5.
2. Ibid II p 145 167 Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat ff 5; Ahwal-i Gaekwad ff 12-3.
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 260, 284 The muqaddam also repre-
sented the Subedar in his dealings with the Marathas
Ibid II pp 300-1, 316; Ahwal-i Gaekwad ff 38
4. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 260; According to Ahwal-i Gaekwad
(f.5) Balidas was also amin of the pargana.
other officials for imposition of hewrs on all villages of 
pargana havell and is reported to have appointed amils in 
the pargana and recovered illegal imposts.¹

Balidas was duly rewarded for the services he rendered 
to the Mughals and the Marathas. He is reported to have 
received amounts of money and regards from the Mughal Sube-
dar and the Marathas sardars.² He was granted a few villages 
by way of in'am in lieu of services (b'sigha-i khidmatana) 
which he rendered to the Mughal Subedar and the Marathas.³ 
He was wealthy enough as to present 100 asharfis on the 
occession of a marriage at the Subedar's place.⁴

In the light of the preceding discussion it may be seen 
that there were muqaddams who suffered substantially in 
terms of their share and position at the hands of other

¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi, II p 260; Ahwal-i Gaekwad, i 31.
² Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 316
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid II p 260 Around the time (1757) Momin Khan II 
captured Ahmadabad, Pani, the muqaddam of mawza Waso 
rose to new heights of power. He was assigned the 
position of amin of pargana Petlad. He had also acted 
as go-between for Momin Khan in his dealings with the 
Marathas. Later he was entrusted the responsibility of 
keeping a watch on the fortification of Ahmadabad. He 
is said to have recruited 1000 soldiers, attacked the 
Marathas out-posts and thanas, carried deprivations 
into Maratha possessions and collected revenues. He 
was suspected of amassing wealth by the Mughal nobles 
who imprisoned and then killed him Ibid II pp 441 504-
6.
zamindars. But a considerably large number of them gained in power and position. Their overall hold over the villages vis a vis the imperial administration had increased considerably. Their hold over the villages was undermined and contested by other influential sections of the village communities rather than by the imperial administration which seems to have yielded before them and accepted fait accompli.
CHAPTER V

THE PRIMARY ZAMINDARS

(On the eve of the eighteenth century).

Like other parts of Mughal empire the Primary zamindars enjoyed an important position in socio-economic sphere of rural life in the Mughal province of Gujarat. The Primary zamindars formed a distinct and considerably influential though not an exclusive category of the class of zamindars. A study of the forms and modes of holding rights by them brings to light an interesting instance of variation, both regional and intra-regional.¹ Holding the lowest ladder of the landed aristocracy the most numerous category of the Primary zamindars was subject to greater degree of administrative control, degree of which varied in terms of space and time.

Before examining the position and the role played by the Primary zamindars in society it may be worth while to

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1. B R Grover (*Nature of Land Rights* pp 17-25), Irfan Habib (*Agrarian System*, pp 141-43, 147-49) and N A Siddiqi (*The Land Revenue Administration*, pp 147-52) have duly taken note of the inter-regional variation. But perhaps in view of the purpose and scope of their studies they have not paid sufficient attention to intra-regional variations.
identify\(^1\) and determine the sway of their rights. It may be attempted with the help of evidence contained in the pages of the contemporary chronicles, both imperial and regional and in the revenue documents.

To begin with, the contemporary sources use different terms to denote various holders of the superior rights in land. The terms, it seems, find definite usage with specifiable connotations particularly in the regional documents pertaining to the Subah Gujarat. The way the term 'zamindar' finds description in these sources has already been discussed at length. Besides the 'zamindar' and allied terms examined earlier, the available documents also mention girasia, chauthia, giras, bantha-giras, bantha-chauth-giras and the chauth. In these sources the holders (girasia, chauthia) of the rights (giras, chauth, bantha)\(^2\) formed an

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1. The Mughal practice of using the same generic term for the holders of superior rights in land has sometimes misled even the modern scholars. W H Moreland, *Agrarian System* pp 122, 279; P. Saran, *Provincial Government* pp. 102-4 of Irfan Habib, "Zamindars in the Ain", *Proc. IHC*, 1956, pp 320-23; For further details of the usage and connotations of the term, Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, pp. 136-39; S. Nurul Hasan, "Zamindar under Mughals" p 18, Moreover, understanding of modern scholars of the terms used to denote the rights and their holders in Gujarat is partly defective and needs to be modified in the light of discussion in the following pages.

2. A section of the holders of bantha belonged to the category of the Superior zamindars [(Chapter I (1) (2))] and the other may be identified as the Primary zamindars. Please see the discussion below.
identifiable section of the landed aristocracy. Not only the possessors and their possessions were thus named differently from the ones of a (Superior) 'zamindar' but also the offering (salami) made to the state was given a different nomenclature to distinguish it from the peshkash-i zamindaran. In the following pages an attempt is made to discuss broad feature of the giras, bantha and chauth, determine the role, position and nature of relationship subsisting between the girasias and chauthia i.e. Primary zamindars and the empire during the heyday of Mughal rule and ascertain the pattern of change, if any, by the onset of the eighteenth century.

Before the above mentioned terms and their import are examined it is worthwhile to point out that though the girasia and chauthia (i.e. Primary zamindars) enjoyed identical rights they could possess a position which might be at variance from one another. The way the terms giras, bantha and chauth are used in the documents perhaps suggests the identity and simultaneously the persisting shade of distinction. The terms as will be seen below, have been used collectively and alternately for one and the same possession as also separately to denote the same right but held in a somewhat different form.

GIRAS:

The giras and its holder girasias are frequently men-
tioned in the sources, right from the *Ain* down to the *British* works. Also, some modern scholars have examined these terms but have not satisfactorily succeeded in the appreciation of the *giras* as an established claim of its legitimate holders, the *girasla*.\(^1\) Besides, these scholars view *bantha* almost as the only form of possession of a (Primary) *zamindar* in Mughal Gujarat and have not examined *giras* as a legitimate claim existing, side by side with, and on a wider scale, and perhaps since times earlier than the *bantha*. In view of persisting views which do not stand the test of evidence and for a proper appreciation of these terms an indepth study of the same is warranted.

In Mughal sources of information the earliest available reference to the *girasla* is made in the *Ain*. But the *Ain* 

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1. Irfan Habib does not go beyond his appreciation of *giras* as "an exaction" which right was derived "from the threat or actual use of force" as different from *bantha* which was "derived from an earlier, legally recognized right". *Agrarian System*, pp 147-48 as also *bid*, pp 142-43, 149. A R Khan first identifies and specifies *giras* among the chieftaincies and then, following Irfan Habib, regards it as an exaction, adding that *girasas* were the ones who "lived upon the exaction, *giras*." A R Khan, *op cit*, pp 95-6 and n, 116. Neither of the scholars identifies the *girasla* with *bantha*. It may be mentioned that *giras* could take form of *ان میلا* also. But as will be seen below it was not its only form. Also the chief could also hold the *giras* but by virtue of merely being in possession of *giras* one could not acquire the status of a chief. The *giras* was Primary zamindar's right which could be enjoyed by the chiefs also (references follow). Though Irfan Habib feels somekind of 'shade of distinction between a *zamindar* and the *girasla* but he leaves the difference unspecified. *Agrarian System*, p 148 & a.
which reflects them in the caste column of the zamindars, seems to have mistaken girasia for a caste. But then, the work also specifies 'girasia-mehtar' (lit. leading girasia) and Rajput girasia in the same column. As such it implies a difference between the caste (Rajput) and the girasia. But the fact that girasias find description along the zamindars and, then, have not been included in the general description of leading zamindars (i.e. chiefs) suggests that the two could carry general similarity and shade of distinction at the same time.

Making no distinction between giras and the girasia, Nizamuddin Ahmed who had himself been in the subah refers to them as a group of people beside the zamindars. The Mirat mentions giras as a possession distinguishing it from the zamindari of a Superior zamindar. Thus during the days of Sultan Muzaffar Gujarati the Jam, Chief of Navanagar "had four hundred (entire villages as) giras" and "one fourth

1. *Ain*, ii, p. 120
3. Thus sultan Muzaffar fought the Mughals "with the support of the Kolis and the giras (? girasia) and other zamindars," and imperial army marched with the intention of "eradicating the disturbances created by the giras" (i.e. girasias). for the same and similar references, *Tabqat-i Akbari*. ii pp. 381, 390; *Ibid*, iii, pp 138, 184-86.
share of zamindari in four thousand villages.\textsuperscript{1} Again, one Bagela-Jhala, (Superior zamindar), is shown as holding "entire giras" rights within his makan-i zamindari presumably in addition to his right as a Superior zamindar.\textsuperscript{2} The apparent shade of distinction between giras\textiacute{} and a (Superior) zamindar is again noticeable in the Mirat's reference to one Jagmal giras\textiacute{} in imperial service along with other 'zamindars' during Aurangzeb's reign.\textsuperscript{3} In one of Aurangzeb's farmans "giras\textiacutes and zamindars" are, again mentioned together.\textsuperscript{4}

The document entitled Yad dasht: dehat pargana Kadi places it beyond doubt that the giras\textiacutes were legitimate holders of superior rights in land and that they were other than and different from though not exclusive of the (Superior) 'zamindars'. Furnishing details of villages and their holders the document first specifies the villages constituting the taalluqa (makan-i zamindari) of each (Superior) zamindar in the pargana. Then it specifies 116 villages as

\begin{enumerate}
\item Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 22 read with Ibid, I, p 285.
\item Ibid, I, p. 22 read with Account, ff 119a-20b, Also see please Mirat-i Sikandari (p. 46) when it refers to 'zamindaran-i Gujarat Tarangdas Raja Champaner and Satrasal (Chhatrasal) girasia Jhalawad.
\item Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 256-57
\item Ibid, I, p. 279
\end{enumerate}
the villages of girasias and others. Of these, 20 villages were held by the 'zamindars' and the girasias collectively and the rest formed exclusive possession of the girasias.¹

These villages contained bantha-giras lands, evidently the girasias' lands.² As such the girasias were accepted holders of superior right in lands and not merely the ones who 'lived upon the exaction, giras'.³ On the contrary a girasia was regarded as a respectable member of society⁴ and could be treated as a person loyal and useful to the state.⁵

The purpose of citing evidence in some details is to remove the existing misconceptions about giras and girasia and to submit that the giras denoted for a girasia what the

1. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi, op. cit.

2. Account, 308 b - 30a; The Mirat-i Sikandari quotes a Minister informing Sultan Muhhamad Gujarati, saying that ki rob-ee mamalik-i mahrusa-i shuma ke an ra... banta mi goyard Rajputan girasia-o koliyan motasarref and. Mirat-i Sikandari pp 363-64. Following it the Mirat-i Ahmedi also notes that rob-ee az mulk-i Gujar rat k' an ra... banta goyard Rajputan Girisia-o Koliyan motasarraf and. Mirat-i Ahmedi, l, p. 83. It will be seen below that giras and the bantha could be different from each other in form only, in spirit the two were identical and similar to each other.


4. See, for instance, the inscription (1615) on a temple at Ghoga recording the names of respectable persons which among other, included the emperor, Qazi, desai, faujdar, Seth beside girasia, Rai-Singh, "Historical Sketch of the town of Ghoga", op. cit, pp. 283-5.

5. Thus, for example, please see subedar Shaista Khan transferring zamindari of a rebel zamindar to Jagmal girasia of pargana Dholqa Mirat-i Ahmedi, l, pp 230, 232.
makan-i zamindari meant in relation a zamindar.

The giras, it may be seen, is noticeable in almost all the kharaji sarkars of the subah. To begin with the Ain notices girasias in the parganas of Bheel, Nadiad, Sarala and Kala (?) in the sarkar Ahmadabad.1 The Mirat-i Ahmadi and other available pieces of documentary evidence suggest the existence of giras in other sarkars of the subah.2 The giras and girasias were also there in the territories which were held by the autonomous (Superior) zamindars.3

So far the discussion has mainly been confined to suggest prevalence and continuity of giras as a superior right from the times of emperor Akbar (rather sultans of Gujarat) onward. Since the revenue department was required to maintain the statement of facts concerning the giras (haqiqat-i giras)4 some information is contained in the pages of the Account and in other revenue documents of the time. The available evidence casts some light on the mode of


3. Mirat-i Ahmadi; I, pp 22, 285; Mirat-i Sikandari; p. 46

4. Account f. 81a.
holding and meeting the giras claim which could be
realized in more than one way.

In the parts of the subah the lands of which were not
surveyed, the giras claim was met in the form of deduction
out of revenue taken as a share out of the produce of the
peasantry\textsuperscript{1}, as far as we can tell. In these areas the lands
of the villages do not seem to have been divided on the
bantha--talpad lines\textsuperscript{2}; it was therefore the revenues extorted
from the peasantry which were apportioned.

Within the villages and parganas the land of which had
been surveyed, the giras-rights could be held in two forms.
The girasias' possession was not apportioned in definite
area units and the area of the village was left undivided.

Thus the area statistics of the cultivable portion of land
of mawza ltawra (pargana Kad) may be cited to clarify the
point.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbullet\quad\textbullet\quad\textbullet

1. Yad-dasht dastur-ul amal...b' mohr Nawab Isa Tarkhan-
dehat pargana ldar, R. No. 23, Pune. For the polaj land,
fasl-i kharif, it is recorded as under: az qarar-i
bilmanasfa seh hissa sarka-o yek hissa giras waz' mi
shavad. The dastur available for pargana Mhorasa and
Meghraj in the Account (f.353b) puts it as under:
hissa-i sarkar-o riaya Nisfa-nisf, az jumla sarkar
chauthai hissa girasia waz' mi shavad.

2. The bantha-talpad, during Mughal age was confined
to the areas lands of which were covered by survey. For
details please see discussion in the following pages.

3. Account, f.311b. For similar references please see
discussion in the following pages under bantha.
mawza Itarwa

785 bigha lalq-i zira't mai giras.

In such cases when the lands were not duly apportioned into talpad and bantha the produce of the village might be divided in the manner referred to above. But then, in the second case, the giras could take the form of bantha: mawza Unada:1-

raqba lalq-i zira't: 1175 bigha
raiyati: 1081 bigha
giras: 94 bigha

Evidently the lands were duly apportioned and the girasias'giras (bantha)2 was separately recorded in definite numbers of bighas. In this case the giras, as such, takes the form of bantha which (division), as will be seen below, denominated divisioning and could be termed bantha-giras, bantha-chauth-giras or merely bantha.

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1. Ibid.f.311a; for more references please see discussion under bantha.
2. The available dastur-ul amal for pargana Kadi speaks of the talpad and bantha or the raiyati and bantha, then, records rates, separately for the villages lands of which were held jointly, and not apportioned. In the latter case the term used are giras or the girasias. Yad dasht dastur-ul amal-dehat paragana Kadi, 1093 fasli RNo.47, Pune; For identification of giras with and the difference from the bantha please see discussion in the following lines. It may however be mentioned here that bantha appears to have been one of the mode of holding giras rights which in substance did not differ much from the former.
According to the available information the bantha rights emerged during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Gujarati and were likewise retained under the Mughals. According to available information the Sultan expelled the Rajputs and Kolis (who were in possession of the country of Gujarat) from their possessions which were taken entirely under direct control. Consequently they created situation which could not be managed by the Sultan. Finally both the parties compromised their position and effected a settlement. According to the settlement three fourths parts of land of every village were attached to the government. A fourth part of the lands was settled upon the Kolis and Rajputs. Thus divisioning (of their land) was settled (bantha qarar yaft). The part attached to the government was termed talpad and the one left with the original possessors was categorized as bantha. Besides, the possessions of a section of them were not likewise divided which, therefore, they continued to hold intact on account of personal favours or else as a political concession dictated by the circum-

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1. Account, f. 106 a.
2. Ibid.
stances. Thus there emerged two forms of zamindari villages, viz; the first which they held intact and the second which were divided into bantha and talpad.

The lands which were not divided into bantha and talpad and were held intact fall into two categories, viz; the lands termed maken-i zamindari and held by the Rajput etc. who were called 'zamindaran' and have already been discussed as Superior zamindars. The possessions of other section holding their lands in likewise manner were termed giras which were subject to the payment of salami by its holders who were called girasias.

In the same way the bantha possessions were common both to the (Superior) zamindars and the Primary zamindars. The bantha'daran in our sources are identified as the 'zamindaran' an also girasias which looks ambiguous and confusing. But, then the girasias' bantha was subject to the payment of state's claim which is described as bantha-sala

1. Account, FF, 106b, 173b; Mirat-i-Ahmadi, 1, P 174; Ibid, Supplement, P. 190.
2. Beside the discussion in the preceeding section please see references in the following pages also.
3. The aspect has been discussed in Chapter I (A) above. Also see please Account (F. 106a) where it state; see also Account ff. 207b-32a read with Ibid F 307a and Yad-dasht dehat pargana kadi, op cit nos. 2a-6a.

361
mi and the zamindars' bantha was, likewise, subject to the payment but it is termed peshkash. Thus a line of demarcation may be drawn between the two categories of zamindars holding bantha land.

The bantha denoted the portion of the possession which its original possessors were allowed to hold after the divisioning was effected. In actual practice the divisioning which being confined to the area regarded as cultivable raqba laiq-i zira't did not cover entire area constituting the village. The cultivable area thus apportioned into two distinct parts has been named differently, viz; talpad and

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1. Account f 101a, 106a. According to the source the salami of state on the bantha (bar zamin-i bantha salami sarkar-i wala) was settled during the period of Gujarati Sultan See also Mirat-i Ahmadi I. p. 174; Ibid, Supplement, pp. 228-29 and the reference in the following discussion.

2. It has been discussed in the preceeding Chapter I (1) and (2); see also, Account, f 106a

3. The term bantha, wanta or banth is taken from vanta (division), a noun for the verb vantam (i.e. to divide), Baden Powell, Land systems of British India, p 278; Bombay Gazetteer, II p129. The Account (f. 106a) also says that bantah qarar yaft, the divisioning was settled. It may be mentioned that the bantha is invariably applied to the land, or a village but in no case to the produce.

4. Account, ff. 175b - 81b; 219 a - 20a; 308-32a; for specific instance please see the discussion that follows.
bantha; raiyati and giras; raiyati and bantha-giras and lastly the raiyati and banth-chauth-giras. The similarity and the difference between various expressions used to denote the Primary zamindar's rights will be discussed a little later. It may however be pointed out that the giras and bantha in many instances have been used alternately as


2. Account, f. 175b: area statistics of mawza Antrali (pargana Bheel) are recorded thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Giras</th>
<th>Raiyati</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>185-5</td>
<td>495-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For similar references, Account ff. 308b-29a.

3. Ibid. f. 176b: mawza Bardoli (pargana Bheel)

- Cultivable area (raqba liaq-i zira't): 900 bigha
- Bantha: Raiyati
- Giras: 225 bigha
- Raiyati: 645 bigha

For similar reference, Ibid, ff. 219a-20a, 339b-40a.

4. Ibid, f. 176 a: mawza Basna Matar (pargana Bheel)

- (Entire area): 11,180 bigha
- Habitations etc. (abadani waghaira): 4290 bigha
- Cultivable area (raqba laiq-i zira't): 4890 bigha

- Bantha: Raiyati
- Chauth-giras: 1223 bigha
- Raiyati: 3667 bigha

For similar instances, Ibid, ff. 177a-81b
well as in conjunction with each other to denote one and the same area of lands. Besides the talpad too has at times been used inter-changeably with the raiyat.

The divisioning did not end with mere categorization of land into two. It meant something more. First the available dastur-ul amals suggest that the rates of assessment were maintained separately for the talpad (or raiyat) and the bantha-giras lands in the revenue department. Detailed informations regarding the area actually cropped during the kharif and rabi crop seasons were procured and specified separately for the lands under two categories. Similarly the details concerning kind and quality of land, viz; ban:

1. The Account uses the expressions bantha and talpad for specifying (divided) lands of entire sarkar Ahmadabad but the area-in parganas and villages is recorded under the heads mentioned in the preceeding notes. The area of villages in pargana Bheel is recorded under the heads mentioned in the preceeding references but the dasturs carry the expressions muzarian-i talpad and the bantha only. Then, the dastur-ul amal for fasl-i kharif is recorded for raiyat and the bantha but the same for rabi are recorded under the expression 'raiyati' and the bantha-giras. Account ff. 82a, 175b—81b, 182a, 333b, 339a-40a; Dastur-ul amal, PC Nos. 45-7

2. But the two did not necessarily denote the same position though at times could coincide with each other. For details please see discussion in following pages.

3. Account, ff. 182a, 333b, 339a-40a; dastur-ul amals (from Shah Jahan to Muhammad Shah). PC Nos. 22-47

4. Docs entitled mazruat pargana haveli Ahmadabad. (for) mawza (so and so) for the years 1090, 1093, 1094, 1096, 1100, 1105, 1117, 1116, '1125 fasli, for the villages of Aslali, Aqilpur, Rasulpur, Sarkhej and other, R.Nos. 21 and 27 Pune.
jar-laiq-i zirat (cultivable waste), polaj (under continuous cultivation) and barani (un-irrigated) and chahi (irrigated) comprising talpad and bantha were duly specified. Besides, separate threshing floor for heaping and threshing the produce of the bandha and the talpad were invariably maintained as also a boundary between wanta (bantha) and government (talpad) land was drawn.

The divisioning seems to have been carried a little farther. The Account sometimes speaks of the cultivators of talpad muzanian-i talpad implying as if there was a distinct group of cultivators that tilled the talpad alone. According to a work of later date kunbis tilled the government portion (i.e. talpad) alone.

The documents which furnish plots and cultivator-wise details for bantha and the talpad lands for a number of villages further strengthen the possibility of divisioning existing among the cultivators. A closer scrutiny of the

1. Dastur-ul amal, PC Nos. 20-51; Account.f. 25b.
3. Account ff. 182a, 336b.
5. Documents Khasra mazurat for the years 1090, 1093, 1094, 1096, 1099, 1100, 1105, 1109, 1113, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1126 fasli, R.Nos. 21, 27, and PC Nos. 110-14, 116-21, 121-30, 153-57.
plots which were duly named and identified in both the categories of lands; and of the cultivators who are named and further identified with their holdings reveals that neither the plot nor the cultivator was common to both the categories of lands i.e. the plots as well as the cultivators in one category were exclusive of the other.\(^1\) Whether similar divisioning among the cultivators existed everywhere in the subah is difficult to say for the available contemporary evidence for the period under review relates mainly to sarkar Ahmadabad.

The practice of dividing the cultivable area into two portions appear to be a common though not the only mode of putting aside the bantha possessions. In some cases entire village could be categorized as the bantha. One Sur Singh girasia held the village of Maile and Khoral (pargana Khan-bayat) entirely in bantha.\(^2\) Similarly Khodasi girasia held mawza Banjral (paragana Dholaqa) entirely as bantha.\(^3\) In brief nine entire villages in all, in the entire sarkar Ahmadabad are specified as the exclusive bantha possessions

\(^1\) See also, Selection from the Records of Baroda Government (Giras), No II vol. II, pp 1127-28 where it records that even the houses in the villages were likewise divided.

\(^2\) Account f. 249a.

\(^3\) Ibid, f. 298b.
of girssias. As such the practice of setting aside entire villages in bantha appears to be an exceptional phenomenon, the common mode being the divisioning of cultivable area of villages rather than the villages themselves. The state, as such, would prefer, if possible, not to allow the girssias to preserve and maintain clusters of villages held entirely by them.

The Mirat and the Account suggest that the bantha constituted a fourth portion of the area of villages. There is evidence to show that bantha could constitute a fourth of the cultivable area but it was not invariably the case. There were 270 such villages in pargana Kadi lands of which were divided into two categories. Amongst these the proportion of the bantha in 158 villages was exactly a fourth of

1. Ibid, ff. 249a, 298b, 350a.

2. Even if a girasia held rights in many villages he was generally allowed bantha in every village in the form of a portion thereto. Thus, according to the Rasmala a Rajput chief was allowed bantha lands in 84 villages as distinct from one-fourth number of the villages themselves. Rasmala p 261. One Lekhraj girasia held bantha lands in seven villages of pargana Bheel. The area of the bantha thus spread over the seven villages, if put together, comes to 7797 bigha and 16 biswa. Area of any village containing his bantha was not less than 7797 bigha. As such the girasia could be allowed any of the entire village in bantha. Doc. Girasiahama mawaziat pargana Bheel, RNO 43, Pune, read with Account ff. 175b-80b.

3. Account, f. 106b; Mirat-i Ahmadi, i, pp 173-4

4. Account, ff. 308b-32a
the cultivable area which had been divided. But in the remaining villages, 112 in number, the bantha constituted either less or more than a fourth, the proportion ranging from 1/9th to 2/5th of the cultivable area. In none of the fourteen villages comprising pargana Piplod the bantha represented a fourth; it stood between 1/5 and 1/3 of the cultivable lands. 1 Similarly no exact proportion is noticeable between the bantha and the talpad portions of lands which were actually cropped. 2

Some idea of the cultivators cultivating the bantha lands besides the grasias may be had from the documents reflecting cultivator wise details of the area actually cropped. In its association with the cultivators the bantha land may be classified into two. In the first place may be mentioned the cropped area which is reflected, exclusively, against the grasia himself, with no other person specified. 3 Such lands may be identified as the khudkhasta lands of the

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1. Ibid. ff. 218a-20b
3. Of 157 bighas of cultivated lands, 19 bighas is shown against the grasia himself in mazruat Rakhyal buzarg, fasal-1 kharif, 1127 fasli, PC Nos. 122-28 a; also see mazruat mawza Mahej, fasal-1 kharif, 1149 fasali PC Nos 95-102; Amal-i dastur PC No 23.
grasia.¹ Another document, though of a little later date (1140 fasli/1732-33) describes a portion of the bantha lands as bantha-sir-i girasia.² The sir lands were the zamindari lands wherein direct assessment was imposed and the authorities collected revenues from the peasantry directly without any intermediary.³ The sir lands which fall in the second category are, in the document, shown as being cultivated by specified persons other than the girasia.⁴ There are then other documents which specify a portion of bantha lands which were cultivated by the cultivators. The documents reflecting 19 bighas of the cropped area of bantha against the girasia (identified as khud kasht) also specifies 138 bighas against persons, other than the girasia.⁵ No further information having been furnished it is difficult to precisely define their position. However it seems they were in direct communication with the state that is why they find descrip-

¹. The works of later date also mention that the girasia carried cultivation with the assistance of 'assamis', halls or meors. Bombay Gazetteer, II, pp. 67, 204-5, 385; ibid, (Kaira), p. 288; Rasmalii, p 565. Locally the 'self cultivating wanta lands were called gur kher'. Selections from the Records of Baroda Government, Jamabandi of the villages of kodram, indrana, and Varsude, No. II vol. II p. 1128.

². Mazruat mawza Dhamanwan, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1140 fasli, PC Nos. 93-4.

³. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System p. 146 and n35.

⁴. Mazruat mawza Dhamanwan, op. cit.

⁵. Mazruat mawza Rakhyal buzurg, 1127 fasli, op.cit.
tion in the records which were utilized for the fixation of the state demand.

Some indications of differentiation are noticeable among the peasantry cultivating bantha lands. The persons (other than the girasia) reflected in the mazruat documents fall in three categories. In the first place may be mentioned those who are merely named against their specified holdings with no other identity provided. ¹ In the second group may be mentioned the holders who have been designated muzare.² Thirdly there were the sub-ordinate cultivators, also called muzare, but cultivated lands which did not belong to them.³

It may thus be seen that there were the peasants holding lands in the bantha and exercising some rights of un-
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1. They appear to have been the most numerous, finding description in each of the mazruat papers specifying bantha lands. In this section may also be mentioned (the non-girasia) desais, muqaddams and kotwals who also held, perhaps as peasant-proprietors, lands in the bantha. Mazruat mawza Mahej, 1149 fasli; op.cit; Mazruat Rakhyal buzurg 1126 fasli for rabi and 1127 fasli for kharif PC Nos 110-4, 116-21.

2. Khasra Mazruat mawza Deori, PC No 92 and Mazruat mawza Mahej, 1114 fasli; R No. 44, Pune. According to S. Nurul Hassan the term 'muzara' included not merely the peasant proprietor but also the tenant-­cultivator. Thoughts on Agrarian Relations, p 20.

3. Khasra mazruat mawza Deori, op cit. The document puts them as under: Pirthiraj muzara-i Udai Singh; Parorkar muzara-i Kalla Gohel or Kalyan, muzara-i Pusaita-i muqaddaman i.e. so and so muzara of such and such person.
specified description coexisting with those of the *girasias* in their capacity as the Primary zamindars over entire bantha.

The *bantha* and, correspondingly the *talpad* lands were earmarked and demarcated. Besides, the *talpad* was attached to the government (*talpad* *mal-ī padshahī qarar yafī) and its revenues were to be expropriated by the state, its assignees or the grantees.¹ But it is yet to be seen whether the holder of *bantha* had any relationship with the peasantry of the *talpad*.

The holders of *bantha* do not find any reference in the documents pertaining to assessment and collection of revenues from the *talpad* which appears to be the concern of *muqaddams* and desais.² Therefore it seems that the *banthadar* was neither allowed a share in the revenues of *talpad* nor to have been associated with its revenue administration.³ But his dissociation from the *talpad* may not be pressed too far, for there were the villages which contained *bantha* lands but

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¹. Account, f. 106b; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, I p 174; Irfan Habib. *Agrarian Systems*, pp 142-3. Also see discussion in the following pages.

². For details and references, Chapters 1 (2), and III above.

³. *Jama-o Kharif mal-i-jihat-o-Sair jihat dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, mahal nazim-i subah fasl-i kharif 1127 fasli* and ¹¹30 fasli; *Jama-o kharj mal-o jihat-w sair jihat, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif 1124 fasli* P.C.
had no Muqaddam.¹

But, then, the talpad lands also were not held by the peasants enjoying equal status with no signs of differentiation. There were some identifiable holders of talpad lands enjoying a privileged socio-economic position. Thus Rajputs, Kolis and Muslims holdings zamín-i sarkar (i.e. talpad) enjoyed exemption from paying a cess, called mankna which was levied from other peasants during both the crop seasons.² The Kolis and Muslims, likewise enjoyed exemption from paying another cess, termed karaya (? rent) which was levied from the peasants in pargana Sarna.³ Besides, the possessions of Kolis and Muslims in pargana Thamna and those of Brahmans in pargana Prantij were assessed at concessional rates.⁴ As such the Rajputs, Kolis, Brahmans being given a preferential treatment must have enjoyed a superior status among the holders of the talpad lands.⁵

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1. Chapter III above. Whether the girasia performed the duty of muqaddam in such villages is not known.

2. Account, ff. 220b, 349b, 359b. The rates varied from crop to crop and ranged between two annas to two and a half mehmudi per bigha.

3. Account, f. 302b.

4. Ibid, ff. 202a, 222a; The Brahmans were allowed to retain two-third and Kolis and Muslims enjoyed three fifth part of the produce; common peasantry paid half of the produce.


372
Whether the superior and preferential treatment thus meted out to Rajputs, Kolis, Muslims and Brahmans was designed (or kept up) to detach them from the giriasias is a matter of speculation. There is, however, circumstantial evidence to show the State's endeavours to deny the bantha-dar probable chances of attracting talpad - peasantry for undertaking cultivation on the bantha which, almost invariably, contained cultivable waste also.

In the sphere of assessment of state's claim entire village comprising talpad and bantha was treated as a unit. The assessment records--crop season-wise details of the actually cropped area by individual cultivators--were prepared by the village patwari with the co-operation of muqaddams and under the supervision of the desai for the bantha the same way as for talpad lands. Then the state assessed individual holdings of each plot-holder in both the categories of lands without making difference and thus entered into direct communication with the cultivators.¹

Secondly, the state maintained dastur-ul amals for both the lands and enforced them through the agency of desais and muqaddams who were required to ensure that the assessment was carried in accordance with the rules laid down for the

¹. This is borne out by the mazruat papers which are cited above as also in the discussion that follows.
bantha as well as talpad.¹

Thirdly a comparative study of the rates of assessment laid down for the talpad and the bantha lands as cited above, reveals that the peasantry whether holding bantha or the talpad had to pay revenue at the same rate. These dasturs take into consideration the chahi and barani, banjar and polaj lands for both the crop seasons including the additional cesses levied.²

Fourthly, any fall in the production of the talpad lands would directly hurt the interests of the desais and the mugaddams who were allowed a share in the revenue collected from the talpad and not from the bantha salami offered by the bantha-holder, the girasia.³ Obviously the mugaddam and desai would act, under normal circumstances as the watchdog of imperial interests which were thus identified with their own.

1. The dasturs are available from the time of Shah Jahan to the opening years of Muhammad Shah's reign. Dastur-ul amal, pargana haveli Ahmadabad; Amal-i dastur dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad; Yad-dasht dastur-ul amal for 1091AH, and for the period of Mahabat Khan, Isa Tar Khan, Ghairat Khan, 1053 AH and 1079 AH PC Nos.20-6,28-61 Account, ff. 182a-2b, 202a, 302b-3a, 338b-40b, 349a-51a, 363b-65a, 408a-10b; Baroda, 87.

2. In addition to the dasturs cited in the preceding note please also see discussion in the following pages.

3. Docs. jama-o Kharj mal-i jihat-w sair jihat dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, op., cit, See also Chapter III above.
Lastly, the *muqaddami* and *desaigiris* seem to have only occasionally coincided with the position of the *bantha*-holders, the three positions were generally, (though not essentially) held by different persons. The checks thus applied would have helped in the smooth working of the *bantha-talpad* system under the over all superintendence of the state.

But, as pointed out earlier, the *bantha talpad* system was not enforced to cover the entire *Subah*. The sway of the system as will be seen below, was confined to the surveyed parts of the mainland Gujarat.

Our sources do not precisely specify the limits of the area of the *bantha talpad* system. Also the modern scholars have not viewed the possibility of the zamindars holding their lands in the non-*bantha* form.

The *Mirat* and the *Account* very clearly speak of the limitations of the state in the enforcement of the system to cover entire lands of all the zamindars. We have already discussed that the *zamindars* of the *peshkashi sarkars*, the

1. For details please see discussion in the preceding Chapter III.
ismis, a section of the zamindar-an-mahin-o-kahin and a section of the girasias also held their lands which were not divided into bantha and talpad. But the territorial limits of the system are yet to be ascertained. On a closer view of the village-wise description of 28 parganas comprising sarkar Ahmadabad and the dastur-ul amals; which are available for the same and other parts of the subah it would appear that:

The references to the bantha lands (i.e. bantha-giras or bantha-chauth-giras) are exclusively confined to the villages, parganas and sarkars lands of which had been surveyed. Even when the land had been surveyed but the area was not divided into two portions, the girasia's claim is termed giras and not bantha.

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1. See above Chapter I (1) & (2); It has been discussed in the preceding section of the present Chapter that in certain parts of the subah giras denoted divisioning of produce as distinct from the bantha-giras which stood for physical divisioning of the lands. Please also see discussion under chauth in the following pages.

2. Account ff.163a,172b 175b - 81b 219a - 20a, 309 - 32a (for the references to the bantha and actual divisioning); Ibid, ff.182a - 82b, 302b, 339a-40b, 349a - 51a, 358b - 60a, 409a for the dasturs specifying assessment rates for the bantha and the talpad lands; see also the dastur-ul amals citid above.

3. To cite two examples representing the two forms (Account, ff. 176a, 314a).

mawza Badosma mawza Pusnota
(entire area) 1000 bigha 5985 bigha
In the areas lands of which were not surveyed (dar paimaish nayamde) the bantha does not find any reference. Instead the share of the girasia is reflected in terms of a share in the produce as distinct from the one in delineated portion of lands.¹

It may thus be submitted that the bantha denoted a portion of cultivable area (and sometime, though only exceptionally, an entire village) which was duly demarcated. The bantha lands were confined to areas which had been covered by the land survey i.e. the central parts of the subah which felt the greatest thrust of the administrative pressure.²

---Continued---

habitations etc. 300 bigha
cultivable area inclusive of giras 309 bigha
raiyati – banthagiras 2892 bigha
(laiq-i zira‘t mai giras) 700 bigha.
2169 bigha 723 bigha.

1. Ibid ff. 212b-13a, 214b, 227b, 353b. For specific instance please see discussion in the following pages. It may also be added that the documents like tamassuks, qabuliyaat, muchalka etc. which are available for the ghair paimoods areas do not likewise, make any reference to the bantha. Similarly the documents reflecting actual revenue – returns mention for such area the salami or giras salami as distinct from bantha-salami which is specified in the paimooda parts only.

2. See also S C Misra, Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat. p. 205
The chauth is another expression which is also used to describe the Primary zamindar's right in certain parts of the subah. Though by and large associated with the Marathas, the chauth seems to have been in vogue in Gujarat prior to their appearance on the political scene of the province.¹ The term which is left undescribed in the available sources, seems to have carried more than one connotations, viz; the possession (i.e., land), the share of a Primary zamindar in the produce and finally the state's share.

To begin with, in its statistical account of lands and village of pargana Bheel (sarkar Ahmadabad) the Account uses the expression chauth in conjunction with the bantha giras.² Of 72 villages carrying area statistics of the apportioned lands the Account specifies one part of the divided --------------------

¹ Yad-dasht-dastur-ul amal, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasli-i Kharif-o rabi 1053 fasli (1645AD), pesh-az julus-i padshah Alamgir, PC No. 50 (f.18b). Its holder when he happened to be a zamindar was called chauthia. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f.13.

² To cite a representative example (Account, f.178a)

mawza Dhamaliya

| Entire area | 2904 bigha |
| Habitations etc. | 213 bighas |
| Cultivable area bantha | 2691 bigha |
| chauth-giras raiyati | |
| 672 bigha | 2018 bigha |
| 15 biswa | 5 biswa |
lands under *rayiat* and the other under *bantha giras* (or simply *giras* and *bantha*). Divided the same way but the apportioned lands in the remaining 58 villages have been placed under the expression *raiyati* and the *bantha – chauth – giras*. Thus, the *chauth* has been added to the *bantha-giras*, features of which have been discussed above. At this stage any inference would be far from satisfactory. However in the light of evidence cited below the *chauth* would appear to be identical to the *bantha* in spirit but in form the two could also differ from each other.

When used in conjunction with *bantha* or *bantha-giras* the *chauth* seems to have denoted what otherwise the *bantha* stood for. The available *dastur-ul amal* for the same *pargana* (Bheel) and contained in the pages of the same work specifies rates for the *bantha* (and *raiyati*) having no reference to *chauth* in anyway, thus equating *bantha* with the rest of expressions used to denote the same portion of lands.

Another set of evidence equates *chauth* with the imperial claim on the *bantha* (of *giras*). The lands of the villages of *pargana* Kadi were categorised as *giras* and

1. Ibid, ff. 174a-81b.
2. Ibid, ff.182a-82b.
raiyyati. The dastur-ul amal available for the pargana specifies rates for bantha\(^2\), the expression not used to describe the relevant portion of land in any of the villages of the pargana. And then, the offering made by holders of the giras (i.e. bantha) lands in 14 of the villages of the same pargana is termed chauth bantha.\(^3\) As such the chauth might be equated with the bantha.\(^4\) i.e. girasias' possession and then with the state's claim on the possession. But the evidence does not help us to differentiate chauth from the bantha as and when the lands were apportioned and termed

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1. Ibid ff. 309b-32a.

2. Yad-dash t dastur-ul amal dehat pargana Kadi;1093 fasli, R.NO. 47, Pune.

3. Yad dasht dehat pargana Kadi; PC No.3b. The document places the specified villages as held by Malik Musalmans Kameja- Muslims, Rajputs, zannardaran (Brahmans), badfaroshan (Bhats), Muslims, Kolis and Charans under the following expression: Musalmanan waghaia mutasarraf and -o chauth-i bantha b'jagirdaran midehand. Another document specifies Rs.1014/6 annas during Kharif and Rs. 907/- during rabi crop season under the expression: chauth-i bantha-i Musalmanan mawza Mahej. Doc. jamo-o Kharj pargana Dholqa, fasl-i Kharif ..1128 fasli. PC No.9-10.

4. Please also see Selection from the Records of Baroda Government NO. II Vol II, p 1121 where it states that "Wanta lands were also known as chauth-wanta. Does it means that chauth rights could be set aside by way of bantha (the division) ?
bantha and the bantha-chauth-giras.\(^1\)

But then chauth rights are also noticeable in those areas which were not covered by land survey and bantha talpad system. Pargana Birpur neither was covered by land survey nor were its lands divided into bantha-talpad.\(^2\) It is however described as chauthia pargana in which the (Superior) zamindar of Lunawara enjoyed chauth claims.\(^3\) Diwan Ranchhod ji of Junagadh also mentions the chauthias later in Nawabi territory of (sarkar) Junagadh.\(^4\)

The dastur-ul amal available for the pargana haveli Ahamdabad (1643 AD) lands of which had been surveyed and accordingly apportioned places it beyond doubt that the chauth beside denoting bantha, represented the share of the state and the giras as well. According to the dastur the produce of bantha- giras was divided into four equal parts.

\(^1\) Chauth literally means a fourth. The bantha as pointed out above, also stood for a fourth. But in actual practice the bantha could be less or more than a fourth, though it could be exactly equivalent to a fourth. The bantha-chauth-giras in the specified villages of pargana Bheel as a matter of fact, represented exactly a fourth. But then every fourth part of the apportioned lands is not termed chauthe-bantha.

\(^2\) Account, f.215a.

\(^3\) Ibid.

\(^4\) Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f 13. In a parwana dated 1172 AH /1758 AD reference is also made to chauthia-mugaddams but no other relevant information is furnished therein. SH Desai's private collection, No 24/1172 AH.
Out of it two parts were left with the raiyat. Out of the remaining two parts each of which represented a fourth of the entire produce of the bantha-giras, one part was to be taken by the state (chauth hissa-i sarkar). The remaining fourth part was marked as the girasias' share but a portion of it was also taken by the state.¹

It would therefore appear that the chauth denoted state's claim, share of Primary zamindar in the produce and, as also the apportioned part of land (bantha-chauth). It seems to have represented a fourth share whether in land or its produce, of the state and or that of the girasia or chauthia.

In the light of the preceding discussion it may be maintained that the Primary zamindar's was a superior right which was other than and stood above and co existed with other rights and claims.² Described as giras, bantha and chauth, the claim was legally recognised and customarily

¹. Yad-dasht dastur-ul amal pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1153 fasli op cit. It puts the rate as under:
bantha giras--- az dastur raiyati nisf.
chauth hissa sarkar - aza jumla chauth juzvi
b'girasia dade, juzvi dar sarkar kharch namude.
It may also be mentioned that the deduction out of the girasia's share of fourth was made for a short period. For details please see discussion in following pages.

well established\(^1\). Though the available evidence is not conclusive however it seems that the *giras* denoted the claim\(^2\), *bantha* (division) connoted the arrangement, a way to meet out the claim and the *chauth* stood for proportion of the claim. The *chauth* and *bantha* seem to have, in due course of time, come to denote the claim itself.

But all the rights designated as *giras* did not meet the state's approval. A European traveller, F. Martin (1681-2) noticed that "all the inhabitants round Baroda are robbers... Further north in the neighbourhood of Ahmadabad there existed a tribe of robbers called *gratias." Unchecked by the Mughal police the ' *gratias* became so bold that they

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2. The *Account* and the *Mirat* speak of the Rajputs and the Kolis in possession of lands prior to their forcible eviction and then of the settlement allowing them to hold a portion of their original possessions by way of *bantha* under the *bantha*-ta\(\text{i}p\) system which for the first time, was effected by sultan Muzaffar Gujarati. In the bardic traditions the original possessions held prior to the emergence of *bantha* lands are identified as *giras*. *Rasmala* pp 255-6, 260-4, 299, 569. Besides, the *giras* existed even within the domains of the autonomous zamindars who granted it as subsistence to junior members (bhayads) of their respective families following rule of primogeniture in the matter of succession. *Rasmala*, pp 186, 586; also see for its presence in the self administered domains *Ain II*, p 120 (Idar); *Mirat-i Sikandri*. pp 363-4. *Giras* papers are available in the palaces of Bhuj, Bhaonagar and Jamnagar; *Selections From the Records of Baroda Government*, NO II, Vol. II p 853; H.W. Wilbeforce, *Bell*, *op cit*, pp 230-31. It may therefore be contented that *giras* claims existed prior to the *bantha* and in the areas where the latter did not exist at all.
ventured to attack villages where they levied contributions from the villagers and hold their headman to ransom if they refused to pay. ¹ The Mirat also speaks of the exaction levied as giras by the Rajputs and Koils sometime after the bantha-talpad system, was effected. ² Thus the present illegal form of giras also emerged but it was different from the giras which carried legal sanctity as discussed above. It may however be seen that the prevalence of giras, the exaction, speaks of limitations of the Mughal security system in the countryside.

SHARE:

It has been discussed above that the Primary zamindar's share in the produce was met out, administratively, in two ways, viz; by effecting a physical division of land and putting aside a fourth part of it by way of bantha and, secondly, by allowing them a share directly in the revenues of the village.

¹ Memoires de F Martin, II, pp 315-7, 351-3 cited in the "Piracy in the western seas in the Reign of Aurangzeb", Journal of University of Bombay Vol V pt IV No 10 January 1939 p 5. The girasias levied exaction (giras) from the travellers also. SN Sen (ed.) Indian Travels of Thevenot And Careri, Indian Records Series, N.Delhi,949,p.20. The two travellers call the girasias as robbers whom they paid 'tole' between Cambay and Baroda.

² Mirat-i Ahmadi, l.p.174 During the post-1700 period the giras acquired unmanageable dimensions for details, Chapter VI below.
The bantha has been identified as (Primary) zamindar's share, an equivalent of malikand of Northern India. From the farman of emperor Akbar it would, likewise, appear that no mehsul was to be demanded from the one fourth land of Kolis and others set aside as ordered. But another set of evidence strongly suggests that the state demanded a share, called bantha-salami out of revenue of the bantha lands.

According to the Account the girasias had accepted (to offer) salami on the bantha land to the sarkar-i wala (bar zamin-i bantha salami-i sarkar-i wala qabul namudand) at the time the divisioning was effected during the period of the Gujarati sultan. The Mirat also suggests that it was paid even under the Mughals. But what portion of the bantha revenues was demanded by the state under the denomination of bantha salami has to be examined for ascertaining the share of Primary zamindars.

The girasias were required to surrender, by and large, a half of the bantha revenues in favour of the state by way of bantha salami. According to the earliest available das-tur-ul amal (c.1642-44) the bantha peasantry was required to

1. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp 149-50.
3. Account, f.106b.
surrender a half of its produce of polaj lands during the Rabi and Kharif seasons in pargana haveli Ahmadabad. The girasia was to retain a half of the portion thus extorted from the peasantry whereas the other was to be paid as bantha salami to the state. Likewise two third of the produce of newly reclaimed banjar lands formed peasantry's share and the remaining one third was shared by the girasias with state on equal basis. The dastur-ul amal which were in force during Auranzeb's reign and were not officially amended during later years for the bantha lands of girasias located in the parganas of haveli Ahmadabad, Bheel, Arharmatar, Petlad, Piplod, Khanbat Dholqa and Nadiad specify the same share i.e. bantha revenues were shared equally between the state and the girasia. Instances showing variation from what appears to be the common pattern mentioned above are also noticeable in the dasturs which, likewise, were not amended. In some of the villages of pargana Munda the salami on bantha was assessed on lump sum

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1. Dastur-ul amal ...b'mohr lsa Tarkhan, PC Nos. 41-2
2. Ibid, PC Nos. 45-7.
(bilmuqta) basis. ¹ The girasias holding bantha lands in mauza Tanbul (pargana Mehmudabad) enjoyed exemption from paying salami as per ancient custom. In some of the villages of the same pargana the girasias paid naqdi salami, rates of which are not specified. ²

Some changes in the rate of bantha salami seem to have been attempted during the course of the seventeenth century. The Account which specifies rates as were in force during, if not earlier than the reign of Aurangzeb and stood unamended for the rest of the period, does not speak of any change in direct terms. But sometimes it does not specify the rates and, instead states that the salami was assessed as per the ancient customs ³ implying that changes might have been effected elsewhere. During the period of his subedari (1645-46) Prince Aurangzeb attempted upward revision of the rate of the state's claim on the bantha demanding an unspecified portion of the fourth of produce which the holder was

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1. Account, f. 339a. In rest of the pargana the rate of salami was the same as in pargana haveli Ahmadabad.

2. Ibid f. 350a; for this village the work records the rate as under: mauza Tabul - qanun-i qadim, salami nadarad-mua'f. In the remaining villages it was assessed on the usual rates.

3. Thus for a pargana (sarkar) Ahmadabad it records the rate as under: bantha salami---qanun qadim ast. Ibid f 302b.
allowed to retain under Isa Tar Khan's dasturs. But the
prince's attempt appears to have been resented strongly
that is why, it seems the administration restored the status
quo ante during the period of administration of Prince
Dara's naib Ghairat khan (1648-50).

Sufficient information regarding the girasias' share in
the villages lands of which were not divided into bantha
and talpad is not available. But some idea of it may still
be formed. According to the Account the produce of the
raiyat in parganas of Mhorasa and Meghej (lands of which
were not divided) was divided into two parts (Nisfa nisf),
called hissa-i sarkar and hissa-i raiya. A fourth of the
hissa-i sarkar was deducted as girasias' claim.

Whether the girasias of the pargana were required to
part with a portion of their share is not known specifically
for these parganas. But the Account mentions girasias as
being under the obligation of paying giras-salami.

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1. Dastur-ul amal fasl-i Kharif-o rabi, 1053 fasli/1645-
6AD, pesh-az julus-i Alamoiri, op cit read with

2. For other similar actions taken by the Prince and the
Prince impact please see discussion under Revenue Grantees of
the present Chapter.

3. Naqi tumar ganwat... Ghairat Khan, PC Nos 46b-47a.

4. Account f, 353b.

5. Ibid f. 126a.
Dastur-ul amal (1050 fasli/1642-3AD.) however suggests that the salami on giras was nothing but an equivalent of bantha salami. Thus the peasantry in sarkar Pattan was required to surrender half of its produce of Polaj lands during Kharif season. Out of the state's share (az jumla sarkar) which thus amounted a half of the produce, a fourth was deducted as giras. Out of the giras (az jumla giras) the state demanded a share called salami amounting to a half of giras in some places and two fifth in other.¹ Thus the girasia was left with a half or three fifth part of the fourth portion of the revenues. It comes to 6.25 and 7.25 percent of the produce excluding talpad. It may thus be seen that the girasia's share baring few exceptions mentioned earlier whether holding bantha-giras or giras ranged between 6.25 to 7.25 per cent of the produce (or 12.50 and 14.50 percent of the bantha, inclusive of talpad.²

The bantha revenue being not entirely retained by the girasia who had to share it with the state, generally on


² Cf. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp 142-3,147,149-50
equal basis, bantha may hardly be equated with the malikana which was an exclusive privilege of zamindar.\(^1\) The bantha in the present context, bears closer identity to the zamindari which had been curtailed rather than the zamindar's share. The salami or bantha-salami\(^2\) was collected regularly and it could be levied both in cash and kind.\(^3\)

The sway of Primary zamindar did not cover the entire countryside of Gujarat.\(^4\) The Mirat refers to the raiyati\(^5\)

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1. Cf. ibid. Irfan Habib has not taken into account the salami as a regular imperial claim.

2. N.A. Siddiqi (op cit p 23n 12 ) holds that the salami came to be known as peshkash during the Mughal age. The author has not been able to distinguish peshkash on bantha as paid by "zamindaran" and salami on the same by the girasias.

3. Yad-dasht haqiqal-i paidaish mawza Rupar, pargana haveli Ahmadabad 1002 fasli R No 37, Pune, and for the years 1023, 1024 fasli for the same village ibid. See also PC Nos. 14-5, Account ff 182b, 202b, 212b-13a, 220b-22b. 303a,339b; for the jagirdars collecting the share and selling it in the market, Corpus Inscriptio-num Bhaonagri, Antiquarian Deptt. Bhaonagar state, New Delhi: 1971 pp 47-8 ; Tamassuk, dt. 1097 fasli-i kharif. RNO.37, Pune.

4. For a general view of their sway Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p 141; BR Grover "Nature of dehat-i talluga" p 166. But the intermediary zamindars would enjoy right even within the raiyati tracts.

5. The term is also used to denote the revenue paying villages as opposed to villages which refused to pay taxes and were, therefore, known as zortalab, mehwas or mawas in Gujarat. Account ff 311a,314a, 316b. In view of its submissiveness a zamindari village could be, as it was, called raiyati ibid ff.225a-6b.
villages as distinct from the villages of Primary and the Superior zamindars of the directly administered territories. The available evidence casts sufficient light on the existence of the raiyati lands within the villages, otherwise known as zamindari (girasias') villages, necessitating modification in the present understanding of the term raiyati vis a vis talpad in their association with the bantha possessions.

The parts of land originally termed talpad were, by and large, called raiyati in contradistinction to zamindari (girasia) lands (bantha-giras) under the Mughals. Thus the talpad portion of lands in each of the 82 (out of 84 villages comprising the pargana Bheel) villages lands of which were divided, is termed raiyati. To cite a representative example:

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement, pp 215-17. Account ff 176b, 181b. According to the Account (ff 81b-82a) the diwan-i subah had to maintain detailed information regarding the makan-i zamindari, haqiqat-i giras, raiyati and mehwas and bantha and raiyati.

2. Account, ff. 175a-81b.

3. Ibid. f.178a
Dhamaliya

entire area 2904 bigha
Habitations etc. 213 bigha
Cultivable area 2691 bigha

banth$u$ i
raiyati
chauth-giras
672 bigha 2018 bigha
15 biswa 5 biswa

Evidently the talpad portion of land is described as the raiyati.¹

Secondly, the talpad, for that matter raiyati lands constituted part of this village otherwise called talluqa-i girasia (or talluqa-i zamindar).²

The detailed break up of area figures of 116 villages described as talluqa-i mutafarriqa-i girasia (in contradistinction to talluqa-i zamindar) in a document is recorded the following way.³

¹. For other instances, Account, ff. 279a-90b; 309a-32a
². As noted earlier, Account and the Mirat state in very definite words that the lands of ‘watans’ (awtan) and ‘villages’ of the Rajput and Kolis (i.e. zamindars and the girasias) were divided into the bantha and talpad i.e. both the portion of land were thus there within one and the same village or villages.
³. Yad-dasht dehat-i pargana Kadi, PC Nos. 3b-4a, 6b-7b; Account, ff. 309a, 316a, 318b-9b, 320b-21b, 324a-25a, 327b, 330b.
Mawza Nadri\(^1\)  \hspace{2cm}  Mawza Firozpur\(^2\)

\(\text{pargana Kadi}\)  \hspace{2cm}  \(\text{pargana Kadi}\)

\(\text{entire area}\)  \hspace{2cm}  \(\text{entire area}\)

\(= 725 \text{ bigha} = 750 \text{ bigha}\)

\(\text{area under} \)habitations etc.

\(= 150 \text{ bigha}  140 \text{ bigha}\)

Cultivable area

\(= 575 \text{ bigha} = 610 \text{ bigha}\)

raiyati

\(= 431 \text{ bigha} = 460 \text{ bigha}\)

giras

\(= 144 \text{ bigha} = 150 \text{ bigha}\)

It goes to establish it beyond doubt that the raiyati lands did exist within the taliuqa villages. As such, the sway of the zamindar (girasia) did not cover the entire area even of the villages which were identified as taliuqa-i girasia, taliuqa-i chauthia or else as the taliuqa-i (Superior) zamindar\(^3\) which we have discussed in Chapter 1(2).

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1. Dehat-1 pargana Kadi, op.cit., PC No. 4a identifies the villages as held by a Bhat, a chauthia; read with Account, f. 331b.

2. Dehat-1 pargana Kadi, op.cit PC No. 6a includes it in the villages of girasia taliuqa; read with, Account, f. 352 a.


393
It would therefore appear that the *taluka* did not necessarily denote the exclusive zamindari possession, at least in the context of Gujarat.

Another set of evidence which furnishes details of cropped area under various titles (i.e. rights) goes to establish that the *talpad* could be identical to as well as different from the *raiyati* lands. Thus details of area statistics of *mawza* Aslali *pargana* (*haveli* Ahmadabad\(^1\)) may be reproduced to establish the point of identity between the two --

(Total cropped area) = 1206 bigha

1. *Raiyati* = 1001 bigha

   A - Kameja kashta = 272 bigha

   B - Paikashta = 729 bigha

2. *Bantha-giras* = 205 bigha

The entire cropped area of the village (1206) consisted of *raiyati* (1001 bigha) which may be identified as *talpad*, and the *bantha-giras* (205 bigha). In the present case the

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talpad may be identified as and equated with raiyati. Similar details available for mawza Rakhyal buzurg \(^1\) (1714-15) may be cited to differentiate one from the other Raqba (i.e. total cropped area) \(= 647-10\)

1. Talpad

   (A) Raiyati \(= 424-10\)
   
   (i). Kameja \(= 107-10\)
   
   (ii). paikashta \(= 317-0\)

   (B) Napa-pusaita \(= 66-00\)

2. Bantha-giras \(= 157-00\)

It would thus appear that the entire cropped area of the village (647 bigha, 10 biswa) comprised talpad (490/10) and the bantha-giras (157/0). Secondly the area of talpad (490/10) is more by 66 bigha, than that of the raiyati (424/10) i.e. the talpad comprised the raiyati and the Napa-pusaita \(2\) which being 66 bigha speaks of the difference. Besides, the raiyati lands were constituted by the area held

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1. Mazruat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif, 1122 fasli, mawza Rakhyal buzurg, PC Nos. 116-21; Ibid, 1126 and 1130 fasli, PC Nos. 110-14, 129-30; Similar documents for mawza Shaistabad (1125 fasli), Sorpur (1128 fasli). Shelkhpur (1131 fasli) and Gopalpur (1131 fasli) for kharif, R.No. 31, Pune.

2. The napa-pusaita lands were held by the revenue grantees. For details please see following sections of the present Chapter.
by kameja (resident-cultivators, peasant proprietors) and the paikasht, non resident cultivators.¹

It would, therefore, appear that the talpad and the raiyati alike denoted lands which did not constitute possessions of (Superior and) Primary zamindars. But the raiyati stood exclusive of the lands which had been set aside by way of revenue grants whether conditional upon or free of service.² Besides, the raiyati like talpad could be found in the villages which otherwise were identified as zamindari villages, at least within the ones lands of which were divided into bantha and talpad.³

It is thus evident that the sway of zamindari did not cover the entire countryside. Even within the talluqa village Primary zamindars' economic claims could as such, be confined to the bantha portion alone still their association with the entire village was maintained, for the bantha-dars

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2. For the lands marked as wazifa (i.e. madad-i' ma'sh) beside pusaita being excluded of raiyati but included in the talpad, mazruat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif, 1127 fasli, mawza Palri Kakej, R.No. 21, Pune.;

3. But raiyati could also be there where talpad lands were non-existant.
were to keep watch and ward and police the villages of their respective possessions.¹

To ensure that the Rajputs and Kolis performed the required duty and that they did not create disturbance they were obliged to furnish reliable securities which were procured by thanedars and faujdars, and sometime by the Nazim².

Some information about the castes of the Primary zamindars is also available. A scrutiny of the evidence would suggest that though the bantha and giras lands were also held by the Jats, Ahirs, Bhats, Charans, Brahmans, Malik and other Muslims but the Rajputs and Kolis were the dominant zamindari castes.³ It is important to note that the clansman of the Superior zamindars and their brotherhood (brathri) and brethren (brathran) were amongst the holders of giras claims. They are moreover described the same way brathran or brathri in available documents.⁴ It is worth submitting that the recalcitrance is generally associated


2. The Nazim had to ensure procurement of the securities from leading recalcitrants. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I. pp. 173-4, 210, 303; Account, f. 106a, Tamassuk, Baroda, 99.

3. Ain, II, pp 120-4; Account, ff, 105b-6a, 175a-75b, 309a, 405a; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp 173-74, Ibid, Supplement, pp 190, 211-8, 225, 228-29; Mirat-i Sikandri, pp. 363-64. Dehat pargana Kadi; Op.cit.

4. Dehat pargana Kadi; op cit.

397
and the rebellious elements are described in terms of castes\textsuperscript{1}.

The state seems to have been quite conscious of the recalitrance in its association with caste. Beside taking immediate steps of punitive nature against the rebels\textsuperscript{2} it seems to have made preventive arrangement for controlling and containing the recalcitrants. Rebellious character of a caste seems to have gone a long way in determining the territorial extent of an administrative unit meant to enforce, among other, the law and order.\textsuperscript{3} Then the rebellious girasias and their possessions could be placed under a separate administrative unit by dividing the existing one, presumably for exerting greater pressure and maintaining

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1.] Thus 'malevolent' Kolls and Kathis, \textit{zxortallab} Jhala Rajput, 'distracted' Kolis, 'misguided' Kolis etc. are the most common expressions used by Ali Muhammad Khan, the last \textit{diwan-i subah}, \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}; I. pp 174, 178, 211. Also rebels from Akbar to Aurangzeb are described the same way \textit{Ibid} I. pp. 173, 210-16, 220, 253-54, 292, 324-26, 330-343, and \textit{Ibid} I. pp. 304, 331, 336-37, 345. It was presumably on account of close identity between caste and recalitrance that is why caste, mawas and giras are used interchangeably as if no shade of distinction existed between them. \textit{Tabqat-i Akbari}, II. pp. 381 390; \textit{ibid}, III pp. 138, 184, 186; \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, I. p. 213 read with \textit{Amal-i Saleh}, I, pp 339-40
  \item[3.] \textit{Account f.405a The Ain too also specifies the parganas which were associated with a single zamindari-caste}; please also see \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement}, pp.203, 211-18.
\end{itemize}
strong vigil through the added strength of troops. Sometime additional troops were also posted to keep the Kolis and other within bounds. The state also assessed the Rajputs and Kolis' personal (non-zamindari) lands at concessional rates and granted them revenue free land. Whether these favors were granted with a view to woe them is a matter of speculation. In spite of all these steps, the state does not seem to have succeeded much in managing the rebellious element, much less in changing their rebellious nature. If therefore seems that the zortalbi had come to stay and was treated as fait-accompli. Since a drastic change in the caste composition of zamindars of the subah could not be

1. Thus in all 700 sawars were maintained to manage the Kolis of Azamabad, a small sized pargana. Mirat-i Ahmadi Supplement, p. 190; for the girasias holding these village called mehwasi, Account, ff. 175a-75b. Similarly pargana Jhalawar was broken into two (Virang-aon and Halwad) to contain zortalab Jhala Rajputs during Aurangzeb's reign. Account f 22a; Mirat-i Ahmadi; Supplement, pp. 192, 219 cf Ain II, p. 249.

2. Account, f 309a; Mitatt-i Ahmad, Supplement, pp. 190, 192-3, 197.

3. Account, ff. 202a-2b, 220b, 222a, 349b, 359b; Isa Tar Khan's dastur, op. cit; For the revenue grants please see discussion under Revenue Grantees in the following pages.

4. The villages and parganas wherein the state had reportedly applied coercive methods or granted concessions are continuously described as zortalab and generally with no revenue returns (hasil nadarad). Account ff. 172a-72b, 224a-26b, 312b, 315a, 316b, 319a, 319a, 321a, 324a, 330a. Besides the Kolis and Rajputs are continuously described the same way.
effected quite continuity in the caste-based recalcitrance is quite understandable. Under Aurangzeb incidents of recalcitrance seem to have increased further.\(^1\)

Instead of taking a drastic step to effect change in caste composition of zamindars, Aurangzeb desperately resorted to inflicting the most severe punishment -- "girasias and zamindars who are mischief mongers, rebellious and confirmed offenders should be killed".\(^2\)

It may also be pointed out that there were also multi-caste zamindari holdings. Thus bantha-giras lands in village Kalba (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) were held by Ranji Koli, Saiyed Akram, Saiyed Inam, Malik Muhammad, Bhawan Parmar, Sangram Gohel and Jai Singh Jadav.\(^3\) Similarly Charans, Bhats

\[\text{---\text{\textend{natural_text}}}\]

1. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; 1 pp. 253-4, 292, 324-6, 330-1, 333, 336-7, 343, 345; *Haqiqat-i Naziman-i Gujarati* makes the following observation for Aurangzeb's reign: *shokhi-o tamarrud an mardum (girasias) darin mulk azhar minash-shams ast.*

2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, 1 p. 279. It was also provided that "they could be killed on evidence against them." But the qazi released a number of girasias who had been imprisoned at the chabutra-i kotwali. Presumably the faujdars failed to bring evidence against them before the qazi. The emperor then ordered that, "after this confirmed (?) rebels should be confined to jail and not released" by the qazi (*ibid.* p 304) They were to be detained without substantiative evidence. It seems none from the villagers would take the risk of speaking against the girasias.

Brahmans, Maliks and other Muslims held *bantha-chauth* lands in the villages of *pargana* Kadi.¹ But references to non-Rajput-Kolis appear only far and few between and negligible number of zamindars belonging to other castes would obviously not have affected the position of the dominant castes.

As regard the mode of possessing zamindari lands by the members of the same family, it could be held in two ways. In the first place the entire lands could be held collectively without effecting physical division of land. The share of each *girasia* in such cases was expressed in terms of *annas*.² But in some cases physical division of lands could be effected and each share, in such cases, recorded in terms of definite area unit.³ Or else *pattis* (strips) of each *girasia* could be demarcated and marked.⁴

In the light of the preceding discussion it may be observed that the position of Primary zamindars in the *subah* is marked by inter-regional and intra-regional variations. As compared to the Superior zamindars, this category enjoyed a wider social base and commanded influence at grass roots.

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1. *Yad-dasht dehat pargana* Kadi, *op.cit*
2. *Bombay Gazetteer*, (Kaira), pp.82,89.
3. *Yad-dasht muqaddaman waghaira, op.cit*; *Yad-dasht bantha-daran mawza Mehmudabad*, *PC* No. 218
level. Still it was exposed to bear the maximum of administrative burden, degree of which varied from place to place and time to time.

The Mughals attempted to reach the peasantry directly and thus contain the zamindars by reducing the area and degree of their control. The administration sought to manage them by exerting continual administrative pressure and maintaining a system of checks and balances. It also attempted to reduce their share. But it could not make effective inroads into the bastions of their power.

Though relatively docile, still the Primary zamindars were restive under the imperial hold. They tried to cash upon a favourable situation. Increasing recalcitrance could not be tackled by adopting harsh measures, much less bring about a qualitative change. Imperial attempts to exert pressure in greater degree met with appreciable success in the central part of the subah. But in terms of comprehensiveness over all imperial control seems to have been declining.

REVENUE GRANTEES

Like its predecessors the Mughal ruling class granted its rights in land or its usufruct to select individuals and establishments. The alienated rights were known as
milk, amlak, suyurghal and madad-i ma'sh. There were inam, inam-i altamgha and awkaf grants which were different in name but were, in fact, very similar. Still other grants were described as pusaita, rawania, ranwatia and devasthan which were indigenous in origin but had been retained by the Mughals who kept up the practice of making fresh grants under regional nomenclature.

1. IMPERIAL GRANTS

A. Madad-i'Ma'sh:

1. For a detailed view of the terms Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, p 298 & n. According to the Ain (I, p. 278) subsistence allowance paid in cash were called wazifa, lands conferred were called milk or madad-i-ma'sh. 'The two types of grants were covered by general term suyurghal'. N.A. Siddiqi, op. cit p 213.

Later on, it seems, the suyurghal came to be replaced by wazifa which covered all grants, both in cash and kind. Thus the Account records the granted revenues and lands as under:

Wazifa (pargana Bheel)
(a) dams: 203630 - (i) madad-i ma'sh 1,22,341
   (ii) ina'm 61,289
   (iii) iwz-i rozina 20,000

(b) arazi: 4386 bigha, 6 biswa and 10 biswansis.

Account, f 241a, see also *Ibid*, ff. 164a, 174bb, 183b, 203b, 218b.


3. The grants under regional nomenclature may broadly be categorized into (i) the pusaita lands held by intermediary zamindars and discussed in the preceding Chapter, (ii) the lands held by servants and artificers of village community and (iii) the ones held by persons who were regarded socially useful and influential.

In the present discussion these grants are referred to as indigenous grants.
In view of the observation that the class of grantees contributed in its own way towards the acceptance of Mughal authority by a considerable number of people, a study of the recipients of imperial grants and their credentials appears to be imperative.

The madad-i ma'sh grants were not an exclusive monopoly, either in theory or in practice, of any caste and community. However, these were more commonly held by Muslims and even among them by the Sheikhs and Saiyeds. In Gujarat too, the same people appear to have formed the dominant group throughout the seventeenth century. Emperor Akbar allowed the noted Shaikhs and Saiyeds to continue in their possessions granted earlier by Gujarati Sultans and also made fresh one. Emperor Jahangir is perceived to have 'moderated Akbar's stern policy a little'. The information contained in the Tuzuk and available documentary evidence goes to suggest that the Emperor showed his particular inclination towards the Sheikhs and Saiyeds of Gujarat and favoured

them with madad-i ma'ish the lands size of which ranged from six bighas to an entire village. But their fortunes seem to have touched a high water mark under Shah Jahan. Under Shah Jahan the Sheikhs and Saiyed got madad-i ma'ish grants which were larger in size and also appear to be relatively numerous. The family of one Sheikh Muhammad Bukhuri was recipient of villages, nine in number during his reign. The Emperor also granted the same number of villages to Sheikh Fatto, khadim-i rawza (of?) beside 700 bighas of land under cultivation in 1629 and 1644. One Saiyed Faizullah and Saiyed Azam were likewise granted five and two village respectively. Similarly Saiyed Chand, Saiyed Idris and Saiyed Abdar Razaque were granted one village each by

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1. Tuzuk, I, pp, 419, 425-26, 439-40; Junagadh SC No 411 Ext. 1 and 2 (mahal Una); Ibid, SC No 625 Exs. 5/4 and 5/6 (mahal Kutiyan); Ibid SC No 894 Exs 12 and 14 (mahal Kutiyan); Ibid, SC no. 1162 Ex. 1 (mahal Una); Ibid SC No 1192 (mahal Una); Haqiqat madad-i ma'ish, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1080 AH; f 9b, R No 22.

2. Junagadh SC No 2 Ex. 1, SC Nos 413, 420, 1137, 1162, 1192 (mahal Una).

3. Ibid, SC Nos 426, Exs 1 to 1d; 912, Ex Nos. 3,5 and 7.

4. Ibid SC No 425 (mahal Una).
the same emperor. 1 Besides, the emperor also granted lands the area of which ranged from 20 to 750 bighas to other Sheikhs and Saiyeds in large numbers. 2

Under Aurangzeb too the Sheikhs and Saiyeds seem to have formed a dominant group but the area of land per individual-grantee appears to be less than the one under Shah Jahan. As per the available evidence the size of grant given as madad-i ma'sh generally ranged between 20 and 100 bighas, but in few instances it happened to be more than that. 3

Though Aurangzeb also granted entire village but the number

1. *Ibid*, SC No 105, Exs 21 and 27; *Ibid* SC No 483, Exs. 22/3 to 22/7 (*mahal* Pattan Deo); *Ibid*, SC No 554, Exs, E-1, 1/2, 1/3, 2/1, 2/5 (*mahal* Una).

2. *Haqiqat-i madad-i ma'sh*, op.cit, ff 2a to 21b; *parwanas, chakhamas* and *parwanchas*, R Nos 21, 29 and 39, Pune; *PC* No 284/41G/Bharoch.

3. Area-wise break up of little more than 110 traceable grants made in favour of Sheikhs and Saiyeds of Gujarat by Aurangzeb may be summarised as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of grants</th>
<th>Size of grants (in bighas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>150 to 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>100 to 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>60 to 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>5 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>each comprising an entire village.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Junagadh, SC No. 429 (mahal Una); Ibid, SC No 1123, Ex 10; Ibid, SC No 1190, Ex 9/3, 9/4 (mahal Kutiyana); Ibid SC Nos 853, 893 (mahal Mangrole); Sanad, parwanas, R Nos. 21,23, 27; *Haqiqat-i madad-i ma'sh*, 1080 AH, op cit; Saiyed Sardar Halder's (Bharoch), Private Collection, un-indexed; PC No. 286/41/G. Please also see following notes.*
of such grants comes to five\(^1\) which as compared to Shah Jahan's reign is apparently less.

The above mentioned Sheikhs and Saiyeds were by and large, associated with the mausoleums (rozah) of sufis-saints where urs were organized and the Prophet's birth day was celebrated\(^2\), the places and occasions of public attraction. Still other Sheikhs and Saiyeds received madad-i ma'ish grants because of their association with the madarsahs, the places of higher learning where Non-Muslims also could acquire education.\(^3\)

Besides there were other Muslims who were likewise favoured with madad-i-ma'sh grants on the grounds of poverty, large family establishment (Kasrat-ul ayal), orphanage, unemployment and some unspecified reasons. They were continuously favoured from emperor Jahangir to emperor Aurangzeb with grants, the size of which generally ranged between 18

1. Aurangzeb's farman, dt 17 Shawwal, 18 RY, Sajjada Nashin, dargah Edroosia, Surat; Mirat-i Ahmadi; Supplement, pp 37-8,


and 60 bighas and in a few instances it could be as more as
100,140 and 1300 bighas.¹ Then Muslim women were likewise
favoured with the madad-i ma'sh grants as direct recipients
as well as under the decrees and rules governing inheri-
tance.²

Non-Muslims were also favoured with the grant of madad-
i ma'sh lands from the time of conquest down to the onset of
the eighteenth century.

Emperor Akbar granted Kaiqubad, a Parsi, 300 bighas of
land together with palm and date trees in pargana Navsari
(Sarkar Surat) by way of madad-i ma'sh.³ He also favoured
one Somji Bhat (bad farosh) with a madad-i ma'sh grant
comprising 30 bighas of land, an orchard and mawza Ahmadpur
entirely (dar-o bast).⁴ Emperor Jahangir also granted two

1. Junagadh, SC No 554/1 (mahal Junagadh); Ibid, SC No 553
Ex. 5/3; Ibid, SC No 554 (mahal Una); Ibid, SC No 894,
Ex 16 (mahal Kutiyana); Ibid, SC No 893 (mahal Man-
grole); Haqiqat madad-i ma'sh, op cit, 10b; Haqiqat-i
aimma pargana haveli Ahmedabad R No 21 to cite few
representative examples.

2. Baroda, 57, 70-73, 75-6, 79-82, 84; Haqiqat-i madad-i
ma'sh, ff 1b, 7a, 12a-14b; SH Desal's private collec-
tions No 16/14-2.

3. S H Hodivala, Studies in Parsi History, Bombay,
1920, pp. (photographic reproduction); Jivanji Jamshedji
Modi The Parsee at the court of Akbar, Bombay 1903,
pp 91 ff.

4. Junagadh, SC No 1201 Ex. 4/3 (mahal Junagadh); His
descendents were confirmed in the grant by Emperor
Aurangzeb, in 1097 AH/1684 Ibid, SC No 263 (mahal
Junagadh).
villages entirely to Shankar Bhat along with descendents in pargana Mangrole (sarkar Soreth); 10 bighas of land to Chandu Sanghvi, a Jain in mawza Akbarpur (pargana Chawras!); 100 bighas of land to two Parsi priests, Mulla Jamaasp and Mulla Hoshang of Navsari (sarkar Surat) and 15 bighas of land to Sukhdev Purohit for laying down a garden in the vicinity of Ahmadabad.¹

Tradition was kept up under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Shah Jahan granted one Naraindas Bhat 15 bighas of land (1634) by way of madad-i ma'sh in pargana Una (sarkar Soreth).² Aurangzeb added 45 bighas of land (1670) together with a well to his possession in the same pargana.³ Bhan Singh, another Bhat, was granted mawza Tari (pargana Kutiyana alias Muzaffarabad, sarkar Soreth) entirely and 3350 bighas of land in another village sometime during Shah Jahan's reign. Qutubuddin Khan Khweshgi, faujdar of Soreth, during the opening years of Aurangzeb's reign, resumed the grant. When the matter was brought to his notice, Emperor

1. Ibid, SC No 995 Exs 11/1, 11/2; Bhanu Chand Charitra, pp 86-8; Muni Vidya Vijaya, Surishwar and Samrat, pp 388-89; "A farman of emperor Jahangir in favor of two Parsees of the Dordi family of Naosar" J.B.B.R A S; (1919-20), pp 419-20; Naqī chaknamah, PC No 245. The Jain was granted land for the purpose of building a temple, laying a garden and a memorial in honour of the deceased Jain Acharya Vijaya Sena Suri.

2. Junagadh, SC No 40 Ex 6/5 (mahal Una).

Aurangzeb ordered its restoration. Bhaval and Raghunath, the Bhats acquired two villages and two mahals of orchard from Shah Jahan and confirmatory farman of Aurangzeb after they had been disturbed in their possession by the local faujdar. Aurangzeb bestowed upon Narottamdas and other Bhattas the villages of Sardari and Baori and 15 bighas of land in 1697 by way of madad-i ma'sh grants. One Vasudev, a Brahman, was likewise granted 15 bighas of land by the same emperor.

The bulk of the madad-i ma'sh grants were conferred without imposing any condition in return. But some grants were conditional which though called madad-i ma'sh were,

1. *Ibid*, SC No 1009 (mahal Kutiyana); The Emperor added yet another village, Choolyana, to his possession. *Ibid*, SC No 996A, Ex A/1 (mahal kutiyana)


4. *Ibid* SC No 70 and 171, (mahal Sutrapara); All these grantees are noticed in their possessions as late as 1880-90. Also see please SH Hodivala, *Studies in Parsi History*, p 178. Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, p 311 & n 55.

however, different from the ordinary grants.¹ Significant among these grants was the one held by a physician. The grant consisting of 100 bighas of land was conditional 'mashroot' upon his service of treating the patients (Khid-mat-i mualja-i marizan).² Then Emperor Aurangzeb also granted village and hills of Palitana to Satidas jeweller, a Jain, in his capacity as a leading member of the sawak (Jain) community with the provision that the grass and timber etc. which was found on the hills would 'belong to the sawak community and that 'whosoever' would 'guard the hills and the temple (devasthan) should be entitled to the income of Palitana'.³

B-INÁ‘M

The ina‘m grants appear to have been less numerous than the madad-i ma‘sh and unlike the latter were generally held

1. The qazis, muftis and the muhtasibs were ex-officio holders of these grants. But these lands were not counted as part of madad-i ma‘sh, ina‘m etc. which were granted free of obligation. Account ff. 174b read with 96a; Ibid, ff 213a, 214a 338a read with, ff 96a, 97b. The official positions tended to be hereditary and therefore the lands too came to be held likewise. Ibid, ff96a-100a.

2. Ibid, f 97b; The physician could also be granted madad-i ma‘sh lands free of condition in recognition of their service of treating "the poor and indigents". Hodivala, Studies in Farsi History, pp 167, 188; Likewise Khan Muhammad who was engaged in teaching in pargana haveli Pattan was granted madad-i ma‘sh lands. Account f 97b.

3. MS Commissariat, Imperial Mughal farmans in Gujarat. plate No XX.
by Non-Muslims.  

Emperor Shah Jahan granted (1634) a piece of chahi land measuring 15 bigha in the vicinity of Delwara (pargana Una, sarkar Soreth) to Naraindas, a Bhat.  

The Emperor also confirmed Bhavanidas and Narottamdas (1638) in the ina'm possession of mawza Sarhari and Baori and 150 bigha of land (pargana Mangrole) which their deceased father had held on the basis of sanads issued earlier.  

Likewise the Emperor confirmed Shantidas, Ratanji and Lakshmi Chand in the ina'm possession after the death of Vardhman and Panju who held it along with their sons since 1628.  

1. Of the known recipients of ina'm lands only five belonged to Muslim community. Junagadh, SC No 105, Exs 21, 27 (mahal Sutrapara); ibid SC No 481 (mahal Una); ibid, SC No 853 (mahal Kutiyana); Baroda, 65; Hakim Ruhulla Bharochi was given villages of Than, Sarvadi (pargana Oklesar) and Kukrawada (pargana Bharoch) by way of madad-i ma'sh after the physician had correctly diagnosed emperor Jahangir's cause of illness and treated the empress Nur Jahan. The Empress granted these villages by a hukm, dt 22nd Julius/1627 AD, of her own. Village of Chawaj was given as ina'm by the emperor vide his farman dt. 24 Rabi, 1, 1032 AH/1623 AD. After the physician's death in 1649-50 his sons were granted the three madad-i ma'sh villages by way of ina'm vide Prince Murad's hasb-ul hukm. These documents are available with Sardar Saiyed Haider, inamdar of Bharoch. Copies of the same are there in Bharoch commission's Report of 25 Aug 1805, District Record office, Bharoch.  


ly another Bhat- family held mawza Bhadora (pargana Kutiyana) by way of ina'm from sometime before 1654. The same emperor had also granted mawza Ramlori (pargana Patlab) to Barsa and Jatlan, Charans on condition of keeping vigil etc (b'shart-i muhafat-w khabardari-i rah-w daf'mutamarridan).

Emperor Aurangzeb had ordered (1672-73) the "resumption of all grants held by Hindus", and thus, it is observed, 'completely reversed Akbar's policy'. Following the order the above mentioned mawza Ramlori granted by Shah Jahan was resumed. But on the Charans' representation the grantee was allowed to retain the same. But the same emperor granted mawza Rakhyal khurd (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) by way of ina'm to Naraindas. Likewise Bikhudas and Jagjiwandas were granted mawza Asja (pargana Mangrole) sometime during Shujat Khan's period of subedari (d.1701) confirmed in their possession in 1703 and are noticed in possession in 1729.

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3. Ibid.
4. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System p 311 and n 55.
6. Ibid.
In 1704 the same emperor granted 200 bighas of chahi and barani land by way of ina'm to Mohanji and Raghunath. Also the Kolls of Chunwai, Amar Singh Bhat of mawza Ropra (pargana Idar) and Kanhaji Brahman of Mogdi (pargana Idar) are noticed in their ina'm possession from Aurangzeb's times to the reign of Muhammad Shah. Non-Muslims who had been granted lands from Akbar to Aurangzeb in sarkar Soreth under whatever nomenclature and referred to in the present discussion, continued to hold the same as late as, if not later than, 1880-90. Aurangzeb's above quoted order may, therefore, be regarded as a statement of policy which was hardly followed even by himself.

There were other grants which, though not given any name, were however identical to the ones mentioned above. Emperor Akbar granted (1592) hills of Sidhanchal, Girnar, Taranga, Abu etc (subah Gujarat) to Hirvijya Suri, Acharya

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1. Ibid SC No 668 Ex 8/4.
2. Yad-dasht dehat tappa Chunwai, amla pargana Jhalawar PC No R-1; Account, ff 170b, 171b.
3. All the Junagadh Settled case files and documents stand testimony to this fact.
4. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p 311 & n 55. The only available instance of resumption of grant held by a Non-muslim is the one already mentioned.
of Jain Swetamber community. The Emperor also granted (1595) 30 bighas of land and an orchard to Somji, a Bhat in pargana haveli Junagadh (sarkar Soreth).2 Emperor Jahangir granted 15 bighas of land to the sons of Sukhmal Purohit.3 Emperor Shah Jahan granted 39 bigha and 15 biswas (1651) of land under cultivation to Raizada Gopaldas (pargana haveli Ahmadabad).4 The Emperor also bestowed 39 bighas of land and a well upon Bhakar and Mordas.5

The nature of rights enjoyed by the grantees seems to have been qualified by the composition of the lands so granted. The grantee was not invested with any rights not claimed previously by the state.6 The state merely transferred its rights over the revenues of the area thus alienated.

1. For the fascimile of the farman see Memorial of the firm of Sheth Anandji-Kalyanji as the Representative of the Jain community in India in reference to their grievances about certain rights Re the Shatranjya Hills. The Times of India Press, Bombay, n.d. pp. 25-6.

2. Junagadh SC No 263 (mahal Junagadh); Ibid. SC No 1201, Ex 4/3.

3. Chakhamah, dt 22 safar, 1061 AH/1650, PC No 245. Since part of the grant originally demarcated had been covered in habitations, the grantee was given the land at another place under Shah Jahan's orders.

4. PC Nos 86.

5. Ibid, No 273; for similar grant by Aurangzeb Junagadh, SC No 893 Ex 1 (mahal Kutyana); Ibid, SC Nos 838, 847 Ex 2 (mahal Kutyana).

The grants generally consisted of the cultivable waste and the lands already under cultivation. The state was 'the proprietor of all the jungles, unreserved and unappropriated waste land' whereas the appropriated land 'was owned by certain categories of the riaya'.

The grantee enjoyed the right to develop the waste land on their own, or get it cultivated with the help of hired labour or the tenants. Such tenants would not be evicted so long as they paid the stipulated share regularly to the grantee. But the land developed by him would be retained by the grantee even after the grant was resumed. In the lands already under cultivation the rights of the grantee for the revenues and the 'land ownership rights' of the self-cultivated lands in grants'.


2. Emperor Akbar had provided to give half of the area already cultivated and the other half in cultivable waste, called ufta-dab, banjar-Laiq-i zira't. (Ain, I p 179). But the rule was not strictly adhered to. The general trend appears to have been to alienate the minimum of revenue-paying (mazraa) lands. Junagadh, SC Nos. 79, 89, 842, 894 (mahal Una); FC No.284 /Bha/ 41g; Junagadh, SC No. 849, 894 Ex 3/3 (mahal Kutiyana); PC No 273.


5. Mazruat wazifa mawza Khatwara. PC No 152; Tamassukh 1082 fasli, op. cit; Khasra mazruat taraf Rajpur, 1149 fasli PC No 163, see also PC No 93b; BR Grover "Elements of Continuity," p 16.
vating riaya co-existed.¹

Secondly, the grantee's claim over the revenues vis a vis the state was also qualified by the nature of abliened area. In the first place, the cultivable waste (banjar-liaq-i zirat or uftadah-laiq-i zirat) is described as kharif az jama i.e. excluded from the jama (not assessed for paying revenues) at the time of making grants. From the available evidence it appears further that the uftadah lands even after they had been reclaimed but continued to be held in grant, were not assessed for fixing the jama.² On the other the mazrua portion of granted land stood already assessed. The individual-grant and grantee-wise jama was ascertained

1. Khatabandi Pali Kochrab, pargana haveli Ahmadabad. PC NO 77; BR Grover "Elements of Continuity." pp 15-6; see also PC Nos 163 and 93b, op cit.

2. The Ain specifies the 'jama alienated under suyurghal, obviously the revenue otherwise demanded by the state from the lands already under cultivation.

The Mirat specifies (a) jama in dams (b) area of land (not covered by the jama and (c) the amount given in cash. (Mirat-i Ahmadi i pp 25-6). The area with no jama obviously is of the uftadah lands which remained unassessed. It goes without saying that the grantees did bring the uftadah lands under cultivation after the grant had been made.

One Saiyed Tahir was granted 45 bighas - 15 bighas already under cultivation and 30 bighas out of uftadah lands - as madad-i-ma'sh sometime during Shah Jahan's reign. The position in regard to jama in 1081 fasli/1673 is stated as under:

30 bigha - dam nadarad
15 bigha - 3150 dam
Haqiqat madad-i-ma'sh, ff 9a and 7b. RNo 22, Pune.
after the chak had been demarcated. The same was recorded along with the area of land, assessed revenue and the hasil (baqald-i jama-o hasil). 1 Since the state is understood to have alienated its 'rights over the revenues', the question whether the state granted a specified jama or else the grant stood independent of the (revisable) amount of jama, may be answered with the information contained in the document entitled haqiqat-i madad-i ma'ish.

The grantee's claim over the grant seems to have been qualified by the amount of jama and the hasil of the granted land. Thus one Saiyed Saeed was granted 125 bighas and 14 biswas of mazrua land sometime before 1071 AH/1660 AD. Its jama was worked out and it stood at 50,000 dams. Consequent upon the upward revision (1081 fasli/1673 AD) the jama of the same land was fixed at 53027. The grantee paid Rs 56/- against the difference (3027-dams) of the amounts of jama. 2

To cite another representative example, a grantee was given mazrua lands which initially carried a jama of 71500 dams. Later the jama was revised and fixed at 1,60,000 dams some-

1. The Revenue Department maintained details of the alienated jama for the grantee, village, pargana, sarkar and then for the entire subah. Account, f 100a. The document which carried grantee and village-wise details for each pargana was called haqiqat-i madad-i ma'ish. Ibid; One such document is available in the Pune collection. op cit.

2. Haqiqat-i madad-i ma'ish op cit f 223a.
time before 1673 AD. The grantee was allowed exemption (izafa muaf shuda) from paying the revenues against the enhanced jama.¹ The state did not necessarily realize the revenues against the difference. Instead the area of land corresponding to the difference (arazi bazyaf)² in jama was realized.

In some cases the difference in the amounts of hasils originally granted and the increased one at later stage could likewise be realized.³

But, then, all the grantees do not appear to have enjoyed rights which were qualified by specified jama and/or hasil. Such grants were therefore described and held as bila-qaid-i dami-o hasil. The principle of resumption (bazyaf) was not applicable to them and the grantees not required to pay any amount of revenues to the state.⁴ Besides, the grantees who held villages 'entirely' (dar-o bast) were

1. Ibid f 219 a see also Ibid ff 167a-69b.
2. Ibid f 211a see also Ibid ff 115a-23b
3. Thus a person was granted a piece of cultivated land the hasil of which stood at Rs 394/4 annas. By the year 1673 the hasil figure rose to Rs 642/10 annas. The difference which being Rs 293/6 annas was realized by the state. Ibid f 56a see also Ibid ff 88a-92b
4. Ibid, f 97a see also Ibid ff 86a-89b. It may however be pointed out that part of the possession could be resumed at the time of confirmation in the inherited possessions. All the available instances pertaining to the ina'm lands record the grant under the expressions, bila qaid jama-o hasil. Ibid f 15.
required to surrender a portion of revenues and therefore not allowed to enjoy the whole of revenues taken from the peasantry.¹

The state maintained detailed account of the cropped area for both the crop seasons of the alienated lands presumably to effect detailed assessment through its own revenue machinery.² Also the sadarat maintained its mutasaddis to ensure that the mutasaddis of diwani would not levy taxes exemption from which had been granted.³ Sometime the fauj-dars and the subedars resumed the grants which had to be restored after imperial intervention.⁴ The grantees, by the closing years of Aurangzeb's reign, had grown bold enough as they are reported to have defied the diwan's orders and did not "produce their sanads for inspection".⁵

1. Ibid. ff 23a-9b; please also see yad-dasht-haqiqat-i paidaish pargana Dholqa sarkar Ahmadabad fasl-i kharif., 1130 fasill (PC Nos 14-17) which separately specifies 'jama b mae bazyayfi aimma' (Ibid, 14b), collection from the dehat-i-aimmadaran (Ibid 15b) under mal-o jihat and then bazyayt laimma waghaira under sair jihat (Ibid, 16a).

2. The mazruat documents cited in the preceding discussion stand testimony.

3. Account ff.100 a & b

4. Junagadh, SCNo 1009 (mahal Kutiyana); Ibid SC No 995 Exs. 11/1 to 11/4, 15/1 (mahal Kutiyana)

5. Mirat-i Ahmadi; i p 335. The diwan therefore approached the emperor who issued a farman asking the grantees to produce their sanads. Ibid.
In the year 1690 Emperor Aurangzeb issued a farman declaring that thereafter "the lands of the grantees would be retained completely and fully, without loss or reduction by the heirs of the deceased grantee generation after generation". Still the state maintained rules governing succession. As per these rules the grantees' descendents were not necessarily allowed to inherit the possessions entirely though it was not invariably the case. Whether these rules which stood unamended were actually enforced is not known. Aurangzeb's order had however placed the grantees on equal footings with the Primary zamindars.

INDIGENOUS GRANTS

Contemporary and near contemporary sources also refer to other revenue-grants which were known as pusaita, shasun, nakru, rawania, ranwatia, haria, halia, dharamdeva and devasthan.

1. Emperor Aurangzeb's farman cited in Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p.306 & n36
2. Account, ff, 100b-101a
3. The terms stand for the grants which the Britisher categorised as 'personal' (jat inam) and the 'institutions'. Among the former were the haria (given to the family of a person who died fighting for the village); ranwatia (given to the 'warriors' family who died in an attack on the enemy), and halia (tombstone field) given for support of a tomb in memory of some Charan, Bhat or Brahman who had killed himself in the interest of the village. The other category comprised the grants which were meant for the maintenance of temples (devasthan,
Granted by the native chiefs and the village communities 'according' to the ancient customs' to patronise families and persons of various description regarded 'useful to the community.' These custom-based grants were honoured by the Mughal administration also. However, these grantees were generally meted out a differential treatment and their grants were not equated with the imperial grants discussed above.

The pusaita lands were found almost in every part of the Subah. On the basis of their holders the contemporary documents categorise the pusaita into pusaita apa and the pusaita na’pa. The two forms were meted out different treatments.

Continued...

dharamdeva or dharamdan), mosques and tombs, The pusaita which were more common and identical to zamindari lands, will be discussed below. It may be pointed out here that in Kaira region pusaita was known as nakru and in Idar it could be called shasun. In other parts haria, yachuk and nakru could be applied to the pusaita itself. Bombay Govt. Rev. Sel. XXXIX, New Series, p. 23; The East India papers, III. p. 708; Tarikh-i Soreth, ff. 205-6; Baden powell, Land System of British India; III, pp. 300-2.


2. These grants were neither recorded with nor counted as part of madad-i ma’sh etc. Also there were separate dastur-ul amals, as will be seen below, for the pusaita etc.

The napa-pusaita lands were held by the ahl-i khidmat\(^1\) (the service rendering people) and the ones other than the serving people (siwai ahl-i khidmat).\(^2\) Beside the artificers the other holders of the napa-pusaita are identified as the Jogis, Brahmans, Bhats, Charans, Kolls and the persons attached to the mosques and tombs of saints.\(^3\)

There were then the pusaita lands which, on the basis of its holders' caste, bore caste-appellations. Thus we come across pusaita-i Koliyan, pusaita-i zinnardaran and pusaita-i badfaroshan.\(^4\) Later on the British found the Gosains, Bairagis, Brahmans Bhats, Saiyeds, descendents of 'noble' persons.

1. Among the ahl-i khidmat are mentioned the pagi (the tracker), qasid (the village messenger), halaikhor (scavenger), hajjam (the barber), bhagalia (?) and dehdan (?). Dastur-ul amal (Prince Aurangzeb), PC No. 49; also the references cited in the preceding note. These serving people seem to have held these lands condition- al upon service and may not be regarded as revenue grantees. Later on the British also regarded them as "the inferior class of village servants" who were regarded as part and parcel of the village community. Bombay Govt. Rev. Sel; III. p. 649. The Account (f.302) describe them as lazim-i abadani-i deh.

2. Among the artificers are mentioned tailor (Khabbat), carpenter, (darudagar) iron-mith (ahangar) potter (Kazar), shoemaker (mochi), rebari(?) and Kalal(?). Account ff 339a, 340a; Mazruat Docs, PC Nos. 99, 114, 120, 125-126, 128, 146, 149, 164, The present section held the lands obviously for the professional indispensable services rendered by them to the village community.

3. Account, ff. 182a, 302, 339a-40a; PC Nos 99, 120, 126, 128, 146, 149-50, 164; dastur-ul amal (Ghairat Khan), PC Nos 47; Ibid (Aurangzeb), No. 51.

4. Mazruat Docs. P.C.Nos 94, 98, 9, 146, 159; Account ff. 339a, 340a
Hindu and Muslim families in possession of the *pusaita* lands from earlier times. As such these lands were held, among others, by the members belonging to high caste, the ones associated with the high caste people and the Kolis—the caste which was particularly singled out for its refractory attitude.

The *apa pusaita* lands were held by the Kolis, Upadhyai, Mehta, Brahmans, Bhaps, Muslims and others. The basis of holding these lands is however not known.

The *devasthan* lands were similarly spread over the villages. From the detailed statistical account of the lands of villages of *pargana* Kadi *sarkar* Ahmedabad it would appear that 105 out of 282 villages had the *devasthan* lands area of which ranged between 1 and 25 bighas.

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2. For the references about Kolis please see the discussion in the preceding pages. According to the Rasmala the influence of the Bhaps and Charans was very powerful. (p.572.) They were closely connected with the Rajputs (*ibid*, p.558); They were in *some places cultivators, in other bankers, but their more legitimate occupations are those of acting as securities and recording the genealogies of their Rajpoot clients*. Person of Bhat and Charan was held "sacred". *ibid*.

3. *PC Nos 146*.

The *pusaita* grants were made by the Mughals also. One Mahadji was granted 45 *bighas* of land (*mawza* Pastwara, *pargana* Somnath Pattan) by way of *pusaita* in 1629 AD to put a well into use for irrigation purposes. He was also granted exemption from paying irrigation cess (*mehsul-i chah*) under the same grant.¹ Two Charans, Lekha and Rana were granted (1668) 20 plots (*qita's*) of land from *mawza* Batwa (*pargana* Batwa) and 16 plots of land in *mawza* Badola (*pargana* Mangrole) by way of *pusaita* out of Khalsa lands on condition of performing watch and ward (*b' shart-i khidmat chowki-o pehra dehat*).² Similarly a son of the *desai* who had been murdered by a *patel* was granted 85 *bigha* of *chahi* and *barani* lands and a well by way of *pusaita* by emperor Aurangzeb.³

The holders of *pusaita* rights were not necessarily the cultivators themselves. Like the *madad-i ma'sh* lands the *pusaita* could be *khudkasht* as well as the one held and cultivated by the peasants.⁴

The *pusaita* lands could be subject to payment of a portion of revenues to the state and therefore the grantee did not enjoy full exemption. During Isa Tar Khan's period of

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1. SH Desais private collection NO 14/1 (1)2.
2. *Junagadh*, ScNO 224 (*mahal* Mangrole)
3. SH Desais private collection, Nos. 14/1 (5) and 14/1 (6).
4. *PC* Nos. 164b, 210-11.
subedari holders of the naps pusaita enjoyed complete exemption from paying revenue to the state. But prince Aurangzeb demanded two third of revenues and eight annas per bigha on the napa pusaita of Brahmans and Bhats; entire revenue from the pusaita of village artisans and half of the revenues from the ones of village-servants. Ghairat Kahn, prince Dara's nald granted full exemption to the ahl-i khidmat, demanded only two third of revenues from the artisans and the Bhats and Brahmans but they were allowed exemption from paying 8 annas per bigha as demanded under Aurangzeb. The prince also demanded two third of revenues from the rest of the holders of napa pusaita. Ghairat khan fixed the state demand @ Rs. 1/4 annas per bigha.

The holders of apa-pusaita were to pay a third of the revenues of the reclaimed banjar and two third of the same of lands already under cultivation during both the crop seasons under Isa Tarkhan. But prince Aurangzeb demanded

1. PC Nos. 42a; The same position continued during the reign of Aurangzeb and later on in Pargana Arharmatar and Kadi Account ff 182a, 302a-b.
2. PC No. 51.
3. Ibid, No. 47b.
4. Ibid. Nos. 47b, 51.
5. Ibid Nos. 41b, 45b, 46a.
entire revenues during the *rabi* crop season.\(^1\) Ghairat Khan restored the status-quo ante.\(^2\) The rates as enforced by Ghairat Khan seem to have remained unchanged.

In brief it may be seen that the Mughals not only continued the grants, extended due patronage to the regional customs by keeping up the old grants and making new grants in the local fashion. Regardless of their usefulness for the Mughal state, the grantees appear to be the persons having social roots which, apparently, forced the Mughals to renew the old grants and make fresh one. The Mughals however did not allow the grantees to acquire administrative hold over their possessions which continued to remain under direct hold of the state. Still the grantees grew bold enough to defy the state that had granted them the rights in the first place and had stood as protector thereof.

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2. *Ibid* Nos. 47a-7b. In some *parganas* the grantees were to pay \(8\) *annas* per *bigha*, one *mehmudi* per *bigha*, something on *bilmuqta* basis or one to two *mehmudis* per *bigha*. Account ff. 182a, 302a, 339b-40a, 350a.
CHAPTER VI

PRIMARY ZAMINDARS

(1700-50)

A definite change in the position of the Primary zamindars vis a vis the provincial authorities as also the peasantry is discernable in the available sources. Under the prevailing situation the Primary zamindars endeavored to shake off the loosening grip of the administrative apparatus, and extend and intensify their own hold over the sources of revenue. Simultaneously a section of them suffered setbacks and lost its position to other contestants. Besides, the prevailing situation also facilitated emergence of new rights identical to those of the Primary zamindars. Even though specific information casting light on the overall impact of the emerging pattern of zamindar-peasantry relationship is hard to come by, some idea of the problem may be formed from the available evidence which, by and large, represents the imperial point of view.

The author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi furnishes brief, though valuable information concerning the position of the bantha-daran (i.e. the Superior and the Primary zamindars) during the sixth decade of the eighteenth century. As noted in detail in the preceding Chapters (II, IV), the Mirat
states that the bantha-daran had occupied talpad portion of land which they had formerly surrendered to the state under pressure of arms, encroached upon the raiyati lands, the Nazim had to lead military expeditions to collect peskkash, procure sureties and ensure remittance of revenues (mal-i wajib) from the bantha-daran who had made encroachments. Elsewhere the same work notes that the Nazim 'visited every pargana' for effecting assessment which he did 'according to his own strength and exigency of situation'. As such possessions of the bantha-daran and others could be assessed for revenue purposes and the remittance thereof could be ensured under the immediate pressure of arms and, apparently, not through the routine administrative apparatus which seems to have been rendered ineffective. The bantha-daran, if would appear, also seem to have acquired intermediary positions, for they are shown as undertaking responsibility for remitting land-revenue (mal-i wajib).

The observations of the Mirat as they come from and apparently for the sixth decade of the eighteenth century


3. For similar observations, Rasmala p. 545, Bombay Govt. Revenue Records, 1821 II p 638; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, p 142
need to be examined closely for ascertaining the growth and dimensions of the reported recalcitrance and acts of widespread encroachments upon the state's share. Moreover, the bantha-daran, it may be recalled, consisted of the Superior as well as the Primary zamindars. It has, therefore, to be ascertained if the reported developments were related, exclusively, to the Superior zamindars i.e., a section of whom offered 'peshkash' on its bantha-possessions. Or else, the Primary zamindars who were required to offer 'salami' had been able to rise in social status as denominated by the reported offering of peshkash, instead of the salami. Before arriving at a safe conclusion it seems pertinent to examine the observations of the Mirat and other relevant points with the help of detailed evidence contained in the same work and other documentary evidence available for the period.

The process of acquiring control over the talpada and, for that matter the non-zamindari lands, appears to have started on a noticeable scale as early as, if not earlier than, the period of subedar of Shahamat Khan (1713). According to a news report the Khan led military expedition for evicting the Kolis out of a number of villages of parga-

1. Neither all the Primary zamindars were the bantha-daran nor all of the latter were the Superior zamindars. (Chapter II and V above). The Mirat, here, does not take note of the Primary zamindars who did not enjoy their rights in the form of bantha.
Baroda which they had forcibly occupied. Later, Daood Khan Panni (1713-15) took steps against the Koli (girasias) of the same pargana and in the adjoining Mahiwara region for ensuring their ouster from the villages which they had occupied by force. Another document specifies a number of villages in pargana Viramgaon which the girasias had occupied during Daood Khan's period of subedar and later refused to pay revenues on their new acquisitions. Similary Somji and Anandji, girasias of mawza Deloli (pargana Kadi) had, sometime before the subedar of Mubariz-ul mul (1724-30) occupied 350 bighas out of 967 bigha and 10 biswas of talpad land of the same village. In such and similar instances the girasias are noticed in possession of a part of the raiyati lands which for reasons not known, was not encroached upon entirely. From 1727 onward the girasias are increasingly noticed in possession of entire villages which

2. Ibid, 5th and 23rd Shawwal, 3rd RY Farrukh Siyar, No. 2312, 2350.
4. Ibid; Kadi, R.No 61 Pune read with Account f 319 a.
5. For the area occupied by the girasias (girasia mutas-sarrif or dar tasarruf-i girasia) Mazruat mawza (so and so) waghaira amla pargana (such and such) Sarkar Ahmadabad, babat fasi-i kharif, 1130 fasli and 1133 fasli R No 37 Pune.

431
otherwise contained talpad or simply raiyati lands.¹

The Primary zamindars and others seem to have found the prevailing atmosphere increasingly congenial to go their own way and make acquisitions. According to the Mirat-i Ahmadi "some of the Rajputs and Kolis and others, in course of time, had acquired a little strength, raised disturbances in the raiyati villages, far and near, lifting cattle and killing the cultivators. The peasants of those places were thus compelled to gratify them by giving them, in some places, a fixed amount of money every year, or one or two cultivable fields. This exaction is known as giras and wol (or udal). This custom has become well established in this region and owing to the weakness of the Governors has become universal (lit 'reached perfection'). There is hardly a place in the parganas where a group of Rajputs, Kolis and Musalmans have not got their manak or giras and wol". It adds that "now owing to the absence of (imperial) control" these people "have settled in certain places and are seizing (not only) the whole of the talpad or the part under the government but in addition many (other) villages to meet

¹. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi, Sarkar Ahmadabad, R No 61; ibid, parganas Bheel, Baroda, Idar, Viramgaon, Mhorasa, Mekhrej and Piplod, R No 64.
their (claim of) *giras*.

What emerges from the long statement cited above is that the Rajputs and Kolis (i.e. the established land holders of long standing) were joined in also by others in their all out attempt to make acquisitions by capitalizing the prevailing situation; that the acquisitions were made not only at the cost of the state but also the *riaya*, that stood unprotected, was likewise bullied down for making concessions to the encroachers; that such exactions, more interestingly, were also known as *giras* i.e. an extension of the legally established right of the zamindars under the same nomenclature.

Further information is not available in the contemporary records but works of later date cast some light on the form of rights which emerged during the period.

The officials of the East India Company noticed many such rights which emerged during the eighteenth century and found their way into the nineteenth. Thus, in addition to the 'legitimate' *giras* claims, the British came across the *giras* which meant a sum paid to powerful neighbour for

2. Vide Chapter V above. Irfan Habib (*Agrarian System*, pp. 142-3, 147) discusses only the emerging form of *giras* and does not pay attention to its legal form. Please see detailed references in the following discussion.
protection and assistance" or "to an unruly village as the price of forebearance" and "to please dangerous neighbours (Kothali giras). It could also be termed abania which meant "land acquired either by usurpation or encroachment". There was then the tora (also called toda) giras which was a 'blackmail imposed in cash' to 'gratify the avarice of the strong' one. The giras, in whatever form was the claim which once established "never becomes defunct". As such the zamindari rights were created and sought to be extended through fair and foul means.

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1. Bombay Gazetteer (Kaira) pp. 82-3

2. Ibid pp. 83, 91; Selections from the Records of the Baroda Government No II vol II, (giras), pp 590, 1122; For the difference drawn between the giras as an exaction and giras as a legal claim, Memorandum submitted to the Bombay Government Ibid, pp 1171-77.


4. Hamilton Walter, op. cit, 1 p 608. There were then the rights called ugaria, Kothali, Kapal, 'pagia', 'baria', Kolapi which also were in the nature of blackmail. Bombay Gazetteer (Kaira) pp 82, 93,315. Ibid II pp 495-6 An interesting instance as to how the giras claims originated is related in the Bombay Revenue Selection, (p 725). A girasia woman, while at the village of Dungri, was delivered of a son, and on the occasion received a little dry ginger, and molasses from the headman of the village. When the child grew up, he claimed this grant as a right and after some dispute, it was settled that, in its stead, he should receive a yearly allowance of Rupee one and eight annas; For a detailed view of the giras in its various legal and blackmail form, Lallubhai Pranvallabhdas Parikh (ed.) Handbook of giras; (Being a compilation of Decrees & c on questions regarding giras, wanta and the guaranteed rights) pp 7, 10,25,35,61,82 Selections From the Records of the Baroda Government, No II, Vol II, (Giras), pp 586-655, 853-901, 1121-27.

434
But it does not mean that all the Primary zamindars were invariably the gainers in the game. The stronger zamindars captured lands of the girasias.¹

As a result there emerged the "mool-girasias" i.e. originally the girasias who had come to terms with the stronger ones who had established over them and by surrendering a portion of their lands to them, had retained the remainder as 'giras'.² Thus the insecurity prevailed for both the raiyat as well as the zamindars. The prevailing insecure state of affair, apparently, might have obliged, rather forced, the zamindars and the raiyat to ensure their safety in their own right.³

The Primary zamindars also sought to acquire additional rights. They contracted ijarah rights and making use of the

1. Treaties VI pp. 9-10; Rasmala p 567; Bombay Gazetteer IV pp 147, 150; Ibid VIII, pp 115-16; East India Papers p 720; For a generalised view to the same effect; S Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars Under The Mughals", p 29.

2. Treaties VI, p.4; Ibid, VII p 9. The girasias surrendered the major part of their share in perpetuity (aghat) or for a fixed number of years (savad) Rasmala, p 567; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, pp 147-50.

3. In the year 1804 it was noticed that "every gracia village is in itself a fortification and every village is surrounded by a mud wall, many of these having in the centre a high stone tower to guard against the attack of their neighbours". Report from Mr HW Diggle to Lt Col A Walker, Resident at Baroda, 10 May 1804⁴; Selection From Bombay Government No XXXIX Appendix, pp 30-34. Please see also Hamilton Walter, op cit, I p 652; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, p 104, RD Chowksey op cit, p 14.
state's declining power to collect revenues, continued to maintain the position. Thus, the administration could not ensure their eviction and, helplessly, accepted them in the new role which the prevailing situation had facilitated them to acquire. According to a parwana (1747) then Nazim assured Rabhji and other Kolis (i.e. girasias) of village Kasandra that the revenue of the village would be demanded from them only and that the riaya would not be troubled for making direct payment on any account.\(^1\) Apparently the girasias had stepped in as intermediaries.\(^2\) Some girasias of a number of villages (pangana Piplod) seem to have stepped into the shoes of the muqaddams sometime between 1723 and 1726. The available tamassuks for the year 1723-24 (kharif 1131 fasli) mention the muqaddams as undertaking responsibility for the collection and remittance of the assessed revenues for the villages, 11 in number. But three years later (Kharif 1134 fasli/ 1726-27) the girasias are shown as undertaking the responsibility.

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1. *Naql parwana bandhari;* dt. 17 Rabi II, 29 R.Y. Muhammad Shah PC No 79E.

2. The *riaya* seems to have been forced into the arm of the girasias by the oppressive acts of the administration and the plundering raids of the neighbouring villagers. For details please see the following discussion. For a reverse position i.e. intermediary zamindars depressing the status of Primary zamindars, S Nurul Hasan, *ZamindARS under the Mughals*, pp 28-9.
responsibility in seven of the 11 villages. 1

Increasing hold of the Primary zamindar on the village is further suggested by another piece of information coming for the year 1743-4. The girasia of mawza Borvi (pargana Bheel) which contained 2550 and 850 bighas of talpad and bantha lands respectively, was assessed at Rs. 701/- for the rabi and kharif crop seasons of the year 1151 fasli. The assessed amount is reflected as blimugte yeke rashqi sal-i tamam (single amount fixed in lump sum for the whole year) together for the bantha and the talpad without reflecting the cropped area and the holders of land. 2 It goes to suggest that the distinction between mal-i wajib (talpad) and salami (bantha) had been done away with, details of assessment were not taken into account and the girasia was regarded as assessment unit. 3 There is also evidence to show that the girasias who, at one or the other stage, had acquired

1. Tamassukat for the fasli years 1131 and 1134 (fasl-i Kharif) for dehat-i pargana Piplod. R No 27, Pune. Particularly see the tamassuks for the villages of Bhalona, Seholi, Ondni, Baori, Jaldondra, Rukhal and Kesarpur for which the girasias furnished undertaking. For the rest of villages i.e. Santri, Ankobho, Baroda and Manjak the muqaddams furnished undertaking for both the years.

2. Yad-dasht khasra mazruat mawza Borvi, amla pargana Bheel, Sarkar Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif-o Rabi, 1151 fasli, R No 32 read with Account, f 176 a.

3. Also see the similar documents for the villages of Barej, Patri Kochrab, Palordra, Bhudah and Santej, pargana haveli Ahmadabad for the years 1152, 1155 and 1156 fasli, R No 35 read with Account ff 414a-15b.
the position for paying revenues on lump sum basis later (1729-30) refused to pay it at all. But it must not be taken to imply that the girasias had acquired hold over the entire talpad, for that matter the raiyati tracts of lands and done away with the distinction between them and the bantha possessions which, the evidence suggests survived even after the extinction of the Mughal rule from the Subah.

It has been discussed in the preceding Chapter that the imperial administration had endeavoured to correlate its claim (salami) on the Primary zamindars with their actual paying capacity by treating the individual peasant and his holding as assessment unit and by regulating the process of assessment through the routine revenue administrative machinery. But during the period under review the whole system seems to have undergone a vital change.

1. Mazruat mawza Maheem, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasli-i kharif-o rabi 1127 fasli read with Yad-dasht-khichri-o bewra dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1160 fasli R No 43. Pune.


438
The expeditionary forces led by the *Nzims* gradually came to replace the routine administrative machinery for assessing *mal-i wajib*, including *salami*. In this regard observations of the *Mirat* for the sixth decade of the century have already been noticed. From a closer view of the available evidence it would appear that the aforesaid development had acquired momentum as early as, if not earlier than the third decade of the century. Though the military expeditions were led even during the seventeenth century but for a different purpose.\(^1\) From the year 1711-12 the military expeditions came to be led for collecting *peshkash* on a wider scale.\(^2\) Later from the year 1720-21 these expeditions seem to have been led regularly, the choice of time and area being determined mainly by the extent and magnitude of Maratha presence and internal politics of the Mughal nobility.

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1. The expeditions were led for making administrative arrangements, procuring *muchalkas* and *bandharis* from leading recalcitrant, ensuring remittance of *peshkash* from the noted recalcitrants and re-enforcing local administration where and when needed. These expeditions were generally preventive and sometime punitive in approach. *Account*; ff 15a, 16a; *Mirat-i Ahmadi*; I pp 168-9, 177, 188, 192, 210, 290-1, 303, 324-5, 330, 334.

ty. If we go by the observations of the Mirat, it would appear that from the same year the expeditionary forces came to be led for "making assessment", "assessing parganas" in addition to taking bonds (muchaikas), 'establishment of order' grasping peshkash and procuring sureties. As such the expeditionary forces stepped into the shoes of the assessment-machinery. It would also appear that the hurriedly passing armies required to cover entire subah might not have been able to effect detailed assessment the way it was done during the preceding days by the routine administrative machinery.

Other set of evidence also suggests that the details of assessment were generally ignored. It has been mentioned above that the state could demand a single amount in lump sum for the whole year from the girasias without any reference to the area actually cropped and the individual holdings. The available mazruat documents for a number of villages of the parganas of Bheel, (1723-24), Kadi (1725-26)


2. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp. 43, 46 50, 55, 57, 82, 92, 167, 243-4, 257-8, Mukhtarar Tarikh-i Gujarat. ff 87-9
and Petlad (1727-8) do not carry cultivator-plot-crop wise
details for the bantha portion as was usually done earlier.

Instead, the entire area with no other details is shown
against the girasia himself. Then, the documents recording
actual collection of salami reflect a lump sum (bilmuqte)
amount for the entire year for both the crop seasons togeth-
er. It would therefore, appear that the Primary zamindars,
in such instances replaced the individual peasants and his
holding and acquired the position of, and themselves emerged
as, the assessment unit. Obviously, the zamindars were left
free to settle details with the peasants. As such the

1. Please see documents entitled Yad-dasht muzruat mawza
(so and so), amla pargana (such and such), fasli-i
kharif for the fasli years 1131, 1133 & 1135. R No 37
Pune. However in certain villages of pargana haveli
Ahmadabad, the salami continued to be assessed on the
basis of area actually cropped by individual peasant.
Muzraat mawza Balad and Odhab, fasli-i Kharif, (1150
fasli), and Faizabad (kharif 1145 fasli) R No 21 Pune.

2. The very title of the documents Tumar Taskhis mawza
Harkhij waghaira amla pargana Jamusar babat-fasli-i
kharif-o rabi, sikhqan ii 1127 fasli, hama jeht sal-i
tamam bilmuqta (R No 37, Pune) is suggestive. Also see,
yad-dasht-paldaish pargana Dholqa, Sarkar Ahmadabad,
fasli-i kharif 1129 fasli (R No 29 Pune) which records
the amount as under: bantha salami Rs 5525/- bilmuqte
sal-i tamam.

3. Later, the British noticed that the bantha lands of the
girasias were subject to the payment of somekind of
quit-rent which was a fixed amount. Moreover, according
to them, state did not enjoy any right to interfere
into the affairs of the bantha. Apparently, the British
who came across the position that emerged during the
days of decline of Mughal rule, erroneously considered
it as the practice introduced and kept up by the Mughal
als during the hey day of the empire. Bombay Gazetteer,
II (Surat,Baroda) pp 387, 482, 495-6, Ibid (Kaira) pp
state's policy of reaching the peasantry directly was reversed by the Primary zamindars along with the other zamindars as discussed in the preceding Chapters. Another set of evidence indicating a fall in the power of administration to force the Primary zamindars for paying the salami and the latter's increasing power to resist the payment, is also available. Girasia of village Kota (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) paid the salami the volume of which went on declining. Thus during the year 1719-20 the salami amounted to Rs. 641/- which figure fell to Rs 500 and annas 6 in 1720-21. During the following ten years, the girasia paid nothing.¹ Likewise the Primary zamindar of village Kasandra of the same pargana paid Rs 261/- and 231/- during 1719-20 and 1721-22 respectively by way of bantha-salami. During the years 1722-23 to 1731-32 no amount by way of the bantha salami from the village could be collected.² Similarly, the amount of salami collected from the entire pargana Dholga in the year 1720-21 stood at Rs 10122/- but the following year

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...Continued...

81, 88; Ragers op cit I, pp 3-4; Treaties, III, p 119; Ibid. IV p 213; East India Papers, III pp 720n. Lallubhal Pranvallabhdas Parikh, Handbook of Giras, pp 61, 82.

1. Mawaznah-I dehsala,dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, R.No.26,Pune.

2. Ibid.
it dwindled to Rs 4585/- only. As compared to 1714-5 entire receipts from *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad dwindled to 5.05 percent in 1751-52.\(^2\) In 1750-51 total revenue receipts, including *salami* from the entire *subah* under the *Nazim's* control amounted to Rs. 400,000/- only.\(^3\) The dwindling volume of income clearly speaks of the declining power of the administration.

The sharp and well evident fall in the revenue receipts inclusive of the *salami* may not be explained away by referring to the territorial losses to the Marathas because the volume of revenue-returns dwindled in the areas which were under the direct control of the *Najims*. Moreover, fertility

1. *Yadasht- paidaish* *pargana* Dholqa, *sarkar*, Ahmadabad, *fasl-i kharif* 1128 *fasli* ff 4-17; *ibid* (1130 *fasli*) ff 8-14 PC. It is worth mentioning that the *Account* mentions 96 out of 244 villages of *pargana* Bhil, and Chunwal (Viramgaon) with no *hasil* figure (*hasil* nada-rad) for the year 1725-26. Each of these villages contained zamindari lands. But on the other hand each of the village which was entirely *raiyati* has been furnished with the *hasil* figures. *Account* ff 167b-69a 175b-81b, 236b-37b, 244a.

2. *Taqseem Mawaziat-mahal* *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad dated 1161 *fasli*, R No 42. Pune. The document specifies income from each village for the years 1122 *fasli* (1714/15 AD) and 1160 *fasli* (1751-52 AD). For calculating percentage we have taken into account only such villages as were held by the Mughal *Subedar* at the exclusion of the ones held by the Marathas.

3. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II, pp 396-7. It may be seen that the total revenue returns of the *subah* (excluding *sarkar* Surat) amounted Rs. 1,20,000,00 in a perfect (*kaml*) year and Rs 77,000,00 in a normal year during the heyday of Mughal rule. *Account* f 14a
of the soil too does not seem to have eroded. Therefore the
causes of fall in the volume of revenues have to be found
out somewhere else.

The necessity of leading expeditions for revenue pur-
poses might have arisen out of the emerging ineffectiveness
of the normal machinery of administration in its dealing
with the zamindars effectively and failure to ensure remit-
tance of revenue through the regular process.

Then the military establishment and expeditionary
forces which once acted as a watchdog to ensure smooth flow
of revenues, themselves acquired the form of assessment and
collection making machine thus making the collection depend-
ent upon leading of expeditions. The military expeditions,
as pointed out above, were not and could not be led regular-
ly. Moreover, the armed resistance put up by the zamindars

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 316. But then the movement of
armies, particularly of the warning ones, might have
done damage to the standing crops. Ibid, II p 145.

2. Increasing and increased recalcitrance necessitated
increase in military strength. But the available income
was found insufficient for the purpose. (Mirat-i Ahmadi
pp 306, 360-Ibid II pp 9, 57, 245-46, 316, 396). Increasing necessity of additional forces followed by
paucity of funds led to further decline in their
strength and failure against the rebels. (Ibid I pp
307, 345, Ibid II pp 133, 163-65, 172-4, 245-49, 256-
57, 351. Please see particularly Anonymous, Apparao
Bholanath collection MS No 245 Pt.II, f 4 where it
states that under Mubariz-ul-Mulk the faujdars had
assumed the charge but had no power to come out of the
fortresses and effect assessment. The faujdars taqat-i
sinazori-i tashkhis nadashte, b'dushwar chahar diwari-i
gila ra nigahdashte.

444
as will be seen below, further hindered the movement of the forces rendering the task of assessment and collection all the more difficult.

Though the incidents of armed resistance were not wholly wanting during the preceding days, from 1725-6 and particularly from 1731-32 such incidents seem to have become common, indicating the zamindar's increasing strength and determination to evade payments or, at least, bargain the amount.\(^1\) It is worth mentioning that the girasias among other, put up armed resistance even in the villages of pargana havell Ahmadabad, seat of power and successfully evaded payments of revenue for many years.\(^2\) Leading nobles of the region like Safdar Khan Babi and Jawanmard Khan Babi found it difficult to effect assessment and collection in south Gujarat and, therefore, withdrew from the field.\(^3\)

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} II pp 133, 144-5, 163-5, 186, 212, 244, 246-8, 257-60, 265-6, 297, 301, 307-12, 319, 323; \textit{Rasmala} pp 393-4. Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah (Subedar) would not like to retain Viramgaon in his conditional jagir (1723-24) as it was noted for its recalcitrance which was on the increase. \textit{Ibid} II p 48.

\item \textit{Majmua-i Qawanin} MS No 297, ff 19-20, \textit{Ruqqat-i Harkaran} pt II MS No 249, ff 35-6; \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} II pp 262, 307-12.

\item \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, II, pp 107, 186, 245-6 \textit{Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat}, f 83
\end{enumerate}
Under the prevailing circumstances, the **Nazim** whenever strong assessed with heavy hand\(^1\) but at times had to be contented with "more or less" because of the exigency of situation (*b'mutaguza-i halat-i waqt*).\(^2\) It would therefore appear that the irregularly collected amount was fixed more by the zamindar's power to resist at the moment rather than by his ability to pay.\(^3\) Since the **Nazim**'s power to exert pressure was conditioned by a number of adverse factors, he could extort less and less.

A significant change in the position of Primary zamindars is discernable from the nomenclature used to denominate the offering made by them. Thus one Subhag Singh, **girasia** of *mawza* Leth (*pargana* Piplod) and Rambhai, **muqaddam** of the village undertook responsibility of paying *salami* and *mal-i wajib* respectively in 1723-24. In 1726-27, the **girasia** is


3. *Ibid* II pp 37, 258-9, 275-6 Rogers, *op cit* I pp. 63, 82; *Rasmala* pp 394-5. The impact of strength under **Nazim**'s command and of the severe action taken may, to a great extent be gauged from the incident of Dabha. As a result of the **Nazim**'s severe action "the zamindars and **malguzars** of the nearby places came on their own accord" and since he was powerful enough he "managed the Kolls as he wished". *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II p 43-4; For the impact of weakness, *Ibid* II pp 143-4, 162-4 as also *Ibid* I p 174 *Ibid* II pp 133, 164, 247, 305, 351, 353.
shown to have paid the *mal-i wajib* also.\(^1\) In the year 1734-35 the *girasias' offering is specified as *peshkash.*\(^2\) One Ajba Singh who had offered Rs. 567/- by way of *salami* in 1719, later (1727) is shown to have paid Rs 501/- by way of *peshkash* to the expeditionary forces.\(^3\) From the year 1731 instances of *girasias* making offerings as *peshkash* instead of *salami* appear more frequently and seem to have become quite common.\(^4\) Then some other *girasias* paid *khichri* (which otherwise was levied from the *raiyyati* tracts of lands)\(^5\) instead of *mal-i wajib* and *peshkash* in lieu of *salami.*\(^6\)

Still others paid a single amount (*yek raqmi*) on lump sum (*bilimuqte*) for the whole year (*sal-tamam*). Such an offering is not placed under any of the routine head of account. Thus

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1. Tamassukat for the fasli years 1131 and 1134 *fasli* for *dehat-i pargana* Piplod, Sarkar Ahmadabad R No 59, Pune.

2. Fa'il zamini for the year 1142 *fasli*, *dehat pargana* Piplod sarkar Ahmadabad R No 51.

3. Yad-dasht paidalsh *dehat-i pargana* Jhalawar (*Viramgaon*) for *fasli* years 1127 and 1135, R No 70 Pune.

4. Yad-dasht--*peshkash-o khichri* waghaira subah Gujarat, R No 63. Pune. The document notes the *peshkash* exacted from the *girasia* separately from the one paid by the zamindars of *pargana* Jamusar and Kaparbanj.

5. For details please see discussion in following pages

6. Yad-dasht-*Khasra Mazruat* Mawza Borvi op cit Tumar Tashkhis mawza Harkej op cit. Yad dasht-*Khasra mazruat* mawza amla *pargana* Mumurabad *fasli-i-Rabi-o-Kharif* 1151 *fasli*, R No 32 Pune. Also the similar documents for the villages Akhrol, Okla and Uledra (*pargana* Munda), Sarkar Ahmadabad; *Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash zamindaran waghaira subah* Gujarat taraf Mahi Kantha, RNo 28, Pune.
the distinction between mal-i wajib, khichri, salami and peshkash was getting blurred. The social distinction as
denominated by the nomenclature that used to denote the
payments was likewise changing. For all practical purposes a
section of the Primary zamindars came to enjoy a Superior
zamindar-like position, simultaneously holding the intermedi-
ary position and enjoying rights of the Primary zamindars.

The preceeding discussion indicates that the state
apparatus gradually ceased to act as a power that once
regulated the affairs concerning the revenue by keeping a
check on the zamindar peasantry relationship. The adminis-
tration seems to have failed to check the Primary zamindars,
like the Superior zamindars from extending their territorial
sway and hold over the sources of revenue. The administra-

1. From the observations of the works of later date it
would appear that the position of banthadars within the
bantha possessions and vis a vis the talpad had under-
gone a drastic change. The girasias, according to these
works, claimed in many places proprietary rights over
their bantha possession and over the entire villages
which contained their giras rights. Secondly, the once
duly assessed salami acquired the position of quit
rent', a nominal fixed rental (udhad Wanta); thirdly,
the banthadar claimed and asserted full autonomy within
the bantha possessions; Fourthly some of them claimed
that their bantha possession were exempt (literally
relief, rahat) from paying any 'rental', so they called
it rahat wanta. Finally, there were the girasias who had
acquired ugaria wanta i.e share exacted in return for
succor (ugaru) given to the weaker against the stronger
ones. **Bombay Govt. Selections, New Series, 23; India
Litho Papers III p 708; Bombay Gazetteer, II pp 495-6;
ibid VIII pp 315-9; Ibid (Kaira), pp 81-3.**
tion, it would appear, compromised its position by accepting the *kisit-samampi* without making a concerted effort to put the affairs back in order. However, some pieces of available information appear to be worth considering.

The *Khasra* documents mention the *girasias* enjoying revenue free lands at least from the year 1738. Thus a *girasia* is reflected as holding 37 *bighas* of cultivated land by way of *napa* (free of obligation) in *mawza* Balad (*pargana haveli* Ahmadabad) during the year (1149 *fasli*) 1741-42. In village *Odhab* of the same *pargana* a *girasia* is shown as holding 18 *bighas* of cultivated area under the title of *pusaita* i.e. grant conditional upon village service. In *mawza* *Mahej* (*pargana haveli* Ahmadabad) 14 *bighas* and 15 *biswas* of land is reflected as *bantha-raiyati* during the *kharif* season of the year 1146 *fasli* (1738). The land shown

1. It has been observed in the Introduction and Chapter 11 that the state assigned the executive as well as financial powers to one and the same person. Whether it was an effort consciously made to strengthen hands of the local officials to enable them to deal with the recalcitrants effectively, or else a concession given by the weak centre to strong nobles, or both is difficult to ascertain.

2. *Mazruat mawza* Balad, *fasl-i kharif* 1149 *fasli*; *pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, R No 23, Pune. The similar document for the year 1141 *fasli* (kharif) does not reflect the area as such. R No 22 Pune.


as 'bantha-raiyati' seems to have been carved out of the 
raiyati portion of land. It is not known as to when and how 
the girasias acquired these rights. Since the office records 
reflect them in the above mentioned position, it seems to 
have carried approval of administration.

Besides, the available evidence also suggests the 
emergence of new rights termed salamiyah and which, for all 
practical purposes, appear to be identical with those of 
the Primary zamindars. In a document (1726-27) coming for 
mawza Lubha 85 bighas of cultivated area is shown as held by 
salamiya Rajputs. The area seems to have been taken out of 
the raiyati portion. In the year 1719-20 the raiyati land 
was specified 715 bighas whereas in 1726-27 its area is 
recorded as 630 bighas i.e. less by 85 bighas which is equal 
to the area shown under salamiyah Rajputs. Another document 
dated 1724-25 (1132 fasli) reflecting land under actual 
cultivation shows 115 bighas under salamiya. The area, 
again, seems to have been taken out of the raiyati portion 
of land. Likewise salamiya Kolis are shown as holding 210

1. Ibid; see also for the presence of bantha-raiyati, 
mazruat mawza Mahej, fasl-i kharif, 1146 fasli, PC Nos. 
98 and 101.

2. Muzruat mawza Lubha - pargana Thamna. fasl-i kharif, 
1127 fasli and 1134 fasli R No 60 Pune.

3. Yad-dasht Khasra mazruat mawza Jamalpur pargana Thamna 
fasl-i kharif 1129 and 1132 fasli R No 63 Pune.
bighas in mawza Rulla (pargana Thamna) during the year 1727-29 (1135 fasli). The area, again, seems to have been carved out of the raiyati area which fell by the same figure as compared to the year 1719-20 (1127 fasli).¹

Nature of rights of the salamiyas being unspecified in any detail, it is difficult to precisely ascertain their position. However, according to an amal-i dastur the salamiya lands were assessed the way the bantha lands were assessed.² Thus:

Salami Salamiya
- produce divided into four parts (chahar hissa):
  : raiya - two parts (raiya du hissa)
share of the government : one part (yek hissa sarkar)
Salamiyah : one part (alamiya yek hissa).

Moreover, the state claim levied on the salamiya lands was called salami. From the view point of share and its proportion in the produce of the peasantry, the salamiyas appear to have enjoyed the position which was identical with those of the Primary zamindars. It is however not known as to why and how the privileged position was bestowed upon or

1. Yad-dasht Khasra mazruat mawza Rulla. pargana Thamna fasl-i kharif 1127 and 1135 fasli.
2. Amal-i dastur--dehat-i pargana Thamna 1135 fasli R No 38 Pune.

451
else grabbed by a section of the agrarian community. It may be presumed that the state sought to create an influential class of people (or else, sought to appease it) to counter the power of the already strong Primary zamindars.

In spite of emergence of the rights which stood parallel and were identical to the Primary zamindars, the influence and increasing hold of the girasias over the villages under them might not have been eroded, a fact which will be discussed a little later. It may be pointed out here, that the Primary zamindars also interfered with the established section of the village community presumably to subserve their own interests.

The paikashtas who were not so deeply rooted in the community of the villages of their cultivation, appear to have been hit at easily. According to a parwana (July 1731) some paikashtas of mawza Chhatral (pargana Kadi) had lodged a complaint stating that Dhanna Singh girasia of the village had evicted them out of their irrigated (chahi) plots which

1. In some instances we also come across the bilmuqte kashta (whose possessions were assessed on a lump sum basis), bilmuqte kameja (the peasant proprietors who were assessed likewise) or such and such person 'bilmuqte. Yad-dasht-i mawza Khrab fasli-i kharif 1148 fasli PC No 139; yad-dasht mawza Rakhyal buzurg, 2 fasli-i kharif 1148 fasli, PC No. 135. It seems that in some villages the administration directly assessed and fixed the amount of revenues on lump sum basis and allowed them to pay to the state directly without the intercession of the girasias or muqaddams.
he had distributed amongst the members of his own brotherhood (brathri). They had brought the matter to the notice of the desai but he showed his helplessness. The administrator of the pargana (sarbarah-i-pargana?faujdar) too did not take any action against the girasia. Therefore, Maharaja Abhay Singh, then subedar (1730-37) directed the faujdar to enquire into the matter and restore their lands which they had been holding from the times of their ancestors. 1 Another parwana (September, 1738) likewise orders the faujdar of pargana Petlad to oust the girasia from the irrigated lands which he had forcibly occupied by evicting the paikashtas. 2 Yet another document (November 1742) records that the girasia and his brethren had taken possession of the lands which were formerly held by the paikashtas who had been ousted from their possession. 3

Another set of information suggests that the girasias also tried to detract the paikashtas cultivating raiyati lands of the state and attract them for undertaking cultivation on their bantha possessions. According to a muchalka

1. Naql parwana dated 3rd Safar, 1144 Hijri, R No 70 Pune.
2. Naql parwana, dated 11 Jamala II, 1151 Hijri, R No 70 Pune.
3. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Bhil, Sarkar Ahmadabad, 1150 fasli, R.No. 61, Pune.
(1727) the muqaddams of pargana Mamurabad are shown to have given an undertaking to the effect that they would not allow the girasias to take the paikalasht of the raiyat lands for undertaking cultivation on the bantha lands.¹ A tamassuk (1728) likewise records the muqaddams of mawza Muzaffarpur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) undertaking responsibility to the same effect.² Another document coming from the period of Momin Khan's subedari (1737-43), mentions that the girasias of the villages of pargana Thamna forcibly (biljabr) took paikashtas cultivating zamin-i sarkar (raiyat) to undertake cultivation on the bantha lands. The document notes that as a result cultivation on the talpad could not be undertaken and a part of it went out of cultivation (ghair mazrua' gashte).³ Still another document (May 1748) states that one Ramji girasia and his caste members (brathri) destroyed standing crops of the paikalashtas of mawza Bharodra (pargana Nadiad, sarkar Ahmadabad) on their refusal to undertake

1. Naqi muchalka, dated 15 Rabi 1, 1140 executed by the muqad dams before the 'Sarkar' R No 53, Pune.
2. Naqi tamassuk, dated 15 Safar 1141 AH, R No 37 Pune.
cultivation on his bantha lands. 1

From the evidence cited above, it would appear that the girasias endeavoured to promote their interests by bullying the paikashtas. In this affair the caste-factor seems to have been the main instrument which the girasias utilized against them. The girasias, it appears, tried to occupy prized lands -- the irrigated ones -- and ensure that their lands were cultivated, presumably in to. The effort, for all practical purposes, was intended to consolidate and strengthen the girasias' power base, socially and economically at the cost of the state and weaker section of riyaya.

Not that the girasias endeavoured to strengthen their position and consolidate hold over the villages by utilizing caste and family bonds. But also, and more particularly, the increasingly oppressive acts of the administration (which had also closed down the channels of redress) where and when it could succeed, seem to have driven the raiyat into the zamindar's arms all the more. It would appear from the following discussion that the riyaya was increasingly and consistently exploited from the first decade of the eighteenth century.

1. Naql (?) dated 15th Jamadi II, 1160 A.H. The document does not carry any title. It seems to be a representation submitted by the muqaddam of mawza Bhadodra for inviting attention of the administration.
A considerable section of rural and the urban society must have increasingly felt the incidence of new imposts and the enhanced dozes of the taxes already in vogue. To begin with, new imposts were levied on certain agricultural and allied items like fodder, grain, vegetables, ghee etc. on their entry into the city from rural side from the year 1708-10 onward.¹ The impact of the imposts which were levied at a 'nominal rate' initially, seems to have increased with the passage of time.²

Khichri was another impost which, according to the Mirat, was extorted from the raiyati tracts by the Nazim while leading military expeditions for exacting peshkash.³ Introduced for the first time by Maharaja Ajeet Singh (1715-17) and subsequently retained by his successors, the Khichri was levied on enhanced rates.⁴ The khichri, moreover, seems to have been levied in addition to, and over and above the

¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 389-91 404-5.
² The income from the new levies swelled up into huge sums of money. Two separate mahals for the same were formed. Ibid I pp 390-91, 405.
³ Ibid I p 174; Account ff 164a, 167ab.
⁴ Ralgobindas Kayath, MS No 15, op cit, ff 58, 79-80, The work notes that Raja Ajit Singh bid't-i taza ikhtara' namudand sal b'sal ihtmaam-i ziyada talbi-o izafa kar-dand; Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash-o Khichri waghaira zamindaran-i subah Gujarat PC No.9-39.
mal-i wajib also. But at times the khichri was also levied in lieu of mal-i wajib from the riyas who had refused to pay the mal-i wajib. The Nazims demanded khichri on annual basis but its actual collection evidently depended on their ability to enforce it.

Yet another levy which was repeatedly exacted by the Nazims and other officials from 1724-25 onward was the despised bewra. From the description of the Mirat it would appear that the Nazims levied bewrah on not less than 21 occasions during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. The Nazims exacted it from the seths, mahajans, silk merchants, other traders, the Bohras, 'from all sections of

1. The Khichri was also levied on the Jagirs by the Nazims. (Raigobindas, op. cit., f 58). The relevant documents record the amount collected as (a) mal-i wajib (b) peshkash and (c) khichri separately. Account, ff 164a, 167ab, 174a 203ab, 213a, 214, 228a, 236b, 241a, 278a, 290b, 295a; Haqiqat-i-nazar-i-peshkash, op. cit, PC No 9-39; yad-dasht-haqiqat-i sarkar-i Soreth PC No p 23.

2. Account ff 164a, 167b, 174a, 203ab, 213a-14a, 221a, 236b, 290b; Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash PC No 20, 26.

3. MS No 15 op cit ff 89,91

4. According to the Mirat (ll p 68) bewra was an innovation of Hamid Khan, the naib-subedar under Nizam-ul-mulk (1723-24). But peshkash papers (see particularly Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash PC Nos. 20 and 26) mention the amount collected as bewra and khichri together during Maharaja Ajit Singh's subedari (1715-17) from parganas of Pattan and Kutyana (Sarkar Soreth).

5. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 68, 78, 95, 106, 136-137, 163, 165, 170-71, 190, 192-3, 195-6, 243, 244, 245, 250, 260, 323, 351, 381
people', Hindus and Muslims alike on 'various excuses', separately as well as collectively. The bewrah was exacted from professional groups, individuals, family establishments by head-counting (sar-shumari) and house-counting (khana-shumari). The Kotwals, faujdars and the mutasaddis emulated the Nazims and exacted the bewrah accordingly. Levied at times along with Khichri, the bewra was levied once, twice and even thrice a year. The last of the subedars levied the bewrah @ Rs. 3.50 per head from the populace of Ahmadabad.

The burden of bewrah was not felt by the town folks alone. There is evidence to show that it was collected from the rural populace of sarkars of Soreth, Nadot and Ahmadabad.

1. *Ibid.* It was also exacted from the bagqals of the town. Yad-dasht haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash PC No 26. Here it may be pointed out that the seths of Ahmadabad had some kind of relationship with the zamindars of villages. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II pp 171-72


5. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II p 323. Hamid Khan had levied it @ Rs 12/- per house but then reduced its rate to Rs 5/- per house. *English Documents*, letters dt. 4th May and 6th May 1725.
and then it was collected in all the Kharaji sarkars, excluding sarkar Surat details of which region are not available. The bewra was an exaction which was levied in addition to the other imposts and usual demands. The bewrah on the agrarian community seems to have been levied at the rates which were revisible. Though the relationship between mal-i wajib and bewrah-o khichri may not be ascertained for want of specific evidence, but the two demands appear to have been related proportionately, particularly for counting the latter. In pargana Dholga khichri-o bewra were calculated @ Rs. 7.50 per cent of the mal-i wajib assessed on the khalsa villages. But in the pargana haveli Ahmadabad collections of khichri-o bewra amounted to 6.5% of the mal-i

1. Yad-dasht nazar-1 peshkash, op cit PC; Haqiqat paidaish pargana Dholqa, op cit.
2. Yad-dasht--nazar-1 peshkash-o khichri waghaira, op cit PC Nos p5, 11b, 16b, 18b, 18b-19a, 20a, 29sb, 37b, read with p 21-24b and p 41. yad-dasht bewra-o khichri dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i-kharif-o Rabi, 1134 fasl PC No 172; read with mawazna fis-sinwat subah Gujarat Sarkar Ahmadabad, pargana haveli op cit.
3. When referring to the rate of bewra for pargana Dholga the document entitled 'yad-dasht abwab pargana Dholga mentions that it was levied at the rate of the preceding year (muwafiq sal-i guzishta). PC No 282.
4. Yad-dasht abwab pargana Dholga op cit.
5. Ibid
wajib collected during the year 1726-27. 1 By all means incidence of bewra and khichri on the tax-payer must have been quite burdensome.

The raiyat, moreover, was also exposed to bear the burden of land revenue which, where and when possible, seems to have been fixed arbitrarily. The raiya of pargana Dholqa, according to the Mirat was 'displeased at the rascality' of faujdar-amil, Muhammad Iraj during Sarbuland Khan's period of subedari. 2 The next faujdar-amil during the period of the same subedar exacted' sum by harassment beside the mal-i wajib. 3 The raiya of pargana have'li Ahmadabad had to flee on account of over-assessment of revenue by the amin-faujdar. 4 Sarbuland Khan replaced him but the new incumbent 'harassed and tyrannised' the raiyat and demanded 'additional sums' with the Nazim's approval even though there "was no scope for additional demands". 5 The Nazims and faujdars oppressed the raiyat in many ways, plundered villages and crops for

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1. During the year 1134 fasli the collection of mal-i wajib amounted to Rs. 2,620,091 and that of bewra-o khichri stood at Rs 17,000/- yad-dasht nazar-i peshkash-o khichri waghaira op cit read with yad-dasht-mawazna fis-sinwat subah Gujarat op cit.
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 94
3. Ibid II p 97
4. Ibid II pp 105-6.
5. Ibid
providing food, fodder and salary to the army establishment. 1

The exploitative acts and high handedness of the officials who enjoyed immunity from imperial action, did not all the time go unprotested. According to the Mirat the seths, merchants and Bohras at Ahmadabad resisted imposition of Bewra but to no avail. 2 The traders remonstrated and went on strike in the imperial capital to register their protest against the oppressive act of the naib-subedar in-charge. 3 The raiyat of Khanbat misbehaved with the oppressive officials and 'pelted stones' on them while they came out after surrendering the charge. 4 The raiyat of Dholga lodged complaints before the Nazim and that of pargana havell Ahmadabad fled but was persuaded to resume cultivation but for bearing additional doze of taxation again. 5 The desai of Viramgam and muqaddam of Padra joined hands with the

1. Thus, for the oppressive behaviours of the officials and imposition of illegal taxes at Khanbat ibid I pp 403-4; for the naib-subedar in-charge practicing immor­
eration and levying illegal extortion ibid,II p 11; for other instances of similar nature ibid II pp 34-5, 75, 139, 143, 164-65, 179, 184, 284, 286; for taxes on fords and passages ibid II p 106; Nazim plundering people of Baroda on false accusations, ibid II p 179, for faujdars engaged in similar kind of activities. ibid II pp 165, 286, 334-35;

2. ibid II p 113

3. ibid II pp 195-6.

4. ibid, I, pp 403-4

5. ibid II pp 94, 97, 105-6.
Marathas which led to the loss of Viramgaon and Baroda. 1

The prevailing tendency to extort money increasingly over and over again on various grounds and excuses from the vulnerable sections within easy reach, seems to have led to the erosion of credibility of the administration. It is reflected from the way the sureties and securities came be furnished.

The faujdars and the thanedars were required to procure reliable sureties from the persons of doubtful integrity i.e. the recalcitrants, the girasias and the Kolis for ensuring their right conduct and guarding against the possibilities of their rising in rebellion and for ensuring their availability as and when summoned. 3 Moreover, the zamindars were required to furnish bonds for not levying the illegal

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2. The document entitled *yad-dasht-abwab pargana* Dholga, *Sarkar Ahmadabad* (PC No 12 to 13) specifies 29 abwab of various kind which were extorted from the rural society during the third decade of the eighteenth century.

3. *Account* ff 14a, 15a; *Tamaesuk hazir-zamini*, Baroda 99. The sureties, called *fa'il zamini*, were to undertake responsibility of right conduct and performance of the assigned duties of watch and ward. The *hazir-zamini* were to ensure availability of the person concerned. Please see *Tasmassukat-fa'il zamini* and *hazir-zamini* for the parganas of havell Ahmadabad, Piplod, Bharauch, Kadi, Viramgaon and Pettald for the years 1667-1741, R Nos 27, 63, 67, 70, Pune.
casses. The faujdars and the thanedars were to ensure procurement of the sureties but where and when it was not within their competence, the Nazim stepped in. Though the practice of procuring sureties was not dropped altogether, but it seems to have undergone a drastic change during the period under review.

From the period of Maharaja Abhay Singh's subedar (1730-37) the Governor himself is shown to have furnished sureties on behalf of his subordinate appointees as well as for himself. Thus, Dalla, muqaddam of Padra and in-charge of revenue matters of Baroda, apprehending ill-treatment at Maharaja's hand obliged him to furnish strong men of the region like Momin Khan, Sardar Muhammad Khan Ghorni, Sher Khan Babi, Jawamard Khan Babi, Faiyaz Khan and others as

1. Account ff 14a, 15a.

2. Of the tamassuks referred to on the preceding page No (1667-1741) 107 were procured by the faujdars and the thanedars. During the period 1683 to 1701 only 19 were procured by the Nazims from the girasia Rajputs and Kolis of Jhalawar region (pargana Viramgaon), a zort lab area and assigned in the jagir of the Nazims who had to lead military expeditions (1683-1701) for the purpose. Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 324, 326, 330, 344, 394-95.

3. In Gujarat the sureties furnished for a person of doubtful integrity and ensuring his proper conduct, were called bandharis and those who acted as surety were designated bandharan (sing., bandhar). For the prevalence of the institution and its sanctity in the subah from the time of emperor Akbar, Mirat-i Ahmadi I p ibid II pp 138, 144, 146, 166-7 see also Handbook of Giras p 10.
bandharis. Only then the muqaddam came to see the Nazim. ¹ Likewise the desai of Viramgaon forced the Maharaja to furnish bandharis at the time of appointment and entry of new faujdar into Viramgaon. ² The muqaddam and the desai appear to have grown strong enough to force the Nazim for furnishing bandharis. ³

From a careful examination of the documents entitled parwana bandhari it would appear that the administration not only had gone powerless but also, and more particularly seems to have lost credibility.

The earliest of the available parwanas (1739) was issued by subedar Momia Khan, (1737-43) to assure Dhanji girasia and raiyat of village Jagatpur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad). The subedar assured them that they would not be troubled for paying bewra and that no addition would be made to the agreed share in the produce. Assuring them further not to entertain any doubts, the subedar asked them to resume cultivation. In order to add credibility to his word he furnished bandharis who would ensure enforcement of the

1. ibid II pp 144, 146.
2. ibid II pp 166-7.
3. ibid II pp 146, 166, 168, It may be pointed out that apprehensions of both of them who are stated to have feared "deceit and artifice" (khad‘-o makr), came true. ibid II pp 146, 167.
Another parwana bandhari which is addressed to Rabhji Waghara and descendants of Ranchhorji (Awlad Ranchhodji, Kolis), girasias of village Kasandra (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) assures the raiyat that none other than the addressees would be required for paying revenues. The Nazim furnished bandharis for removing their apprehensions. It seems the raiyat had taken shelter under the girasia to guard against the imposition of additional demands. Yet another parwana issued by the Nazim assured the kameja and paikashta of village Ghayaspur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) that the revenue would be determined on divisioning basis (amal-i batai) and that no extra demand would be made (darin bab zayadah talbi-w-safaqat n'khwahad shud). Stating further that the 'word of sarkar is, the word of God' the Nazim as such asks the raiya to believe him and undertake cultivation without having apprehensions.

The representative documents cited above suggest that the Primary zamindars and the raiyat had, on account of

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1. Naql parwana bandhari, dt 17 Rabi II, 20 Ry Muhammad Shah R.No 37 Pune; see also parwana bandhari 6th Rajab 29 RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79/1. Particular note may be taken of the assurance that siwai an bewrah-o izafa b'ahwal anha mazahim n'khwahad shud and that b'hichwah-jah waswas b'khatir rah n'dehand.


3. Naql-I ganwat, dt 24 Jamadi 1 1153, fasli, PC No 64.
their past experience, developed apprehensions and therefore, mistrusted even the highest official that was once regarded as the fountain-head of justice in the Subah. The above indicated mistrust and distrust seems to have been the direct outcome of the unending exploitation of the raiyat (vulnerable and within easy reach) and closing down of the channels of redress. A further view of the increasing and increased strength of the zamindars into whose arms the riaya seems to have been driven by the prevailing insecure state of affairs, may be formed from the following discussion.

The burden of procuring sureties particularly from the year 1720-21 seems to have passed on to the Nazims. The inference is based on two corroborative sets of evidence. The military expeditions which had become a common feature from 1720-21, as pointed out earlier, were led for procuring sureties also. The necessity of leading these expeditions by the Nazims denominates ineffectiveness of the faujdars and thanedars in procuring sureties. Secondly, of the available tamassuks coming for the post-1720 period, 87 were furnished to the Nazims and only 11 to the faujdars and

It may therefore be seen that the zamindars had grown relatively stronger to resist the local administrators and thus force the Nazims to do what otherwise the faujdars and thanedars were required to do.

Then even the Nazims sometime on account of indifference and at other times due to preoccupations could not procure the sureties consistently. The available evidence increasingly mentions the committing of dacoities, plundering of caravans and treasury, raids on and looting of towns and villages, attacks on officials and 'commotions' created by the Kolis and recalcitrants from the second decade of the eighteenth century. From the description of events in the Mirat and other contemporary sources it would appear that the lives and property of the people had become insecure. Such a state of affair, it may be presumed, would naturally oblige the weaker section to seek protection of and align themselves with the stronger ones.

1. *Tamassukat fa'il zarnini and hazir zarnini* for the pargnas of Bharuch, Kadi, Piplod, Viramgaon, Petlad and haveli Ahmadabad op cit.


3. *Ibid*, I p 174; *Ibid* II pp 27, 102, 133, 144, 163, 164, 247, 249, 258, 265-66; *Tamassukat-dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad* etc. *op cit*; *Tamassuk*, 26 RY Muhammad Shah PC No 268; *Yad-dasht haqi'at-i nazari-i peshkash waghaira*, *op cit* PC No p2; *Ruqqat-i Harkaran*, *op cit* ff 35-6; Raigobinda Kayath, *op cit* ff 73; *Akhbarat*, Nos 2312 dt 5th Shawwal, 5th Ry Farrukhisiyar, No 2350 dt 23rd Shawwal, 5th Ry Farrukhisiyar No. 2506, 23rd Shoban, 3rd Ry Muhammad Shah; 2707 dt 5th Ramadhan 4th Ry Muhammad Shah.
Because of its apparent helplessness in maintaining law and order the administration as well as the people who had thus been exposed to live under the chaotic conditions, seem to have turned to the Koliis and Rajputs who were collectively regarded as recalcitrants and held responsible for the prevailing chaos. According to a news report (1723) the naib-faujdar of Bahadarpur maintained only a single horseman and four footmen and was a failure against the recalcitrants who used to raid the houses of the people. The people, therefore, employed Koliis, 40 in number and paid them out of their own pocket. Instead of lending a helping hand, the naib-faujdar harassed the populace and the Koliis. Likewise the muzarlan of Navapur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) paid the Koliis of a neighbouring village Rs. 40/- per month for seeking protection from the inroads of some unidentified recalcitrants. Ratan Singh Bhandari, naib-subedar had asked the Koliis and Rajput girasias of pargana haveli Ahmadabad to maintain 'watch and ward' (chowki-o pehra) and enjoy revenues of the jagir which otherwise was conditional (mashrut) upon the thanedari of the place. The Bhandari also assigned


468
thanedari of mawza (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) to Yadji, a Koli for maintaining law and order. 1 Similarly Momin Khan, next subedar and his successor Jawanmard Khan Babi entrusted the Kolis and Rajputs with the duties of protecting villages and highways, maintaining chowki-o-pehra, stopping robberies and thefts and plundering of caravans and travelers. 2

Even though the Kolis and Rajputs had been favoured with administrative assignments but they too seem to have developed strong apprehensions and lost trust in the word of administration for the reasons not known to us. According to a parwana bandhari (1740) subedar Momin Khan furnished sureties (bandharis) to the girasia of village Hirapur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad). The girasia had some reservations and, therefore, reluctant to come to the provincial capital as summoned. The subedar, therefore, furnished bandharis assuring him of his safe conduct from his village to the provincial capital and back and for removal of doubts.

1. Tamassuk, dt 27th Jamadi II, 1148 AH, R No 53, Pune. The Bhandari while besieged (1736-37) at Ahmadabad by subedar designate Momin Khan, had employed Kolis of Chunwal, (the region noted for Kolis' recalcitrance) for supplying fodder and act as spies. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 179, 212, 221

Likewise Jawanmard Khan Babi issued a parwana-i qawl-o bandhari in favour of Hirajî girasias and others of village (pargana haveli Ahmabad) when they were summoned to the court. By issuing the parwana and furnishing bandharis the Nazim assured them of safe conduct and non-interference into some matters (b'ab-wab anha mazahem n' khawahad shud) which have been left unspecified. Presumably the girasias apprehended some kind of ill-treatment and felt it unsafe to visit the provincial capital.

Further, the Primary zamindars performing the duty of watch and ward, or else those who were especially entrusted with such duties, were apprehensive of interference of unspecified nature. Subedar Jawanmard Khan Babi, therefore, asked Udalbhan and other Kolis of village Harsa (pargana Kadi) to maintain watch and ward in mawza Kaopur of the same pargana assuring them by furnishing the bandhari to add credibility to his word (qawl) for non-interference in this

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2. Naql parwana-i qawl-o bandhari dt 3rd Ramadhan, 29RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79F.
matter on any ground. Like-wise Bhola, Ranchhod and other Kolis of village Kasandra were favoured with the issuance of a parwana. The Nazim asked them to maintain watch and ward without fear (of molestation) for the removal of which suspicion the bandharis were furnished. The evidence cited above is quite limited, rendering it difficult to make a general statement. But the significance of the fact that it comes for the environs of the provincial capital, may not be lost sight of. Evidently the Primary zamindars (of the environs of Ahmadabad) had grown strong enough to extort sureties and dictate their own terms to the Governor. The situation as might have prevailed elsewhere is not difficult to imagine. It may thus be seen that the administration seems to have lost all of its control over the countryside and the Primary zamindars who were successfully consolidating their hold and emerging as the leaders of raiyat whose direct communication with the state had been broken off

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1. Naqil parwana bandhari, dt 20th Ramadhan 29 RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79/F; Also see the similar parwana dt 11 Ramadhan, 29 RY Muhammad Shah issued in favour of Jetha, Bena and Ranchhod Kolis PC No 79/E.


3. It seems that those whose possessions were situated far off the seat of provincial power would not like to co-operate even this much.
Revenue Grantees

The government continued alienating its share in the produce of society in favour of individuals and institutions during the first half of the eighteenth century also. In principle no change, whatsoever, in regards to granting and holding the alienated rights is reported to have been effected. However, fortunes of grantees passed through many vicissitudes during the period of declining imperial hold over the province and its administrative apparatus. Some of them lost their means of livelihood whereas the other had to bear the burden of illegal exactions and encroachments. But on the whole the class of madad-i ma'sh holders showed tenacity to survive these vicissitudes.

With regard to the grantees remaining in possession of their grants the author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi has made some observations. Commenting on their position during the closing years of Maharaja Abhay Singh's period of subedari (1730-37) he remarks that "their affairs have reached such a pitch that they are in need of bread at night as well as a dam". 1 He has also commented on their conditions during the closing years of Mughal rule in the subah, saying "there is no trace of such persons getting means of livelihood (madad-

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 141.
They gave up claims with turpitude and entreaties. They got scattered for want of livelihood and hardship of the situation. These remarks though exaggerated, yet refer to a real situation of hardship as would be borne out by other evidence. Of course not every madad-i ma'sh holder was reduced to utter penury as we have instances from the Mirat, other documents and works of later date mentioning madad-i ma'sh holders in possession of the grants, it is holder of cash-stipend who lost their means of livelihood from 1748-49 when these grants finally seased following Nazim's order.

The Mirat elsewhere mentions some eminent Sheikhs and Saiyeds holding their madad-i ma'sh lands and villages which they were granted during the seventeenth century by the Mughals and earlier by the Gujarati sultans. These grantees were in possession of their lands even after the extinction of Mughal rule from the subah.

Likewise the grantees of Junagadh and Surat regions seem to have continued to hold their possessions even after

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1. Ibid II p 381.
2. Ibid
3. Ibid Supplement pp 11, 14, 28, 32-4, 38, 44, 58-63, 65, 70, 75, 91-2, 94, 105, 126 particularly for Sarkar Ahmadabad; and for further references please see discussion in the following pages.

473
the extinction of Mughal rule from the subah. 1 The Marathas too appear to have confirmed the Mughal grantees in their possession during the process and after the conquest of the subah. 2

Besides, the Mughal emperors and the Governors continued to bestow madad-i-ma'ash grants during the period (1700-50) and the grantees continued to hold the same even during later years. Emperor Bahadur Shah granted mawza Kasandra (pargana Haveli) to a Saiyed for defraying expenses on the Propnet's birthday ceremonies beside the village Mehta (Pargana Kadi) and Ranwasan (pargana haveli Pattan) bestowed

1. The grantees who had continued to hold their possessions under the Nawabs of Surat were, later on, likewise confirmed by the administrators of the British East India Company. In 1862-3 the British Crown confirmed them afresh and issued confirmatory orders which are summarily recorded in the Alienation Register, Record office (fort), Surat. Similarly Nawabs of Junagadh confirmed the grantees in their possessions. Later (1880-1) the Nawab tried to levy some taxes from the grantees which they contested before the British officer by submitting farmans, hasb-ul-hukms, parwanas etc. Copies of the same categorized as barakhali settled cases are preserved at District Record Office, Junagadh.

2. For the Marathas allowing the grantees to continue in their possessions after making enquiry into the legitimacy of their claim, Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 245; For the permission granted to a specified grantees to retain his rights, DB Parasnis (ed), Selections from the Satara Raja and the Peshwa Diaries, I, Document Nos 63 p 36; Ibid, p 63; For the general order allowing the holders of *inam, wazifa and devasthan* lands granted by the Mughals, Historical selections from Baroda state Records-I (1724-68) Documents Nos 30, 36, 127 pp 22, 32, 121; For actual continuity, Baroda, 57, 64, 97; For further continuity under the British, Bombay Gazetteer, II p 318 Ibid (Kaira), 81-3.
upon the same person as madad-i ma'sh!1 Children of Sheikh Ali Sarhindi (d 1729) were granted villages of Kochrab, Sanhel and Rahnas by emperor Muhammad Shah.2 One Sheikh Muhammad Saleh got mawza Mahej as altamgha from the same emperor in addition to village Tajpur (pargana Viramgaon) already possessed as madad-i-ma'sh.3

From the evidence cited above it would appear that the Sheikhs and the Saiyed continued as the state's favorite beneficiaries of the grants.4

The state kept up its policy of extending favours to select Non-muslims also. Subedar Daood Khan Panni added five more villages to the ina'm possessions of the Kolis of Chunwal (pargana Viramgaon).5 Sons of Parmanand Bhat were granted a village (1716) in pargana Kutyana (sarkar Soreth) in addition to the villages, two in number, which they already held by way of madad-i ma'sh.6

2. Ibid p 105.
4. Please see also Ibid pp 15-6, 28, 33-4, 38, 44, 58-63, 65-70, 75, 94, 105, 126; Junagadh SC Nos 983 (mahal Junagadh); Ibid SC No 443 (mahal Una); Ibid, Sc No 409, (mahal Balagam).
5. Yad-dasht-tappa Chunwal, op cit PC No k1
6. Junagadh, SC No 995 (mahal Kutyana)
One Jiwandas Bairagi got mawza Chandwana (1720) by way of khairat for feeding medicants.\(^1\) One Vasudev Brahman was granted a few more plots (1723) in appreciation of his services as physician.\(^2\) One Bawa Lakhmidas, a Bairagi was granted mawza Samroli in khairat during Muhammad Shah's reign.\(^3\) Yet another Non-muslim, Purshottamdas was granted (1748) a village by way of madad-i kharch for defraying expenses on the bhog of Srinath (?) in pargana Mangrole by Sher Khan Babi, the faujdar turned nawab of Junagadh.\(^4\) As such the Mughal State and officials kept up the policy of granting revenues during the period on almost the same pattern continuously.

Though very limited in quantity and scope there is however evidence to show that some of the grantees prospered enough to make further investment during the period. Mir Amanullah, a holder of madad-i ma'sh lands in Surat, mortgaged 35 bighas of land of one Rewa of mawza Nabol (pargana Chorasi, sarkar Surat) for Rs 200/- in 1711.\(^5\) The following year he bought two plots (du qiteh) of land from the desai

\(^1\) Ibid, SC No 1042 Ex No 5, 13/3 (mahal Seel)

\(^2\) Ibid SC Nos 170, 171 (mahal Sutrapara)

\(^3\) Ibid SC No 359 (mahal Sutarpara)

\(^4\) Ibid SC No 364A (mahal Mangrole)

\(^5\) PC NO 280/Bha/41A dt. 27 Muharram, 4th RY Bahadurshah.
of mawza Barot (pargana Chorasi) for Rs 205/- only.\textsuperscript{1} In 1722 he bought 10 bighas of land for Rs. 55/- from Kanwarji and Siyamji, sons of Ram Kishan desai, and Bhim and Kalyan Mahadev muqaddams of Nabo (pargana Bulsar, sarkar Surat).\textsuperscript{2}

Sibghatullah, another grantee, bought twelve and a half bigha of land along with 24 mango trees for Rs. 125/- from Nathu and others of mawza Katorgaon in 1724.\textsuperscript{3} Yet another grantee, Sheikh Murtaza, raised orchard on his 45 bighas of madad-i ma'sh lands in pargana Mangrole (sarkar Soreth) between 1735-37.\textsuperscript{4}

But all the grantees do not appear to have prospered the same way. The evidence available particularly for sarkar Ahmadabad shows the grantees suffering at the hands of Governors who levied illegal exactions from their possessions. The first to do so was Daood Khan Panni (1713-15) who is reported to have exacted a levy, called chhuttaman (literally release, also termed chhuttawan) from the holders

\begin{itemize}
\item PC Tamassuk, dt 17 Safar 1124 AH
\item PC No 287/Bha, dt 20 Rabi l 1135 AH.
\item PC No 481/Bha/41B dt 11 Ramadhan, 1137 AH
\item Junagadh, SC No 1155 Ex. Nos 5, 1142 fasili and of 1144 fasili (mahal Mangrole).
\end{itemize}
of allowances and madad-i ma'sh. The impost was levied during both the crop seasons and demanded in addition to the routine claim of the state as discussed in the preceding Chapter. During the subedari of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37) when all the 'former innovations' (?) are reported to have been revived and the madad-i ma'sh grants of 'noble' Saiyeds, and holy saints as well as 'deserving persons' were subjected to some discount' of unspecified descriptions. Separate amins and tehsildars were reportedly appointed for its collection.

Holdes of the madad-i ma'sh lands were forced to pay other imposts levied at Nazim's convenience. The Nazims as we have seen in the preceding discussion under Primary zamindars, levied bewra from the rural populace every year from 1725 onward. Whether the bewra was imposed on the grantees also during pre-1742 period, is not known. In the year 1742 Momin Khan, the Nazim, extorted Rs 2171/- as bewra

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 364. The matter was brought to the notice of the emperor but to no avail. Ibid.

2. Yad-dasht-haqiqt-i padaish, pargana Dholga, Sarkar Ahmadabad, 130 fasli PC; yad-dasht abwab, pargana Dholga PC.

from the persons holding madad-i ma'sh lands in 23 specified villages of pargana haveli Ahmedabad. During the years 1747-48 the persons holding madad-i ma'sh possessions in the same villages were exposed to bear the burden of imposts levied separately as well as jointly by the Mughal Governor and the Maratha chief at Ahmedabad. Thus Rs 2121/- were extorted by way of bewra by the Nazim. He extorted some amount as part payment (ala hisab) of some unspecified impositions. Again, Rs 1555/- were extorted as ghasdana by the Nazim and the Marathas together. Then the Nazim and the Marathas each extorted Rs 741/- the same way from them. A sum of Rs 2190/8 annas each were levied by both of them by way of nazrana. In 1750-51 the Marathas extorted bewra from the grantees again. These imposts and levies were extorted in addition to the naked loot which was resorted to by both

1. Yad-dasht bewra dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmedabad, 1150 fasli PC No 82.
2. Ibid, 1155 fasli PC No 81.
3. Yad-dasht tafrig-i dehat-i wazifadar, pargana haveli Ahmedabad, b'sigha-i alal hisab, 1155 fasli PC No 76.
4. Yad-dasht-gahdana dehat-i wazifadar pargana haveli Ahmedabad, 1155 fasli PC No 74.
5. Ibid, 1155 fasli PC No 73.
6. Haqiqat-i nazrana-i dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmedabad, 1155 fasli PC.
of them whenever it was possible. 1

Magnitude and impact of the above mentioned levies might have been unbearable for at least some of them. The Mirat observes that the villages held as madad-i ma'sh which were in a 'flourishing state' were 'ruined'. 2 The statistical information which is available for such villages of the same pargana (haveli Ahmadabad) partly substantiates the Mirat's assertion. 3 Also the agricultural activities even in the villages described as 'populated' (abadan) seem to have been at a low pitch during the same period. 4

1.  **Mirat-i Ahmadi** II pp 160-61, 245, 323. Whether the authorities could adopt the same attitude towards the grantees in the other parts of the subah is not known. Pargana haveli Ahmadabad, it may be recalled, had been exposed to bear burden of extra levies, particularly because of its vulnerability.


3.  In the year 1709-10 out of 40 villages held by the grantees only one is described as 'desolate' (weeran). The number of desolate villages shot up to 20 out of 45 such villages in 1747-48. Yad-dasht dehat-i wazifa, pargana haveli Ahmadabad. dt 1122 AH, RNo 35, Pune; Yad-dasht tafrique-i dehat-i wazifadaran, 1155 fasli, op cit, PC No 76.

4.  **Haqiqat-i wazifa farzandan-i** ... Sheikh Mohd Ghaus *'zamin-i wazifa dar dehat-i pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1156 fasli*, PC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Entire area held as madad-i ma'sh</th>
<th>Area under cultivation (mazrā')</th>
<th>Area out of cultivation (uftadah)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neharwala</td>
<td>35-0</td>
<td>4-15</td>
<td>30-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balad</td>
<td>148-0</td>
<td>5-0</td>
<td>143-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasandra</td>
<td>300-0</td>
<td>4-0</td>
<td>296-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghayaspur</td>
<td>45-0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>45-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karad</td>
<td>228-10</td>
<td>4-0</td>
<td>224-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saiyedpur &amp;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehrwala</td>
<td>20-0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>776-10</td>
<td>17-15</td>
<td>258-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus in the year 1747-8 of the entire cultivable area held as madad-i ma'sh by the sons of Sheikh Mohammad Ghaus, only 2.29% was under actual cultivation.

It may however be pointed out that the crops were raised on the madad-i ma'sh lands in other villages of the same pargana. But due to the non-availability of the necessary area figures proportionate relationship between the

1. For example please see Khasra mazruat mawza Mahej, fasl-i-kharif, 1146 fasli, PC Nos 95-9; ibid, Dhamnon, 1140 fasli.
Thus in the year 1747-8 of the entire cultivable area held as *madad-i ma'sh* by the sons of Sheikh Mohammad Ghaus, only 2.29% was under actual cultivation.

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### Table: Cultivable Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Entire area held as <em>madad-i ma'sh</em></th>
<th>Area under cultivation (mazrua')</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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481
area actually held and the one cropped may not be worked out.

But there is other set of information which shows that from the year 1748-49 the process of going more and more village as desolate had been arrested. Thus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of villages in madad-l ma'ash</th>
<th>No of villages described 'desolate'</th>
<th>No of villages described populated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1709-10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1747-8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748-9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749-50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidently the number of desolate villages which had risen from one (1709-10) to 20 (1747-48) came down by 5 (1748-9) and again fell by one more (1749-50) the following year. Whether the same trend (i.e. rehabilitation of the desolate villages) continued during the later years is difficult to explain for want of required evidence.

The available evidence though too scanty to draw a viable conclusion however suggests that the grantees' over

1. Yad-dasht dehat-i wazifa, 1122 AH op cit; Yad-dasht ta frique-i dehal-i wazifadar, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1155 fasli PC No 76; Ibid, 1156 and 1157 fasli R No 37, Pune.
all relationships with the intermediary zamindars were not necessarily cordial. According to a parwana (1739) muqaddam of mawza Rakhyal Khurd (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) had encroached upon an orchard, measuring 10 bighas belonging to Sivparsad, a grantee sometime during the subedar of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37). On the representation of the aggrieved grantee, subedar Momin Khan (1737-43) ordered for restoring the orchard and recovering the misappropriated revenues. Whether the subedar's order could really be enforced is not known. Later on the Marathas also entertained a complaint against the desai of Baroda who had imposed salami on the wazifa lands. The qasbati professional soldiers who acted as ijarahdars also made some kind of interference into the madad-i ma'sh possession of one Nazar Miyan in mawza Dher, pargana Una (sarkar Soreth) sometime before 1750-51.

But, then, all the grantees do not appear to be so docile as to submit before the Mughal officials with ease. Of the 25 villages described as 'populated' the administra-

1. Parwana (Momin Khan) dt. 19 Rabī 1, 20 R Y Mohammad Shah.
3. Parwana dt. 15 Rajab, 1164 AH, Junagadh SC No 419, Ex. No 2 (mahal Una); For similar developments in Awadh Muzaifar Alam, op cit pp 76-7.
tion could levy exactions only from 18 villages. Of the seven villages which enjoyed virtual exemption from paying the additional cess, one is categorized as *zortalab* i.e. refractory.¹

From the preceding discussion it would appear that the fortunes of a number of grantees passed through many vicissitudes. The Mughal state that created and patronized the grantees during the hey-day of its rule, also victimized them during the days of worsening financial crisis and political chaos. The state fell upon its own 'army of prayers', *(lashkar-i duaqoyan)* or else the instruments of creating a 'social base' for the empire.

It may however be seen that the grantees as a distinct category of people holding superior rights in land or its usufruct survived the eclipse of its patron, the Mughal empire.² They simultaneously continued to acquire additional resources and add new members to the category, though over all social formation seems to have remained unchanged.

Though it is difficult to ascertain their role in precise

1. *Haqiqat nazrana: dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmada-bad*, Nawab Jawanmard Khan, PC No 83. The *zortalab* village is further identified as 'hilly' *(Kohil)* i.e. located in a hilly tract.

terms in the society but the fact that they managed their survival even after their original patrons had gone, suggests that they were not so insignificant group of people that might be eradicated outright.
The complex forces let loose by the wars of succession, economic crisis, Maratha pressure and constant convolutions at the imperial court as well as provincial politics determined the political behaviour of many of the nobles of the Subah. The explosive impact of these forces aroused the daring hopes of ambitious military adventurers to carve out independent principalities for themselves.

In their bid to retain and perpetuate delegated position, power and a hold over revenue some of the Mughal nobles and officials strove incessantly and the efforts of some of them met with success. As a result the first half of the eighteenth century witnessed the emergence of a number of petty "states" carved out of the Mughal empire by the Mughal nobles and officials themselves. Possessors of such lands known as nawab, diwan, thakur, raja etc. in our subah, enjoyed Superior zamindar-like position but with a difference. Their position was not legally sanctioned, even though it was virtually recognized. Theoretically they did not dissociate themselves from the Mughal Empire, but practically they broke it up into fragments. The nawabs even sought legal confirmation of their position as Mughal officials.
which they had virtually converted into zamindaris but as a matter of fact the Mughal Emperors acted only as rubber stamp. Such zamindars enjoyed hereditary rights, claimed a share in the revenue and surrendered a part of it to the provincial authorities only whenever forced. In the following pages we propose to discuss some of such zamindaris which emerged during the first half of the eighteenth century in the subah.

1 MAIN LAND GUJARAT :

A. Diwans of Palanpur:

A study of faujdari of Palanpur and Deesa which remained confined to the well known Jalori family from 1697 to the close of our period provides a significant example of the emergence of a zamindari out of the faujdari. The process of conversion of official position into a zamindari commenced with the death of Bahadurshah and reached its culmination in Mohammad Shah's reign.

At the time Emperor Aurangzeb took away the pargana of Jalor from the Jaloris in 1697, he also confirmed diwan Mujahid Khan Jalori as faujdar of Palanpur, Dantiwara and Deesa. In addition to the revenues conditional (mashrut) on

1. Situated in North-eastern part of Gujarat, Palanpur was a pargana in sarkar Pattan. Because of the turbulent nature of the populace, the pargana was provided with 28 thanas dependent upon faujdari. Mirat-i Ahmadi Supplement, p.201
faudadar, Mujahid Khan was also granted tankhwah jagir out
of the revenues of the aforesaid pargana against a mansab of
1500/1500. The rest was settled as jagir of the jagirdars.
Mujahid Khan, besides his duties associated with faujdari
within the pargana, was also commanded to serve the Nazims
at the head of specified contingents.

The author of Mirat-i Ahmadi tells us nothing about
Mujahid Khan Jalori after 1697. But at the time of assump-
tion of faujdari by diwan Firuz Jalori alias Ghazni
Khan(1715), our author records that "he (i.e. Ghazni Khan)
occupied (Palanpur and Deesa) from the beginning(?) of
revolts as zamindar" and "abstained from royal service and
occupied by force some of the places in the neighbourhood
and brought them under his control". In the pargana-wise
description of subah Gujarat he remarks that "earlier (?)
they assisted Nazims. Now (i.e. sixth/seventh decade of the
eighteenth century) the Subedar leads an expedition and
captures peshkash according to his power and strenghht. They
have divided the mulk among themselves like zamindars (b'
tariq-i zamindaran) and they (i.e. Jaloris) do not behave

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1, pp. 341-2; Tarikh-i Palanpur pp.
   195, 201-2; Hadiqat-ul hind, f.33
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1, p. 342; Ibid., Supplement, p.200
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 1, pp. 341-2; Ibid., Supplement, pp.201-2
well though the post of faujdari was held by them till the book was being written.

From the detailed statements of the Mirat quoted above it may be inferred that the Jaloris occupied the parganas like zamindars, conquered the lands not belonging to them, did not perform the functions attached to their office, divided the lands among themselves, turned zortalab-peshkashi but continued as imperial faujdar. Before reaching a final conclusion, it would be better to examine in detail the available evidence not merely for checking the statement of the Mirat but also for a better appreciation of the new dimensions being added to the position of the faujdar that had been held on a hereditary basis by the same family.

According to the author of Tarikh-i Palianpur, the family history of Jaloris, Mohammad Kamal Khan Jalori had occupied pargana Tehrad sometime between 1711 and 1712 -- the first undesirable action on the part of a faujdar from the point of view of imperial authority. Diwan Ghazni Khan, the next faujdar (1715-29), extorted peshkash from Rana Pac-

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I pp. 341-2; Ibid., Supplement, pp. 201-2 The faujdar of the place therefore, came to be described as the 'rebel' (faujdar baghi) Account, f. 46.


3. Tarikh-i Palianpur, p.212

489
hanji, zamindar of pargana Wao soon after he assumed the office of faujdar. ¹ Sometime later the Khan incorporated the said parganas into his possessions. ² Similarly he forced the zamindars of Kakosi, Kedonar, Rohu, Dabhela, Dhaner, Malana and Sorbhakri to pay peshkash. In the subsequent years the zamindars of these places met the fate of Rana Pachanji. ³ Firuz Khan alias Ghazni Khan is also reported to have forced the jagirdar of Kakrej to offer "peshkash and nazrana" to him and some time later he annexed the entire pargana. ⁴ Ghazni Khan’s successor, diwan Karimdad Khan extorted peshkash from Bajodhodi of Nagor, invaded Danta and occupied the place. ⁵ Rana Amar Singh of Danta was forced to offer his daughter in marriage to the Khan in return for his possessions. ⁶ Jaloris are also reported to have occupied the jagirs of Sherwanis some time in the year 1742-43. ⁷ Thus Mirat’s observation that Firuz Khan had occupied some of the

1. Ibid.,
2. Ibid.,
3. Ibid., p. 213
4. Ibid.,
5. Ibid., pp. 227, 237, 239-40.
6. Ibid., p. 240
7. Ibid., p. 241

490
neighbouring territories by force is borne out by corroborative evidence.

The Mirat's observations that the faujdari of Palanpur and Deesa was held by Jaloris, at least during our period, is also corroborated by detailed evidence. As we have noted earlier Mujahid Khan Jalori was confirmed as faujdar of Palanpur and Deesa in 1697.¹ At his death, his eldest son, Mohammad Kamal Khan assumed the office even without seeking the approval of the emperor. Farrukhsiyar appointed Rahim Yar Khan (1715) who arrived at Palanpur to take charge. But Ghazni Khan who had, in the meantime, assumed the charge asserted his right, gave a battle and did not allow him to occupy the office.² But in order to seek imperial confirmation of his de facto position, he 'sent presents, and peshkash to His Majesty and with an offering of money obtained the farman-i bahali to continue at the same post.'³ He was so confident of the continuity of the position that during his lifetime itself he divided the territory among his sons thus assigning Deesa to his younger son and the rest to the

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¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p.342; Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat (f.83) describes him and his successors as watandars of Palanpur. Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II, p. 132
² Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p. 342; Tarikh-i Palanpur, p.214
³ Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 3; Ibid., Supplement pp.200-1
eldest one, Karimdad Khan, who succeeded him at his death. 1 Karimdad Khan Jalori lived for about two years and died in 1730 at Ahmadabad while serving Maharaja Abhay Singh, the Subedar. The Subedar is reported to have got diwan Mohammad Pahad Khan Jalori confirmed in the rank and position of his deceased father. 2 Mohammad Pahad Khan was succeeded by his uncle, Bahadur Khan (1744) who held the office for the rest of our period. 3 It is, therefore, evident that the principle of hereditary succession to the office of faujdar had virtually been established and it was enforced through the use of sword, diplomacy and the purse. The imperial authority acted merely as regularising authority.

The Mirat's assertion that diwan Firuz Khan alias Ghazni Khan and his successors did not serve the Nazims is only partly borne out by other evidence for we notice Ghazni Khan, and later on his son at Subedar's service. Ghazni Khan served Maharaja Ajit Singh during the latter's tenure as

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1. Tarikh-i Palanpur, pp. 214-6; Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, p.342
3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I, pp. 341-2, 373, 413, Ibid., II, pp. 119, 132-3, 321-2; Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat, f. 83

492
Subedar (1715-17) of Gujarat.\(^1\) Diwan Karimdad Khan (1729-30) accompanied Maharaja Abhay Singh while the latter passed through Palanpur to take charge of the subah in 1730.\(^2\) However, none of the faujdars of Palanpur after Maharaja Abhay Singh's withdrawal from the subah seem to have served any of the succeeding subedars.

It is important to note that the assumption of office by Ghazni Khan in 1715 and his son Karimdad Khan in 1729, almost coincided with the posting of Maharaja Ajit Singh and his son, Maharaja Abhay Singh as subedars in 1715 and 1730 respectively.\(^3\) That the Jaloris served only these two subedars may not be regarded as a matter of mere coincidence. The Two Rajput princes were the immediate hereditary and strong neighbours of Palanpur.\(^4\) For Jaloris it might be politic to maintain good relations, or at least not to allow any suspicion to arise in the minds of their neighbours.

\(^1\) Mirat-i Ahmadi., II, pp. 18, 20. The Khan was invited to assume the office of Naib Subedar by Dawood Khan Panni when the latter left for Deccan. But before the arrival of Maharaja, Ghazni Khan had left for Palanpur. It must be remembered that the Khan did not serve Daood Khan. \textit{Ibid.}, I, pp. 413; Also Ghazni Khan served as Maharaja's naib., II, p. 20

\(^2\) \textit{Ibid.}, II pp. 119, 132, \textit{Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat} f.71

\(^3\) \textit{Ibid.}, II, pp. 3, 119, 132-3,


493
Secondly, Ghazni Khan in 1715 had opposed the officially appointed faujdar and was waiting for the award of sanad-i bahali from the imperial court. Fear of armed action and the hope of securing recommendation of the Maharaja might have compelled Ghazni Khan to render service. Partly his desire to be confirmed in his position might have motivated him to serve the Raja. Lastly, both the princes-subedars passed through Palanpur at the head of strong contingents while the other subedars had adopted the other route.

Maharaja Abhay Singh's march was directed against Sarbuland Khan Mubariz-ul mulk, then subedar in office, who had concluded treaty with the Marathas and against the latter who had imposed khandni upon the Jaloris. Obviously the Jaloris might have visualised a strong general in the person of the Maharaja who could provide protection against the Marathas and put an end to the subedari of Sarbuland Khan who had let

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 3, 119, 133; Ibid., I, p.342

2. Ibid., II, pp. 3, 16-8, 119, 132-3, 193, 240. Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat, f. 70. Moreover, Pahad Khan Jalori was also favoured with the office of naib-faujdar of Pattan under Bakht Singh who had accompanied the Maharaja. B.N. Reu, "A letter from Rajadhiraj Bakht Singh of Nagor (Marwar) dated Oct. 10, 1737", Proc. IHC, 1949,

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 99-100, 102-03; Tarikh-i Palan-pur, pp. 222, 228-9

494
the Jaloris suffer at the hands of the Marathas. The very next year (1731) the Jaloris were again exposed to Maratha impositions and the Maharaja could do nothing about it. The Maharaja could not protect even Ahmadabad well. It might have proved an eye opener to the Jaloris. At this stage the Jaloris might have with reason decided to look after their own possessions instead of rendering service at Ahmadabad. Hence they fortified Palanpur, raised strong fortifications and after 1733 never came to serve the subedar.

The Mirat-i Ahmadi, as mentioned above, has reported that as the faujdars did not come to serve the Nazim, the latter led expeditions and extorted peshkash from them according to his strength and capacity. We have seen that the Jaloris rendered service for the last time in 1732-33. The first reported expedition for peshkash from Jaloris was led in 1734-35 by Ratan Singh Bhandari, the naib of Maharaja Abhay Singh. Three years later, Momin Khan extorted

1. For Maratha imposition on Jaloris, Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 99-100, 102-03; Tarikh-i Palanpur, pp. 228-9. Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat f. 16
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 157-61, 235-6, Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat f. 16
4. Ibid., Supplement, pp. 201-02 Account f. 46a
5. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 190., Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat f. 15
peshkash from Jaloris who offered it through Sher Khan Babi. The last expedition under Jawanmard Khan Babi, the de facto subedar, was led in 1748. Thus the Mughal subedars who could not extort regular military service from the Jalori faujdars, decided to extort occasional peshkash at least, as in the case of Superior zamindars of long standing.

It is, therefore, evident that the Jaloris who held faujdari of Palanpur and Deesa, acquired the position of Superior zamindar who not merely ruled within the territory like autonomous chiefs but also behaved like independent rulers. With expedient use of the power of sword, diplomacy and purse they converted the faujdari into zamindari within the empire in violation of the established rules.

B. Raja of Idar:

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 245; for Jaloris' close association with the Babis, the founder of the Nawabis of Radhanpur and Junagarh, please see Ibid., II, pp. 16-8.

2. Ibid., II, pp. 403-04; Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat f.21

3. Even then the Jaloris continued to recognize the Mughal emperor as their sovereign. Please see them seeking and getting favors from the court, Basheeruddin Khan (ed.) Faramin-i Salatin-i Hind, pp. 160-6; also Parwana dated 15 Jamadi II, 22 Ry of Muhammad Shah in possession of Hamiduddin Amir Miyan, Shehr Qazi of Palanpur.

4. Situated in Eastern part of the subah on a hillock and duly fortified, Idar was a pargana of sarkar Ahmadabad.
The history of the establishment of what came to be known as 'Later Rathor dynasty' at Idar is an interesting episode of the gradual transformation of jagir, acquired virtually by force, into zamindari. The disturbed state of affairs helped the two Rathor brothers, Anand Singh and Rai Singh, in their endeavours to acquire Idar and subsequently to retain it by the force of arms, diplomacy and money—though at times the process was also hindered by the forces at work in the region.

The episode of the establishment of the hold of Anand Singh and Rai Singh, the younger brothers of Maharaja Abhay Singh, over Idar had its roots in the family feud that followed the death of Maharaja Ajit Singh in 1724 for the gaddi of Jodhpur. Maharaja Ajit Singh's younger sons, Anand Singh and Rai Singh, raised the standard of revolt against Abhay Singh who had been recognized as the ruler of Jodhpur.

1. Prior to 1678, Idar was held by the Rajput zamindar of Rathor clan. In 1678, this territory as a result of the confrontation between the Rathors and Aurangzeb, was incorporated into Khalsa lands. For details, Commisariat, History of Gujarat, 11, pp. 2, 10, 49n, 178; K. Kamdar, "Conquest of Jamnagar", p. 215.

2. Maharaja Ajit Singh was believed to have been poisoned by his son Bakht Singh at the instigation of Abhay Singh; after his death, Ajit's sons were divided into two rival groups, viz., Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh, and Anand Singh and Rai Singh. For detail G.R. Parihar, Marwar and the Marathas (1724-1843), Jodhpur, 1968, pp. 26-30; B.N. Reu, Marwar Ka Itihas (Hindi), Jodhpur, 1968, 1, pp. 326-33; by the same author, Glories of Marwar and the Glorious Rathors, 1943, pp. 127-29.
by Mohammed Shah. The two brothers, having failed in Mar- war, retired to Gujarat and made an attempt to capture Idar which Maharaja Abhay Singh held as jagir. In order to strengthen their position the Rathor brothers, Anand Singh and Rai Singh, allied themselves with the Marathas who began their onslaught on Idar in the middle of 1725. Though the Rathor brothers failed to weaken Abhay Singh's hold on the territory, their "regular incursions ruined sources of revenue".

On the other hand, desais and other zamindars who are reported to have formed one group, were at daggers drawn with the Qasbatis -- the professional soldiers and money-lenders. Members of the extinct ruling house of Idar also


were active in the politics of Idar.\(^1\) In addition to the havoc caused by Maratha forces, Idar, even internally, did not enjoy peace at the moment.

Maharaja Abhay Singh devised a plan to deal with his brothers. He designed to hand over the *jagir* of Idar to the Maharana of Udaipur on condition that the Rana would get both the brothers, Anand Singh and Rai Singh, murdered.\(^2\) But the Rana did not lay hands on the two brothers. On the other hand the Maharana entertained overtures from Anand Singh for a compromise between the brothers. Abhay Singh did not like the move.\(^3\) In the meantime Pilaji and Kanthaji, the two Maratha generals, invaded Marwar and looted the area of Jalore which was then held in *jagir* by Bakht Singh, the brother of Maharaja.\(^4\) On the other side, Anand Singh and Rai Singh took possession of Idar (1728) which by then was

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included in the *jagir* of Abhay Singh.¹ The Maharaja did not oppose their action probably keeping in view of maintaining undisturbed peace in Marwar. Even the then *subedar* of Gujarat, Sarbuland Khan seems not to have taken note of this incident. Virtually forced by circumstances, Maharaja Abhay Singh agreed to the proposal of Maharana of Udaipur to close down the long struggle with his brothers by agreeing, in August 1728, that Idar might be granted as *jagir* to Anand Singh and Rai Sigh by the imperial court.² Thus Anand Singh and Rai Sigh who started the struggle with their eyes on the *gaddi* of Jodhpur succeeded in acquiring Idar as a political concession from Abhay Singh.

The *jagir* of Idar so acquired was retained by the Rathor brothers by using force, bribery and diplomacy. Jawanmard Khan Babi, then *faujdar* of Viramgaon, resolved to secure possession of Idar with the help of Akraj, the *koli zamindar* of Katosan and Amra Koli, the *zamindar* of Iiol Kanrah (*pargana* Ahmadnagar) to compensate losses which he had suffered in his *ijara* lands. He marched against Idar in

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1734. It so happened that at this time two Maratha generals, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindhia, were proceeding to Malwa. Messengers for help were accordingly sent by the Rathor brothers and it was readily granted. Idar, because of this timely help was saved. But the Rathors had to part with half of the Idar revenue as chauth to Damaji Gaekwad some time between 1734 and 1741.

In 1742, the Rehwar Rajputs in league with qasbatis, the professional soldiers and money lenders, attacked and took Idar, killing Raja Anand Singh. On hearing of the disaster his brother, Rai Singh, taking leave of the Nazim, Momin Khan went to Idar. With the help of desais and zamindars and his clansmen he drove out the Rehwars and killed many qasbatis who had supported them and reoccupied Idar. The Mughal subedars all through those years neither lent any support nor intervened in the affairs of Idar. It was due to the effort of Rathor brothers themselves that they succeeded

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 172-5; Commissariat, History of Gujarat, II, p. 449. The Rathors had to pay the cost of assistance they had acquired. Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat f. 83; Ms. No. 191/1. f. 13
in retaining their possessions against the potential threat both from within and without.¹

The Rathor brothers are in our sources nowhere reported to have been rendering military assistance to the then subedar Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37). Expediency seems to have dictated the Maharaja not to press his brother for service.

But during the years 1738-42 the Rathor brothers are reported to have served the then subedar, Momin Khan (1737-1743). They came to Momin Khan's camp when he visited the area. After matters about the payment of peshkash had been settled, the elder brother returned to Idar while Rai Singh remained with the Nazim.² Sarjit Singh, zamindar of Mohanpur paid peshkash to the Nazim through Rai Singh.³ At the time Momin Khan laid siege to Viramgaon in 1740, Rai Singh was present in the Nazim's camp.⁴ Two years later (1742), Rai Singh, for the last time, is noted in the company of the

1. Ratan Singh Bhandari, deputy to Abhay Singh, the Nazim of the Subah acted as silent spectator while Idar was besieged by Jawanaaard Khan Babi. Nor even Momin Khan came to help them either against Marathas or the Reh­wari Rajputs.
3. Ibid., II, pp. 247-8
4. Ibid., II, pp. 261-2
Raja Rai Singh was summoned by Fakhruddawla, the Nazim-designate (1743), to assist him against Jawanmard Khan Babi, the de facto subedar (1743-53). The Raja joined Fakhruddawla near Kapadwanj (sarkar Patan) as a mercenary general. Since the Nazim-designate did not meet the expenses of his troops on the pleas of his holding the jagir, he abandoned his camp and joined hands with Jawanmard Khan who had readily agreed to bear the expenses. Until the year of his death (1750) Rai Singh took an active part in the shifting politics of the time, allying himself indiscriminately with other Mughal nobles, with Rengoji, with Fakhruddawlah, with Sher Khan Babi, the first Nawab of Junagadh as it suited his purpose and ambition.

1. Ibid., II, p. 265. Rai Singh took leave of the Nazim to settle affairs at Idar in 1742. The next year (1743), the Raja did not come to help and remained busy at his and his brother's jagir -- Idar.


3. Raja Rai Singh joined with Fakhruddawlah, the Subedar designate, in 1743-4. Since the subedar failed to pay him, the Raja deserted him and joined hands with Jawanmard Khan Babi, the de facto subedar, who undertook to pay him for his services. Again, Raja Rai Singh left Jawanmard in 1744-5 and allied himself with Renkoji, the Maratha chief against the de facto subedar. Since Renkoji failed to meet his claims, the Raja deserted him and left for his jagir. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 269-71, 327-8, 328-30, 334-6, 355-6, 358-69, 394, 402-12; Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 270-4.
At the death of Raja Anand Singh at the hands of some local Rajput -- probably a zamindar -- his son Shiv Singh who was only six years old succeeded to the gaddi of Idar in 1742.1 His uncle Rai Singh who died in 1750 acted as in-charge of affairs.2 After 1750, Raja Shiv Singh enjoyed a long period of rule at Idar till his death in 1791.3

It may be seen, then, that the Rathor brothers who had acquired the jagir of Idar by virtue of conquest, retained it in a likewise manner. From the year 1742 they rendered neither service nor paid peshkash mainly because the power of collecting the revenue had almost gone. The prevailing state of affairs proved them helpful not merely in acquiring the jagir but also converting it gradually into zamindari with virtual hereditary claim on it.

C. Nawab of Radhanpur*

Jawanmard Khan Babi, a leading member of the well known

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* pargana Radhanpur (sarkar Pattan) is located in the North-west of Ahmadabad on the route leading to and adjoining the Rann of Kutch.
Babi family and de facto Governor (1743-53) of Gujarat established himself firmly, by carving out a Nawabi, at Radhanpur. Though he failed to retain the provincial capital but succeeded in retaining and transforming the positions of faujdar-watandar-jagirdar and ijadar assigned to him and other members of Babi family into hereditary nawabi which he and, later, his descendants continued to hold even after the extinction of Mughal rule from the subah. The ability of Babis in general and that of Jawanmard Khan in particular to

1. For a brief view of the Babis who played a significant political role during the first half of the eighteenth century, Ms Commussariat, History of Gujarat, II, pp. 169-70, 212, 432n and 435.

The family tree of Babis who established Nawabis during the period is as under;

Safdar Khan Babi
(d.1725)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salabat Mohammad Khan Babi (d.1730)</th>
<th>Jawanmard Khan Babi (Senior) (d.1728)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahadur Khan (Sher Khan Babi) (d.1758)</td>
<td>Kamaluddin Khan Mohammad (Jawanmard Khan Anwar - Junior) (Safdar Khan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Nawab of Junagadh</td>
<td>I Nawab of Radhanpur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mahabat Khan Sardar Mohammad Khan
II Nawab of Junagadh I Nawab of Bajasimor. Junagadh (1758-79)
muster resources by making effective use of their nativity and acquaintance with the region seem to have enabled them to acquire and retain positions under the prevailing situation.

The first assignment of significance to the Babis during the eighteenth century was made during Emperor Far-rukhsiyar's reign. The Emperor granted Jawanmard Khan Babi (died 1728) the watandari\(^1\) right, and as also assigned him in jagir the pargana of Radhanpur, the place which formed the seat of the Nawabi's power.\(^2\) Later on the Babis not only succeeded in retaining Radhanpur but also made valuable acquisitions in terms of administrative assignments and territorial sway.

From the time of Hamid Khan the Naib-subedar under Nizam-ul mulk every succeeding subedar ensured to acquire services of the Babis who in their turn were accordingly rewarded. In order to ensure active support of the Babis, Hamid Khan appointed (1726) Salabat Mohammad Khan as faujdar of Viramgan.\(^3\) But as the Babis' moves for extending support

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1. Precise nature of the watandari rights is not known. However, it seems, the watandari right implied grant of some financial benefits for, according to the Mirat-i Ahmadi, (Supplement pp. 202-3) the jama of the pargana was reduced at the time of his appointment as watandar.


3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, 11, p. 78
to the incoming subedar became evident, the faujdari was taken away.\(^1\) The incoming Subedar, Mubariz-ul mulk, ensured Babis' support against Hamid Khan by promising, beforehand, faujdari of the same place to Salabat Mohommed Khan Babi and that of Pattan (sarkar Pattan) to Jawanmard Khan Babi (d.1728).\(^2\) In appreciation of their valuable services which they rendered against Hamid Khan and, presumably, for ensuring their active assistance in future, the subedar appointed Jawanmard Khan Babi as faujdar-amin of pargana Petlad also.\(^3\) At his death in 1728, the subedar proposed the award of khitab, (Jawanmard Khan) and mansab (700/? for his eldest son, Kamaludding Khan thus ennobled as Jawanmard Khan Babi (junior), and jagir in the parganas of Sami and Monjpur. The younger son, Mohammad Anwar Khan, (ennobled Safdar Khan) got the mansab of 500/? and the faujdari of Radhanpur along with its dependency, Terwara.\(^4\)

1. Ibid., II, p. 81
2. Ibid., II, p. 86 Salabat Mohammad Khan died in office (Ibid p. 116) at the time of Maharaja Abhay Singh's arrival.
3. Ibid., II, p 105; for their support against Hamid and for assistance to Mubariz-ul mulk Ibid., II, pp. 79-80, 83, 86, 88, 92, 93, 98.
4. Ibid., II, p. 106 He had also contracted ijare right on pargana Petlad, but died before the completion of the stipulated period. Ibid., II, p. 112,

507
With the arrival of subedar-designate Maharaja Abhay Singh and determination of Mubariz-ul mulk to resist his ouster, Jawanmard Khan opted for rendering active support to the former.\(^1\) In view of his active assistance and for compensating the apparent loss of Pattan, the maharaja procured for Jawanmard Khan Babi an addition to mansab and watandari of Badnagar.\(^2\) Later (1731) the Babi chief acquired parganas of Kadi, and Vijapur on ijara.\(^3\) His brother, like-wise acquired parganas of Munda, Matar (Arharmatar) and Nadiad.\(^4\)

Jawanmard Khan Babi reoccupied pargana Pattan at (Subedar-designate) Momin Khan's instance who needed his support for ousting Ratan Singh Bhandari (naib-subedar in office) and therefore assigned faujdari of the pargana before hand to align the Babi with him.\(^5\) Jawanmard Khan also

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3. *Ibid.*, II, p. 168. Sometime before 1753 Kadi was lost to the Marathas; MS NO 191/1 f 13.


5. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 196-7. The faujdari of the pargana, as pointed out in a preceding note, had been assigned to Raja Bakht Singh, the brother of maharaja. The Babi chief seems to have been hurt and was therefore to get it back which he did by expelling the Raja's naib forcibly. *Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat*, f.83.
obtained from Momin Khan *pargana* Kheralu for his brother, Zorawar Khan.¹

It may thus be seen that Jawanmard Khan emerged beneficiary after every change in the *subedari*. The Babi chief almost consistently remained 'loyal' to the *Subedars-in-office* rendering them active assistance.² Once the *subedar-in-office* was dismissed, he threw his lot with the Governor-designate after his arrival in the *subah* for ousting his predecessor by force of arms.³ The Babi chief extended his support and extorted one or the other official position which, barring exceptions already mentioned, he and members of his family continued to hold. Then in 1743, a little

1. He was assigned *pargana* Prantij for paying ransom money to the Marathas who held Zorawar Khan, his brother as hostage. Later, he got Kheralu instead. Even after his brother's release, the *pargana* was retained by them, *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, pp. 205-6, 239.


after Momin Khan's death Jawanmard Khan occupied Subedari which he made instrumental for ensuring continued possession of Radhanpur.¹

Despite holding faujdaris, enjoying mansab, jagir and watandari, Jawanmard Khan Babi ceased to render services at least from the time of Momin Khan's period (1737-43) of subedari. Instead, he served as a mercenary charging "an amount of money by way of daily expenses of his troops" for rendering service which the nazim procured every year.²

Since the amount charged by him was found "to be heavy", Momin Khan chose to engage his brother, Zorawar Khan, who also held pargana Kheralu in jagir on an agreement of less expenses,³ as a mercenary. Evidently the services of Babis' in general and those of Jawanmard Khan in particular seem to have become virtually indispensible for the subedars. From the time of Hamid Khan each subedar was keen to ensure their

1. Having entered into an agreement with the Marathas, he surrendered Ahmadabad to them in 1753. As per the terms and conditions settled between them Jawanmard Khan was to retain entirely and exclusively (dar-o-bast bile shirkat) the parganas of Pattan, Badnager, Sami, Munjipur, Baisalnagar, Tharad, Kheralu, Radhanpur, Terwara, and Vijapur. Moreover his family members were to retain one third of revenues of qasbah Matar, Kheda, Vasna and Munda entirely beside the villages which they held in jagir.

2. Ibid., 257

3. Ibid.
support and, procure their services for taking possession of the subah, dealing with the Marathas, running the administration and effecting assessment and collection of revenues and extorting peshkash from the zamindars.1 Jawanmard Khan Babi, like his father and other member of the family, seems to have established good rapport with some of the leading magnets of the region2 The Babis were capable of mustering support for assisting the Nazims as well as for fighting them.3 It may particularly be mentioned that the 'zamindars', girasias, Kolis and other recalcitrants were among the ones who assisted them against the Nazim.4 The Babis who were duly recognized as natives of the region5 might have,


2. Ruqqat-i Alamgiri, letter no. XIX (1706), pp. 24-6; For the Babis enjoying confidence of the leading element of the region, Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 40-1, 78-81, 144, 170-1; Jawanmard Khan Babi for being hailed as man of the region (ham watani) by the Gujaratis, Ibid., II, p. 312


4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., II, p. 312

* Located on a hill and having strong fortification, Junagadh was headquarter of sarkar Soreth, the peninsular Gujarart.
presumably, been better placed to consolidate their position with the cooperation of local element.

II. The Peninsula Gujarat:

D  Nawabi of Junagadh:

The last faujdar of sarkar Soreth, Sher Khan Babi\(^1\) consolidated his position at Junagadh during the days of the decline of Mughal rule in the subah. Having tried his luck on the mainland where he could not make much headway, Sher Khan Babi retired to the peninsula and established himself at Junagadh. With Junagadh safe in his hands, Sher Khan re-entered the main field of provincial politics but with a new approach and changed purpose. The distasteful, as also not so appreciable an experience there, forced him to retire to Junagadh to consolidate his achievements in the climate of political uncertainty. Our main point of concern, therefore, is Junagadh; however, for a better appraisal of the whole development a study of Sher Khan's achievements, failures and strategy on the mainland seems to be pertinent.

To begin with, Sher Khan Babi, during the early years (1719-37) of his career had endeavored to acquire and hold a

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1. Ennobled as Sher Khan Babi, Mohammad Bahadur Babi was son of Salabat Mohammad Khan Babi (500/250), the watan-dar of Balasinor (Barasinwara). His father came to lime light during Aurangzeb's reign and played an active role in the provincial politics during later years. Commissariat, History of Gujarat, 11, pp. 169-70, 212, 432n and 435.
position on the main-land, except for a short duration (1729-30)\textsuperscript{1}. According to the available evidence he began his career as faujdar-i gird (1719) of Ahmadabad, the position which he retained under naib-subedar Mehar Ali Khan.\textsuperscript{2} In 1721, naib-subedar Shujat Khan (1721-22) who bore enmity towards the Babis threatened him and his father in their respective possessions but their grievances against the Khan's humiliating behaviour were redressed by Subedar Muizuddawlah Haider Quli Khan (1721-22) who appointed him thanedar of Sadra and Birpur, managed award of mansab and confirmation in the jagir.\textsuperscript{3}

But Sher Khan Babi was deprived of the above mentioned thanedari within an year and with the death of his father (1730) he was left in his sole (watandari) possession of Khera.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} Sher Khan held Junagadh (1728-30) as deputy of his father who had been appointed naib-faujdar of the place by the dying faujdar; \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, II, pp. 101, 103

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} II, p. 22

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, II, pp. 41-2. \textit{Mirat-i Mustafabad} pp. 259-60. He was awarded a mansab of 500/270 and khitab of Sher Khan. His father ws, likewise, allowed to hold Barasinwra as watander and Sher Khan to continue in the watandari of Khera.

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi}, II, pp. 48-9, 69-70. His father was continuously favoured and then, disfavoured by Nizam-ul mulk, Hamid Khan and Sarbuland Khan. But at the time of his death, he held Barasinwra as watander and Ghoga as faujdar and manager of the king's mother who held it in tayyul (i.e. jagir), \textit{Ibid.}, II, pp. 10, 21-2, 48-9, 69-
Sher Khan Babi managed, at the recommendation of the then subedar to acquire Barasinwra, watandarl of his father, and port of Ghoga after his father's death. The imperial court rejected the Nazim's proposal and deprived him of Ghoga, an easily manageable and prosperous port-town on the peninsula.

Sher Khan's fortunes witnessed fluctuations in his other assignments also. Maharaja Abhay Singh appointed him faujdar of Baroda (1731) but soon (1733) it was captured by the Marathas when Sher Khan was in Barasinwra. Similarly he was appointed faujdar of Viramgaon (1733) by the naib-subedar but the imperial court assigned it to Behram Khan. At the instigation of the Naib-Subedar, Sher Khan Babi fought the new incumbent to finish. But then, the naib-subedar himself replaced him by another person of his liking for...

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...Continued...

70, 78, 81-2, 86, 116

1. He was allowed to retain his father's mansab and jagir. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp 132, 165-66, Ibid., Supplement, p. 191


some ulterior motives.\textsuperscript{1} As such, of the many areas at one or the other time at his disposal, he was left only with his *watandari* possessions of Barasinwra and Khera.\textsuperscript{2} It may thus be seen that Sher Khan Babi was generally beneficiary of the *subedar's* favours\textsuperscript{3} and each time a looser at the hands of the imperial court. It may further be seen that except the incident of Viramgaon— the strategically significant fortified town between the main-land and Soreth — Sher Khan, by and large followed the imperial command peacefully. Moreover, he was continuously at the service of *Nazim*.\textsuperscript{4} But the *Nazim* too seems to have gradually lost its credibility as the source of providing favours and therefore Sher Khan Babi

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1. The *faufdari* was granted to him because he maintained cordial relations with the *desai* without whose cooperation management of affairs was a difficult task. *Ibid.*, II pp. 168, 179, 184, *Mirat-i Mustafabad*, pp. 264-5.


3. The *Babis*, in general, acted as mediator between the *peskash* collecting expeditionary forces and the *zamin-dars*. As such their utility for the *subedars* need not be over emphasised. The favours, moreover, sometime came in view of political compulsions as mentioned in the preceding note.

was, as will be seen a little later, with reason obliged to proceed accordingly.

Sher Khan Babi, as early as 1728, was reluctant to surrender Junagadh to the naib of the faujdar appointed by the Imperial court. Sher Khan held the place since 1727 as naib of the naib-faujdar Salabat Mohammad Khan under faujdar Asad Quli Khan, who died in 1727. The next faujdar, Ghulam Muhiudding Khan also appointed him his naib. In 1728 Ghulam Muhiuddin Khan, with royal consent, deputed Mir Ismail in Sher Khan's stead. But Sher Khan did not let him assume office. ¹ Mubariz-ul mulk, then subedar, recommended (1729) that Sher Khan be allowed to continue by way of ijarah-i nayabat. ² But the following year (1730), Sher Khan, for reasons unknown, vacated the office for Mir Ismail Khan. ³ Nevertheless Sher Khan's interest is evident from his early action. In the year 1736 at the time he had been deprived of all his positions except ones in Barasinwra and Khera, Sher

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 117; Mirat-i Mustafabad, p.259. By this time Maharaja Abhay Singh had assumed charge of the subah and the Babi had not even called on him. Moreover, his father Salabat Mohammad Khan also died (1730). Apparently Sher Khan Babi would not like to annoy the Subedar and the court at the juncture when he needed imperial favours.
Khan Babi was appointed faujdar of Petlad by Naib-i-subedar, Ratan Singh Bhandari. The Bhandari in spite of proceeding with a firm determination (azm-i musammam) however, failed to install Sher Khan Babi by ousting Momin Khan, the ifaradar of Petlad. The incident which reflected the weakness and inability of the highest provincial authority, seems to have proved an eye-opener for Sher Khan. Before analyzing evidence and developments for the ensuing years, it will not be out of place to have a retrospect of the preceding developments --- Sher Khan's obvious endeavours to hold some position on main-land which had resulted in almost a fiasco.

On the basis of available evidence it may be submitted that until the year 1736-37 Sher Khan had associated himself with the subedars and obviously he seems to have seen an identity of interests with those of the latter i.e. the Nazims of the subah. In principle, no doubt, he was bound to serve the subedars in his various official capacities but he did, in this association, something more even apart from and also in violation of the rules and regulations. It was at the instigation of Ratan Singh Bhandari, the naib-subedar incharge of the subah that Sher Khan fought the faujdar-

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 192-94. Momin Khan, the first nawaab of Khanbat was also a strong noble having roots in the soill of the land. For details please see discussion under khanbat in the following lines.
designate of Viramgaon to the finish. Moreover, he was, generally, with the subedars in their peshkash collecting expeditions. It was, apparently because of his association with the subedars that since the days of Maharaja Ajit Singh (1719-21) almost every subedar favoured him by making assignments, recommending khitab and increase in mansab and on two occasions favours came in violation of imperial regulation and rules. But such favours neither proved lasting nor even secure. As pointed out above Sher Khan was deprived of all his positions, excepting the watandari of Barasinwra and Khera by the year 1736. Even Barasinwra was exposed to Maratha inroads twice in 1733 and 1736. It could be retained only by offering a huge sum by way of khandni (security money). As such, Sher Khan might have observed that while the subedars could assign positions and make grants, it was the recipient alone who could retain these by virtue of his own strength. Moreover, inability and failure of Bhandari against Momin Khan highlighted the fact that the highest authority of the subah was neither capable of ousting

3. *Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement*, p. 191

518
determined official nor, therefore, in a position to bestow favours even on its favourites. The conditions of insecurity and instability were further created, at least for Sher Khan, by the subedars themselves. Ratan Singh Bhandari took faujdari of Viramgaon from him. To all appearances Sher Khan's strategy i.e. acquiring and retaining position through the good offices of subedar by helping them in the subah, failed to meet the desired aim.

With regard to his field of action - the mainland - it may be submitted that it was like the hunting ground of Maratha armies. Beside extorting khandni they had successfully aimed at territorial acquisitions, as distinct from their policy of collecting only khandni from the peninsular Gujarat. ¹ The mainland was relatively vulnerable and within easy reach of Marathas as well as the Mughal subedars. Above all, since he failed to retain his positions on the mainland, therefore, he would welcome a change in the area of operation. Hence forward (1736), Sher Khan seems to have decided to act independent of the state authority to acquire as well as consolidate his position in his own right.

The long armed struggle (April 1736 to May 1737) that started between Momin Khan (the future subedar) and Ratan

Singh Bhandari (the naib-subedar in charge) for the occupation of Ahmadabad provided Sher Khan an opportunity to act. Instead of taking sides, Sher Khan Babi utilised the opportunity to expel state officials and occupy Dehgam and Korwa which were located in the vicinity of Barasinwra. Having acquired tacit approval of the new subedar who did not disturb him in his new acquisition, Sher Khan Babi called on him (September 1737) and served him for sometime. In the meantime situation at Junagadh took a favourable turn for the Babi chief.

Hazbar Khan, faujdar of Soreth, deputed two naibs -- Sher Mohammad Khan and Mamur Khan -- one after another to take over Junagadh from Mir Dost Ali, the naib-in-charge in office. With a design to capture Junagadh, Sher Khan Babi proceeded to Ghoga (which was situated on the peninsula and had already been occupied by him) and instigated the unpaid Gujarati soldiers of Mir Dost Ali who was simultaneously threatened in his position by the naibs-designate and, moreover, short of funds too. The soldiers "were internally in concord with Sher Khan Babi" and "that helpless man (i.e. Mir Dost Ali) was entangled in the snare of their

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 198
2. Ibid., II, pp. 243, 245
strategam*. Mir Dost Ali was forced to invite Sher Khan Babi "on an agreement of half to half" for collecting revenues. Having thus entered the citadel of Junagadh, Sher Khan Babi occupied the place for himself without partnership of anyone.¹ A little later the imperial court appointed Himmat Ali Khan, nephew of subedar Momin Khan, as faujdar. But in view of Marath's presence and Sher Khan Babi's strength (for he was entrenched in the strong citadel of Junagadh) the subedar could not even venture to act against him.² Sher Khan therefore continued to hold the place uninterrupted.

During the years 1738-43, Sher Khan confined his activities to Junagadh and took no part in politics on the mainland.³ Because of the paucity of evidence nothing can be stated with confidence, however, according to the author of the Mirat-i Mustafabad, Sher Khan, during these years, subdued the recalcitrant elements there.⁴ In all probability Sher Khan Babi might have utilised the time to consolidate his position at Junagadh. That his wives, Ladli and Amani, succeeded in administering the region during the years of

1. Ibid., I, pp. 245-7 He expelled the naib after his entry into the citadel.

2. Ibid., II, pp. 246-7


Sher Khan’s absence (1743-45 and 1746-47) is indicative of the degree of success he had attained. During the period Sher Khan Babi confirmed the holders of the madad-i ma’sh, in’am, pusaita and other grants in their possessions.

There is evidence to show that he made new grants in favour of Bairagis, sadhus, faqirs, Saidyids and the desais. Also, he is reported to have made a grant of four villages in 1741-42 to a local zamindar. It seems that during the period he had tried to win strong and influential local persons to his side.

Sher Khan re-appeared on the political scene of the mainland in 1743-45. He came at the invitation of Maratha chief, Rengoji who had promised him deputy Governorship of the subah under Marathas. Finding no room for materializing his objectives of getting deputy-Governorship, he plundered


2. Each document concerning Settled cases (Junagadh) cited in Chapter V and Chapter VI above testifies the undisturbed continuity of the grantees in their possession. Besides, the files related to mahal Junagadh precisely cite Sher Khan Babi’s order dated 1153, 1154 and 1155 AH. to that effect.

3. Please see, for instance Junagadh SC No. 993, (mahal Mangrole); EX A/1, Ex A/3 and A/5; SC No. 362, (mahal Seel) EX No. 4

4. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS.) f. 17.

5. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 286,289,290,293
villages and then joined hands with the then Mughal Deputy-Governors as mercenaries against the Marathas. But his endeavours to ensure installation of Fida-ud-Din Khan and then Fakhruddin in the seat of power were successfully thwarted by his cousin, Jawanmard Khan Babi who aspired for and succeeded in capturing the office of subedar for himself.

Once Jawanmard Khan Babi captured Ahmadabad, Sher Khan Babi endeavoured to consolidate his position by occupying Kapadbanj and Thamna, the territories adjoining Barasinwra, which was held by his son, Sardar Mohammad Khan.

Sher Khan, it may be seen, had by now abandoned the policy of association with subedars and remaining aloof from the politics of the subah. Between 1743 and 1745 Sher Khan took an active part in the shifting politics of the time allying himself indiscriminately with the subedar, with other Mughal nobles, with Rengoji and other Maratha sardars; with the phantom subedar, Fakhruddawlah and with Rai Singh, the jagirdar-chief of Idar according to convenience. During

1. After the death of Momin Khan, the charge of the subah was held by Fakhruddin and Fidauddin jointly as deputy Governors. They were engaged in a struggle with Renkoji who wanted to oust them.
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 289-90, 293
3. Ibid., II, pp. 290, 293, 295-8, 311, 317.
4. Ibid., II, pp. 311.
all these years his only permanent ally seems to have been Rai Singh, the man with identical interests.¹ In 1745-46 finding no possibility of adventure on the mainland and having strengthened his position at Barasinwra he retired to Junagadh where his wives had carried the management of affairs.²

Post 1746-48 developments show Sher Khan acting as an independent ruler. Available evidence, though little in quantity, is significant for the light it casts on Sher Khan's ways of asserting and consolidating position.

Sher Khan shifted to the policy of opposing Mughals in case he was disturbed, and earning confidence of the local elements. The very position of faujdari, as pointed out

1. Sher Khan with Raja Rai Singh of Idar warmly welcomed Fakhruddawlah, the Nazim-designate in 1743-44 but within few days he deserted the Nazim-designate and joined hands with Potaji, the Maratha chief who along with Jawanmard Khan Babi was opposed to Fakhruddawlah. In the year 1744 Fakhruddawlah attacked Sher Khan's camp but could not achieve success. Sher Khan, subsequently entered into league with Rengoji, the other Maratha chief in the subah. The new alliance forced Fakhruddawlah to open dialogue with Sher Khan. But Sher Khan could not be desisted. In the struggle between Jawanmard Khan, the de facto subedar and Rengoji, Sher Khan supported the latter but during the following year, he deserted Rengoji who was fighting Khanderao, another Maratha chief. While the struggle for supremacy between Rengoji and Fidauddin Khan was on, Sher Khan changed his sides twice. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 286, 289, 290, 293, 296-8, 314-25, 327-30, 334-8, 355-6, 395-6, 402-11, 502-12, Mirat-i Mustafabad pp. 270-4.

2. Mirat-i Mustafabad. p. 274, Barasinwra, under Sher Khan Babi's son, also acquired the status of Nawabi.
above, was gained by him by seizure rather than by sanction. Also, he continued to hold it without having legal approval and against the wishes of the Emperor. During the closing days of 1746, Sher Khan opposed and fought Fakhrud-dawlah, the subedar at Banthli, 10 miles east of Junagadh.\(^1\)

At Khere and Barasinwra, Sher Khan's son and deputy resisted imposition of peshkash by the subedar but was forced to offer it twice.\(^2\) Sher Khan's son agreed to share revenues of Barasinwra with the Marathas, under the pressure of arms.\(^3\)

Sher Khan in an apparent effort to growing roots in the soil granted certain concessions to the local zamindars. He granted them exemption from paying salami on their chauth rights.\(^4\) As such the possessions of the chauthias were made free of the main monetary obligation. One Weera Kathi of Jeetpur was permitted to raise fortification at the same place. He was also granted a jagir in the pargana of Jeet-


\(^3\) Ibid., II. pp. 562-5.

\(^4\) Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 284-85. The loss in terms of revenues must have been quite considerable because there were, in all, 400 such villages as contained chauth possessions and the exemption was not withdrawn. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f.7.
pur. Besant, a Rajput, was granted the revenues from the Panchala village. The mahant of Koili was granted revenues of the village Koili in the pargana of Banthali. Dholqa was assigned to the gasbatis -- wealthy-soldierly class -- who had killed the Mughal faujdar of the town. Town of Una was likewise granted to the local gasbatis as watan. He also assigned talluqa of Bantwa and Sardargarh, also known as Gidar, to his younger brother. He did not disturb the zamindar of Porbandar in his new acquisitions, instead demanded peshkash only. On the whole he seems to have maintained cordial relations with the old as well as newly emerging zamindars.

In spite of ruling Junagadh like an independent chief, Sher Khan never broke his relations with the Emperor till

1. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f.37, Mirat-i Mustafabad, p. 285.
2. Mirat-i Mustafabad, p. 280
3. Ibid., p. 286
4. Ibid., p. 351
5. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f.70
6. Mirat-i Mustafabad, p. 286
7. Tarikh-i Soreth (Junagadh MS) f. 69
8. For his relations with Pahad Khan Jalori (chief of Palanpur) and Raja of Idar, Mirat-i Ahmadi, 11, p. 245; Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 261-2, 272-4; with muqaddam of Padra and the desai of Viramgaon, Mirat-i Ahmadi, 11, pp. 144, 162, 168, 179, 184
his death (1758). He liked to be addressed as Nawab Sher Khan Bahadur fidwi-i Badshah. However, he did not share revenues with the Mughal Emperors.

To sum up, Sher Khan Babi, the founder of the Nawabi of Junagadh, first unsuccessfully tried his fortune on the mainland and attempted holding positions with the consent and support of the subedar. Since he failed to retain any position of significance with the Nazim’s help and had to part with his positions on the mainland, he consolidated his position at Junagadh by acquiring support of the local zamindars. The period of uncertain political conditions thus provided opportunity to one more Mughal noble to carve out an independent principality.

III. SOUTH GUJARAT: THE PORT-TOWNS

D. Nawabi of Surat:

Tegh Beg Khan, who appeared as compromise candidate in the political game initiated by Mulla Mohammad Ali, the

1. Britishers wrongly assumed that Sher Khan Babi assumed the appellation of Nawab and Bahadur, see Bombay Gazeteer, VI, p. 99, Wilberforce, op.cit p. 129; Treaties, VI, pp 84-5. The Khitabs were granted by Empir Muhammad Shah, see Mirat-i Mustafabad, pp. 259, 261-2, Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 132, 144. Even his grand son was addressed with the same title see Mirat-i Mustafabad, p. 285.

2. Account, ff. 10b, 18a

3. However his son continued to hold Barasinwra and Kheda on the mainland even after extinction of Mughal rule from the subah.
Umdat-ul tujjar, to acquire ascendancy over the economically important sea-part of Surat, emerged out of strife as the practically independent ruler— the Nawab— of the place. The capture of power by Tegh Beg Khan and later on by other adventurers and the related developments constitute an interesting episode in the history of unscrupulous politics.

The history of this episode may be divided into three broad phases: the first phase when Tegh Beg Khan succeeded twice in capturing the mutasaddi's office displacing Behram Khan, the officially appointed mutasaddi, with the help of Mulla Mohammad Ali, the trader and Begler Khan, the qiledar; the second phase when having been officially appointed mutasaddi of Surat, Tegh Begh Khan attempted to consolidate his position and power, and the third phase when, after the death of Tegh Beg Khan, a new game began in which the mutasaddigiri changed hands more than once.

Umdat-ul tujjar Mohammad Ali1 an ambitious rich merchant of Surat, "gave up his ancestral ways due to abdu-

1 Mulla Muhammad Ali was the son of Mulla Abdul Ghafoor the umdat-ul tujjar. At the death of Mulla Ghafoor, the then mutasaddi (1716-18) Haider Quli Khan confiscated his property. Beside precious material and articles he is reported to have left a fabulous sum of Rs. 80,00,000/- in cash. After making arduous efforts, Mulla Muhammad Ali was allowed to take back his father's belongings. For details see, Zahiruddin Malik, "The Rise of Tegh Beg Khan" (1733-46), Islamic Culture, XXXVI, 1972, pp. 57-8.
nance of wealth" and laid the foundation of a palatial fort-
sum-port at Athwa island, three miles off Surat. Behram
Khan, the then mutasaddi, forbade (1729) the trader from
carrying out his unauthorised work of construction. Humili-
ated but resolute in his designs, the trader, with big power
of purse at his command, resolved to dislodge Behram Khan
from his office. With a lucrative offer of securing sanad
for the post of mutasaddi for qiledar Beglar Khan's brother
Tegh Beg Khan, the merchant purchased the loyalty of the
Khan to execute his designs of expelling Behram Khan from
the office (1729-30). Tegh Beg Khan, thus, appeared on the
political chessboard; previously he held no post in the
Imperial administration.

To translate their political ambitions into reality
Tegh Beg Khan gave out that he had received a sanad for the
post of mutasaddi of Surat. Having brought about a keen
controversy around Behram Khan the two brothers dragged him
into conflict and gave him battle. Under the terms of agree-
ment concluded through the peace making mission of interest-
ed traders of Surat, Behram Khan vacated the office and
waited for the arrival of a new sanad in his name. Tegh Beg

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II pp. 103-4 Account, f.70a.
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 103-4; Mukhtasr Tarikh-i Gujar-
arat, f.77
Khan entered the official palace (*darbar*) and began to rule over Surat from 1730 as a *de facto* ruler with no legal right to rule.  

The agreement came under a strain soon after the merchant recommenced the work of building his palatial-fort-cum-port without procuring the *sanad* of confirmation for the post of *mutasaddi* in the name of Tegh Beg Khan from the imperial court. Tegh Beg did not permit him to proceed until the *sanad* had been procured. The snubbed trader turned to Behram Khan -- the *mutasaddi* out of office. Mohammad Ali, the trader, assured him of the *sanad* of confirmation; in turn Behram Khan undertook to allow the merchant to accomplish his object. The trader spent a sum of Rs. 180000/-, procured *sanad* for the new ally and thus enabled him to reoccupy the official palace of *mutasaddi* after a lapse of ten months (1731). Mohammad Ali, then, put his design into effect and built a palatial fort-cum-port at the island of Athwa.  

Even the newly formed alliance did not last long. Mulla Mohammad Ali assumed princely ways: he appointed his own *qiledar* and *kotwal*, kept retinue, put cannons on the fort.

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and above all succeeded in attracting the merchants to the newly developed port. The new port registered very rapid growth at the expense of Surat. The mutasaddi could not and would 'not suffer the pecuniary loss in terms of revenues' nor political prestige. ¹ In order to protect his interests, Behram Khan appointed faujdar at Athwa to supervise the trade. The action was sharply objected to by the merchant-prince. ² With the help of the trading communities and 'an amendable religious leader' Syed Muhammad Ali Waiz, the merchant prince gave the issue 'a sectarian fervour' which led to a big tumult. ³ Behram Khan, however, succeeded in overcoming the problem with a firm hand.

Mulla Muhammad Ali pursuaded his abandoned allies, Beglar Khan and Tegh Beg Khan, to resume the task of expelling Behram Khan. In addition to his promise of securing the sanad, the trader by advancing the required amount of money and providing the ammunition, demonstrated the sincerity of his intention. ⁴ In his revengeful mood, he sought the as-

2. Ibid., II, pp. 147-8
3. Ibid, II, pp.69, 147-8. Syed Muhammad Ali Waiz who had bribed the qazi also, declared that Tegh Beg Khan had not kept his word, cheated the trader and thus acted against the Shariat. Z.U. Malik, "The Rise of Tegh Beg Khan", p.59.
istance of the Dutch, the English and the Marathas. The mutasaddi gave a long battle but could not succeed. Hence Tegh Beg Khan was reinstalled as the de facto mutasaddi (1731-32). The trader resumed the princely ways and busied himself with enhancing the trade at Athwa. Tegh Beg Khan, along with his brother-ally Beglar Khan, the qilledar, ruled over Surat.

Apparently Mulla Muhammad Ali did not remain content with what he had achieved till then. To keep Tegh Beg Khan on tenterhooks, the Mulla made no effort to procure the sanad from the court for the Khan. Instead he secretly arranged for seeking a grant of mansab of 3000 with a title of Fakhruddin Khan for his younger son and the sanad of the post of mutasaddi exclusively for himself with the specific request that he be allowed to appoint any one of his choice as his deputy. Apparently he wanted to acquire the legal supremacy at Surat so as to perpetuate his gains at Athwa or


at least to make the position of Tegh Khan vulnerable. To translate his desire into action he sent a hundi of Rs. 60,000/- to Hafiz Khidmatgar, the favourite of Emperor Muhammad Shah.¹

But the merchant's scheme of attaining a position of legal eminence did not succeed. His court-bound messenger fell into the hands of Tegh Beg Khan. Tegh Beg Khan changed his strategy and embarked upon a policy of cleansing the stage of his foes so as to consolidate his position there.

The de facto mutasaddi, without revealing the news of arrest of the trader's messengers decided to outwit him. He invited the trader to a feast and put him under arrest in 1732 and sometime later, (1733-34) deprived him of his life.² Mulla Muhammad Waiz who had sided with the trader was also assassinated.³ Ahmad Chalpi who had also tried to create a rift between Tegh Beg Khan and the British was put


2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp.154-5, 168-9, Selection from the Peshwa Diaries, III, Letter No. 185. According to Mirat (II, pp. 153-6) the mutasaddi confiscated all his property and razed the Athwa complex to ground. He further informs us that Asaf Jah had asked Tegh Beg to spare the life of the trader. But Tegh Beg Khan actually killed him while making public that the trader had been released.

to death (1735), at the instance of the former. Thus the port was cleared of his known opponents. Then 'he breathed of authority and absolutism with tranquility'.

As yet Tegh Beg's position by the year 1732 was neither regularised nor had he sought legal confirmation from the Emperor. The circumstance however made it necessary. Mulla Muhammad Ali had, earlier (1732) attempted destabilisation of his position. On the other hand, the imperial court appointed Momin Khan as the mutasaddi of the port. Simultaneously Tegh Beg Khan was ordered to take charge of faujdari of Cambay. Tegh Beg Khan paid no heed to the imperial decree. Instead he retained his position by putting armed resistance to the new incumbent. Nor did he proceed to Cambay. At the moment he might have thought the obtaining of the sanad of confirmation an expedient way out of the situation. Hence he deputed some reliable messengers to the court. By offering costly presents, seven Arab horses and 10,000 asharfis, he was confirmed (1737) in the position he already possessed by virtue of conquest.

1. Ibid., II, pp. 175-6; Bombay Quarterly Review, IV, p.203
2. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p.177
Having obtained legal confirmation, the mutasaddi, without seeking due permission, appointed his younger brother Safdar Mohammad Khan as naib-mutasaddi and put the city under his charge. The qiledari of the port was still held by the mutasaddi's elder brother, Beglar Khan. For all practical purposes the principle of division of power had ceased to operate. Not content, Tegh Beg Khan discarded the official designation of mutasaddi and styled himself as Nawab.

That Tegh Beg Khan had assumed a position of practical independence is also borne out by other facts. He is reported to have imposed new taxes on the populace of Surat. He concluded treaty with Damaji Gaekwad, a Maratha sardar. According to the terms, Damaji undertook the responsibility of assessing and collecting revenues of the mahals dependent


2. After Beglar Khan the qiledari was held by his son, Aibak Khan who was succeeded by his son-in-law, Waqar Mohammad Khan, the son of Safdar Mohammad Khan. As such the mutasaddigiri and qiledri both, were held by the same family. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 340, 352, 362-3.

3. English Documents, pp. 16-7, The Surat District Gazetteer, pp. 140-2. It is not certain as to whether the title was bestowed by the Emperor or assumed by himself. The British works also speak of the assumption of the title of 'Nawab' by Sher Khan Babi (Junagadh) though it was granted by the Emperor.

4. English Documents, pp. 16-8, Surat District Gazetteer, pp. 139-41; Bombay Gazetteer, VI, p. 116-7.
on Surat agreeing to pay a fixed sum to the mutasaddi per annum. In this way the mutasaddi pacified the Marathas who had been enjoying a predominant position on the land in South Gujarat and particularly in the sarkar of Surat. As such he placed himself, relatively, in a safer position both on land around and inside the port. In his next step he refused to pay Sidi, the Incharge of Mughal Fleet, the usual amount of money out of the revenue of Surat. According to the British work Tegh Beg Khan, prior to his coming into open hostility with Sidi, had concluded some agreement with the British at Surat.

1. The Maratha ascendancy in sarkar Surat had been established by Pilaji Gaekwad during the mutasaddigiri of Behram Khan. Deprived of the land revenue the mutasaddi closed city-gates for the riaya for selling its produce in Surat, the only available market. The Marathas, in their turn, blocked up routes for the town-folk. The deadlock was resolved with the riaya agreeing to pay a share of their produce to the mutasaddi. Later, Damaji Gaekwad (1734-57) agreed to pay Rs. 2, 36,000/- as his share in the revenues annually. Soon, a cleavage developed and the Marathas refused to pay at all (November 1735). Finally in December 1735 the crisis was resolved when the 'Nawab' (Tegh Beg Khan) agreed to accept less than the stipulated amount. English Documents, pp. 16-8; Ibid., letters dated 2nd and 26th November, 1735 and 28th December 1735; Mirat-i Ahmadi II, pp. 363-4; Bombay Gazetteer (Surat, Bharuch, Cambay), p. 117


4. Treaties, VIII, pp. 353; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, p. 117.
that the zamindar of Cheharmandvi (the zortalab one) had supported Tegh Beg Khan against the marchant prince.¹

From 1732 until his death (1746) Tegh Beg Khan was practically an independent ruler of Surat. He was succeeded by his younger brother Safdar Mohammad Khan, the incharge of port. Safdar Mohammad Khan also sought the sanad of confirmation (1747) from the court and spent a sum of 10,000 asharfis, besides other precious presents, to obtain it.²

But Safdar Mohammad Khan was not destined to enjoy the position uninterrupted. His bakhshi, Saiyid Muinuddin Khan alias Achhan³ acting under Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah's instructions, ousted Safdar Mohammad Khan out of port and the fort. In a sudden move the Bakhshi captured the fort and placed the qiledar, Waqar Mohammad Khan who was taken by surprise, under arrest (November 1747).⁴ Determined to capture the port also, Saiyed Achhan acquired services of Madhav Rao

3. The Saiyid was brother of Saiyid Mithan, a religious man who was held in esteem by Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah. The Nizam had hatched a plan to oust Tegh Beg Khan earlier by working on Achhan (the bakhshi) through Mithan but to no avail. After Tegh Beg Khan's death, the Nizam renewed his effort, hence the present struggle. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 356-8
Maratha who was invited into the fort. 1 Equally determined to retain his position, Safdar Mohammad Khan obtained support of another Maratha sardar, Khanderao. 2 But the traders, wealthy men, the British the 'nobles and ignobles' of the town who were vexed with the mutasaddi lent support to Achhan. 3 Having smelt general opposition and apprehending mass uprising against him, Safdar Mohammad Khan vacated the post. 4 Thus Saiyed Achhan who assumed power and made proclamation in the name of Nizam came to occupy (December 1747), the mustasaddigiri as well as the qiledari. 5

But within a month of his exit, Safdar Mohammad Khan found a treasure trove and resumed the struggle (February

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 358-9, 363; English Documents letter dated 10 December, 1747. His services were acquired for Rs. 1100,000 with the understanding that he would enjoy one third share in the revenues until the stipulated amount was paid. But the sardar was slain while the struggle was still on. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 358-9, 363.

2. His services were acquired for Rs. 300,000 Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 364.

3. They were all opposed to Safdar Mohammad Khan and disliked him since the days of his deputy-mutasaddigiri. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 359-60, English Documents, dated 18 December, 1747; For his oppressive attitude under Tegh Beg Khan and reaction of the traders, English Documents dated 22 January, 24 January, 1st February, and 10th February 1734.

4. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 359-60. He seems to have run short of funds also.

5. Ibid., II, p. 360; English Documents, letter dated 18th December 1747
1748) to meet, this time, still stiffer opposition.\(^1\) Saiyed Achhan approached and acquired active support of the English, the Dutch, the Portuguese and Hafiz Masud Khan. (Vakil of Yaqut Khan of Danda Rajpuri, in-charge of Mughal Fleet).\(^2\) He was joined by the wealthy men, traders and common populace. Apprehending ill treatment which might be meted out if Safdar Mohammad Khan succeeded they "on their own entered into an agreement together among themselves not to allow Safdar Khan, or any other person in future, to seize government (of Surat) and that they would prevent and obstruct him".\(^3\) Also Nizam-ul mulk endeavoured to ensure support of leading men of Surat in favour of Achhan by promising them favours.\(^4\) Safdar Mohammad Khan finding himself not capable to meeting the challenge, withdrew and left for Sindh.\(^5\) With this, Saiyed Achhan started ruling Surat by assigning qiladar to his son, Saiyed Hafizuddin and naib-mutasaddigiri to

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3. Ibid., English Documents, letter dated 18th December 1747


Ali Nawaz Khan.\(^1\) Nizam-ul mulk, patron of Saiyed Achhan, procured imperial *farman* confirming the Saiyed in the position and granting him *mansab* and *khitab*.\(^2\)

But the revenues of the port which he did not share with the imperial centre, were not appropriated solely by Saiyed Achhan.\(^3\) The Marathas sometime between December 1747 and February 1748 succeeded in extorting a share of one-third in the port revenues. Along with them, Hafiz Masud Khan also enjoyed equal share. The *mutasaddi* and *bakhshi* together were left to enjoy the remaining one-third part of port revenues.\(^4\) As such from the point of view of shares in the

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3. *Account ff*. 15a, 18a

4. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, pp. 363-4. The logic put forward by the Marathas in justification of their share is interesting to note. As pointed out above, Safdar Mohammad Khan had procured Khanderao's help for Rs. 300,000. But the Khan was defeated. Khanderao, then, approached Saiyed Achhan, saying "if Safdar Khan had succeeded—he would have paid the stipulated amount of money. Now that he (i.e. Achhan) had assumed the charge of government, he must pay the amount." To press it further, he blocked up the roads of transport and communication for merchants and travellers. Saiyed Achhan could not meet the demand immediately. He, therefore, assigned one-third of the port's revenue till he paid off Rs. three *lakh*. But even after the amount had been paid, the *mutasaddi* could not expel the incharge of the Maratha
revenues, the nawabi of Surat emerged as a collective-holding of the three partners in the revenues.

But Saiyed Achhan too failed to retain the trust and support of his allies in the port and consequently lost the position, acquisition of which had been facilitated by the Nizam and regularised by the Emperor. In the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust and distrust Saiyed Achhan developed suspicions against his ally and partner, Hafiz Masud Khan, and antagonised him.¹ The Saiyed then planned to confiscate property and wealth of Wali-ullah Khan and Kali who had served under Safdar Mohammad Khan, the ousted mutasaddi.² Then attributing their escape to and shelter in the dargah of Saiyed Edroos to Naib-mutasaddi Ali Nawaz Khan, he ordered him too to quit.³ Ali Nawaz Khan brought Safdar Mohammad Khan's son, Waqar Mohammad Khan into the port with the assistance of Sajjadah Nashin Saiyed Abdullah of the dargah.⁴ Proclaiming Waqar Mohammad Khan the leader and

Continued...

share. Ibid.

1. Ibid., II, pp. 382-3, 385.
2. Ibid., II, p. 384
3. Ibid., II, pp. 382-4. The present struggle started in May 1749. Ali Nawaz Khan was sister's son of Saiyed Achhan and son-in-law of Safdar Mohammad Khan.
4. Ibid., II, pp. 384-5. Waqar Mohammad Khan was brother-in-law of Ali Nawaz Khan and son-in-law of Beglar Khan. He had been qiledar under Tegh Beg Khan.
declaring to bring Safdar Mohamm Khan back, he joined hands
with Hafiz Masud and attracted around him pro-Safdar Khan
and anti-Achhan element. \(^1\) Hafiz Masud Khan also won over the
traders who lent him active assistance. \(^2\) Syed Achhan's
bakhshil deserted his master and joined hands with Hafiz
Masud. \(^3\) But the Saiyed enjoyed active support of the British
whereas his opponents acquired support of the Dutch. \(^4\) By
November 1749, the fort had passed into the possession of
Hafiz Masud and the port (darbar) had been occupied by Waqar
Mohamm Khan who brought Safdar Khan back from Sindh and
installed (1750) him in the position which had likewise been
lost. \(^5\)

The inability of the Emperor in protecting Surat region
against Maratha inroads and making effective interference
there seems to have motivated the merchant prince to turn
adventurer. By the year 1728-29 the routes between Cambay,

\(^1\) Ibid., II, pp. 383-5.
\(^2\) Ibid.,
\(^3\) Ibid., II, pp. 386-7
\(^4\) Ibid., II, p. 387-9.
\(^5\) Ibid., II, pp. 387-90. But then Sayed Achhan resumed
the struggle with the support of the British who finally emerged as the real master of the port.
Bharuch and Surat had been occupied by the Marathas. Thus the city was isolated from the rest of the Mughal Empire. Therefore, the developments at Surat went unchecked though not un-noticed. Under such circumstances it was the turn of adventurers who might take risks and make their fortunes by the dint of intrigue and sword. Tegh Beg Khan at the instance of the trader and Syed Achhan at the instance of Nizam-ul-mulk, turned ones such, carved out a principality out of Mughal empire and listed themselves among the Nawabs.

**E Nawabi of Bharuch**

By an expedient use of sheer diplomacy Abdullah Beg, the faujdar-amin of pargana Bharuch succeeded in establishing his personal rule and in carving out a principality. The process of emergence of the Nawabi at Bharuch furnishes an interesting instance of how a prudent and shrewd Mughal official could succeed in defying the authority by aligning

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2. Bharuch, a well known port-town, is situated in Southern Gujarat between Surat and Baroda. Situated on comparatively an easy route for Deccan, the town was strongly fortified. Its fort was known for its "impress-banility and solidarity". *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, p. 445; Hámilton, *New Act*, I, p. 49; Munshi Abbas Ali *Qissa-i Ghamgin*, Baroda, 1975 couplet no. 74, p.5. Administratively, the town was sarkar and pargana head-quarter of the same name. The port was however the administrative concern of the port officer of Surat. But the sarkar and pargana were the administrative charge of the faujdar. *Mirat-i Ahmadi, Supplement*, p. 205.
himself with and placing himself under the political protection of another strong defiant, Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah of Deccan.

Abdullah Beg was appointed *faujdar* and *amin* of *pargana* Bharuch by *subedar* Mubariz-ul-mulk at the recommendation of his son, Khanzad Khan (1725). Prior to his appointment, the *pargana* had been hit by the Marathas and their claim for *chauth* accepted by Hamid Khan, and later on, renewed by Mubariz-ul-mulk himself. Subsequent to his appointment the Marathas cut the land routes which connected Bharuch with Surat, the seat of the Port-officer, and Ahmadabad, the seat of provincial authority. Then, the Port-officers of Surat came to be locked up in internecine wars with the *qiliedrs* in

1. The *pargana* still formed part of *jagir* of Nizam-ul-mulk. Mubariz-ul-mulk had encroached upon the *khaisa* and *jagir* lands in the *subah*. The appointment of *faujdar* to the *sarkar* was an imperial prerogative which too had thus been usurped by the *subedar*. *Mirat-i Ahmadi* II, p.91


3. Thus the *mutasaddi*-designate of Surat, Mustafid Khan (1726) could not go to Surat from Ahmadabad through land route. He reached Khanbat (Cambay) and thence reached Bharuch by sea route. Since he "had no boldness to cross the river Narbada so opened communication with Pilaji Gaekwad" and agreed to surrender *chauth* of Surat for ensuring his safe arrival there. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, II, pp. 132. For Maratha occupation of Baroda (1727) and Dabhoi (1726-7), the towns situated between Ahmadabad and Bharuch, *Ibid.*, II, pp. 95-6,
addition to fighting defensive battles against the Marathas. 1 Thus neither the subedar, nor the mutasaddi had an easy access and a free hand to take any effective interest in the affairs of Bharuch whose faujdar thus would act the way he deemed fit for himself.

With the assumption of subedari by Maharaja Abhay Singh and his successful march against the Marathas as far as Baroda, the situation seems to have taken an alarming turn for Abdullah Beg. The Beg like his master Mubariz-ul mulk, who had already been expelled from Ahmadabad, apprehended his own ouster from Bharuch by the new Nizam. 2 In order to ensure his continuity in office and do away with the fear of expected action, the Beg "with foresight approached" Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah (technically still jagirdar of Bharuch), the strongest defiant of the empire. Asaf Jah granted him

1. The struggle that went unabated, started in 1726. For details please see Nawabi of Surat, above.

2. Abdullah Beg had stood neutral in the battle that took place between Mubariz-ul mulk who resisted his ouster and Maharaja Abhay Singh. As such he managed his survival. But the Maharaja who had taken hold of the jagir and khalsa lands, could obviously occupy Bharuch as it was held by the Beg as faujdar under Mubariz-ul mulk. (Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 132). By occupying Baroda, the Raja had shown his ability to reach Bharuch also. Above all, the court had appointed one Saiyid Azmat as faujdar and he had come with the Raja to assume charge of office. Ibid., II, p. 133.
sanad-i nayabat, a mansab and title of Nek Alam Khan. ¹  

Having thus placed himself under Asaf Jah, the Beg and his descendants continued to hold Bharuch and there is, moreover, no evidence showing interference either by the imperial centre or the provincial authorities. ²  Not that, Bharuch was considered as hereditary jagir of the successors of Asaf Jah. ³  

The Marathas appear to have been the major disturbing factor for the Nawabs of Bharuch. ⁴  Pilaji Gaekwad and later his son, Damaji Gaekwad, attacked and besieged Bharuch. In view of increased as also increasing Maratha pressure, Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah intervened and agreed to surrender half of the revenues of the port and the pargana. Later on, 

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1. Ibid., II, pp. 132, 135 Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat, ff.68-9; For the place being Asaf Jah's jagir Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 48-9, 103 Haqiqat-ul Hind ff.43-5.  

2. For the continuity of Abdullah Beg and his descendents under the protection and with the approval of Asaf Jah and his successor, Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 264, 380-81, 399, Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat, f. 4, Gazetteer of India, Gujarat State, Bharuch, p. 70. Majmaa-i Danish, pp. 3-9, Haqiqat-ul Hind. ff. 43-5.  

3. When the imperial court asked (1749-50) Nek Alam Khan to remit Rs. 10,000/- he answered that the pargana after the death of Asaf Jah belonged to Nasar Jang and his permission was necessary for the purpose. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 380-1.  

4. Qissa-i Ghamgin, p. 6 couplet Nos. 96-7. These couplets also refer to the mawassis i.e. recalcitrants as having been fought by the Nawab.
Damaji was allowed 3/5th part of the revenues.\(^1\) It seems the Nawab had made it a point to live in peace with the Marathas even at the cost of open hostility with the Governor.\(^2\)

Nek Alam Khan II broke off his relationship with Nasar Jang, son and successor of Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah also. When Nasar Jang, instructed Nek Alam Khan II to remit his share in the port revenues, he approached the imperial court for the award of mansab (2000/500), Khitab of Nek Alam Khan and sanad-i pargana, which he was accordingly granted. Thereafter he appropriated "the whole amount of revenue without partnership" of Nasar Jang and the imperial court. He prepared detailed accounts for equating expenditure with the income, submitted with the office of Khalsa and "prospered".\(^3\)

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2. Nek Alam Khan II "either through fear or at the instance of" Maratha sardar came into open against su-beda-designate in 1743-44 Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p.320.

3. Ibid., li, p. 399 Hadiyat-ul Hind, ff. 43-5 The Nawabi after passing through a long drawn struggle over the question of succession among the family members, was finally captured by the British in 1772. Gazetteer of India; Gujarat State, Bharuch, p. 70. The Nawabs, It may be mentioned, continued to regard themselves in theory, as the imperial servant and their possession as part of khalsa land. Qissa-i Ghamgin, p.10 couplet Nos. 168, 174.
F. Nawab of Khanbat

The mutasaddi of Khanbat was another Mughal official of a port town to establish his personal authority and family rule over the place thus adding yet another nawabi to the chain of chieftaincies which were being carved out of the shattering Mughal Empire. A study of the process of conversion of the official position into a family rule significantly brings to light the way Momin Khan, founder of the nawabi, made the offices of mutasaddi and the Nazim instrumental for consolidating his hold over Khanbat.

Having been appointed the mutasaddi of Khanbat, and bakhshi and chronicler of the subah, Momin Khan reached

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1. The port town of Khanbat, also called Cambay, situated at a distance of 32 Kuroh south of Ahmadabad, was also pargana head-quarter of Chorasi Khanbat. For administrative purposes the offices of mutasaddi of the port and faujdar of the pargana were combined into one. The official was sub-ordinate to the diwan-i subah, and appointed directly by the imperial court. The port town had a strong fortification around it and was easy to defend. JW Watson, (ed) Statistical Account of Bhaonagar, Rev. edn, 1883. p. 24. Account, ff 240a.

2. Momin Khan was son-in-law of Momin Khan Dehlami, the diwan of Gujarat (1725-27). His original name was Fidauddin Khan and was honoured with the title of Mirza Mohammad Najm-i Sani (1725) and Najmuddawlah Momin Khan Bahadur Dilawarjang in 1738. Commonly known as Momin Khan, he was the mutasaddi of Khanbat (1730-43) and subedar of Gujarat (1737-43) until his death (1743). Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 87, 118, 195, 242, 271, Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat, f. 84. For further details, Kamaluddin Husain Rizvi Shirazi, Hasbanama-i Khandan-i Momin Khan Sani Bahadur Wali-i Gujarat, Bombay, n. d. pp. 3-7, 29.
Ahmadabad (1730) with subedar-designate Maharaja Abhay Singh. 1 The mutasaddi seems to have remained steadfast in his duties until the year 1734-35 when a definite cleavage developed between him and Ratan Singh Bhandari, then naib-subedar. 2 From 1735 onward the Khan did not report for duty even though, he had been summoned by the naib-subedar. 3

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I I, p. 118. It may be mentioned that Momin Khan's services as petrolling faujdar of the environs of Ahmadabad had earlier been terminated by Sarbuland Khan. Momin Khan was, therefore, obliged to repair for the court. (Ibid., I I, p. 110) Since Momin Khan also enjoyed some respect locally, his association with Maharaja Abhay Singh who was required to oust Sarbuland Khan from the subah is, evidently, meaningful. Hasbnama-i Khandan-i Momin Khan pp. 29-30, Hadis- qat-ul Hind, ff. 33-4.

2. For the services rendered to the subedar, Mirat-i Ahmadi, I I, pp. 128-30, 131-5, 136-9. Ahwal-i Gaekwad, ff. 12-3. But in the year 1733 Momin Khan had tried to provoke Nagar Seth Khushhal Chand who was harassed by the Naib-subedar to stir up trouble in Ahmadabad. Though the Khan promised him help but because of exigency did not help the Seth. Mirat-i Ahmadi, I I, pp. 170-1. However, he extended him shelter at Cambay when the Seth was forced to leave Ahmadabad. Ibid., I I, 172. Momin Khan was accused of supporting the cause of Behram Khan who had fought the Naib-subedar. Both Behram Khan and Momin Khan were political allies of Amire-ul umrah, Mirat-i Ahmadi, pp. 183-95. Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics, pp. 207-10, 222-6.

3. The author of the Mirat attributes the cause of Momin Khan's disobedience to the 'fraudent nature' of Bhandari: since Momin Khan "felt unsafe from his fraud" (Oo chun kidrash itminan' n' dasht) therefore, he did not turn up. Ibid., I I, p. 191. It must however be kept in mind that the author had himself suffered at the hands of Marwaris whom he hated whereas he happened to be a family friend of Momin Khan. See also Ahwal-i Gaekwad, f. 16.
Naib-subedar Ratan Singh Bhandari does not seem to have been bold and strong enough to take action against Momin Khan who commanded respect locally and enjoyed patronage of Amir-ul umrah, the strongman at the court. Determined however to expel the Khan from pargana Petlad which he held on ijarah, Ratan Singh Bhandari persuaded Jawanmard Khan Babi to join his camp and assigned the pargana to Sher Khan Babi "who bore displeasure" with Momin Khan. With a firm resolution to expel Momin Khan from Petlad, the Bhandari directed Sher Khan Babi to march against him and himself started for extending moral and material support to the Babi.

Momin Khan who seems to have perceived the consequence of his act of defiance, in the meantime, strengthened his position. He undertook repairs of the fortress and made it 'strong enough' to face attacks. Then he avoided confrontation with the Marathas who were quite active in the surrounding areas. First, he 'entertained' Kanthaji in the vicinity of Khanbat. Since Kanthaji failed to assert


2. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 192-3. The naib-subedar terminated Momin Khan's *ijara* of Petlad before the expiry of the stipulated period. But Momin Khan refused to vacate it on one or the other pretext.


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against Renkoji, another Maratha leader, the Khan allowed
the latter to appoint naib for collection of chauth form the
port. ¹ Soon after Ratan Singh Bhandari and Sher Khan Babi's
march, Momin Khan won over Renkoji's support to use him as a
shield against the inevitable threat which he thus avoided.²

To counteract Ratan Singh Bhandari's moves further,
Momin Khan approached his political patron, Amir-ul Umrah
and, at his instance, undertook to oust Bhandari from the
office of subedar. In order to ensure success against Bhand-
dari, he acquired Maratha support by surrendering half of the
revenues of the subah. To retain Khanbat entirely for him-
self Momin Khan left pargana Viramgaon entirely with the
Marathas in exchange for their share in the revenues of the
port.³ With the appointment of Momin Khas as subedar and
issuance of the farman long after he had entered into agree-
ments with the Marathas, the imperial court thus put the

1. Ibid., pp. 185, 318, 398. The claim of chauth in the
revenues of the port had been established as early as
1725. Danniel Innes to John Courtery, Cambay, dated 6th
April, 1725, and Danniel Innes to John Courtery, Cam-
bay, dated 29th September, 1725, English Documents, pp.
4 and 6

presence there, the Bhandari could not march at Petlad.
Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat f. 83.

3. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 198 200, 203, 206, 208, 212,
219-20, 318, Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat f. 5; Ahwal-i
Gaekwad, ff. 17-6, 22,23, Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat,
ff. 84, 86.
seel of approval on his action. 1

Momin Khan utilised his position as subedar for furthering his interests at Khanbat. Sher Khan Babi held the port of Ghoga, a feudatory of Khanbat 2 and still laid claim to the faujdarl of Pettad. Momin Khan expelled the Babi from Ghoga and 'gave in writing several villages' of Pettad to Renkoji, the Maratha chief, of his choice. 3 He terminated services of the darogha-i bandar and in sheer violation of the Diwan's prerogative appointed, instead, a man of his own choice. 4 Having effected administrative changes the Khan put the economy of the port in proper order. 5

Thus before his death (February 1743) Momin Khan had successfully consolidated his position in Khanbat. It goes to his credit that he did not come into confrontation with the imperial centre and simultaneously avoided hostilities with the Marathas whom he utilised to defend his position

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 198, 242, 273 Hasbnama-i Momin Khan, p. 29

2. Large vessels directed for Khanbat were sent to unload at Ghoga whence the cargo was sent in small crafts to Khanbat. JW Watson, "Historical sketch of the town of Ghoga" op, cit, p. 263.


5. Ibid. Moreover, he did not remit any revenues of Khanbat to the court. Account, f. 18a.
against the subedar and then oust him from the office though at a big cost. Moreover, he made the port free of Maratha interference and established his sway over Ghoga.

After Momin Khan's death the port was held uninterrupt-ed by his descendents, the imperial authority simply put the seal of approval on the succession to power. 1 Though his successors were not disturbed by the imperial authority they however faced difficulties on other counts and failed to retain the entire inheritance intact.

The struggle for the subedar that ensued after the death of Momin Khan put his successor and the Marathas in opposite camps. Renkoji, a Maratha sardar exerted pressure on the mutasaddi with the design to capture Khanbat. Najam Khan, son-in-law and successor of Momin Khan yielded and "purchased Renkoji's friendship by allowing him half the revenues" of the port. 2 During the post-1743 period, the mutasaddis faced Maratha forces on more than one occasion, each time defending the place successfully but yielding to pay dictated, or else bargained sums of money levied under


one or the other pretexts, to the invading sardars.¹ The mutasaddis entrenched behind the strong fortifications could defend the port with relative ease but the land routes leading to and from the port passed through the open lands of the pargana Chowras Khanbat where the Marathas enjoyed predominant position.²

Because of the surrender of chauth to the Marathas, imposition of a dakhla (entry) fee on the merchandise and exactions levied by them and, then, disturbed political condition affecting trading activities adversely and finally increased expenditure on the military establishments rendered the financial position of the mutasaddis so precarious that they could not come out of the vicious circle and continued to face difficulties.³

¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, pp. 398, 418, 423-4, 449-50; Ahwal-i-Gaekwad ff. 38, Precis Relating to the History and Affairs of the Nawabs of Bombay, Bombay, 1864, p.5 The levy so imposed is termed 'ghas-dana' (grass and grain). It was a military levy which could be exacted not only from the hostile territory but also from the territories included in the Maratha domain. It was imposed arbitrarily and exacted forcibly. "The fear of whole-sale plunder and destruction, and not the free consent motivated the payment of ghasdana tax." HB Vashishta, Land Revenue and Public Finance in Maratha Administration, Delhi 1975, pp 13-7


Having been confronted with financial difficulties the mutasaddis resorted to oppressive acts. Momin Khan's immediate successor captured the goods of silk merchants, imposed additional taxes on the town-dwellers and 'plundered' the merchants of Khanbat in May 1743.\(^1\) A few months later, the traders of the port were again forced to pay Rs. 100,000/-\(^2\) Illegal extortions led to the desertion of the port by traders, who reached Borsad and Jamusr, thus reducing the income of the port.\(^3\) Some of the traders who had deserted the port early in 1744 developed strong suspicions against the mutusaddi and could agree to return only after some influential persons at the port became 'securities of Nizam (i.e. Najam) Khan's mild behaviour' towards the merchants.\(^4\) Thus Momin Khan's successors lost the faith and trust of the real masters of the source of their financial strength—the traders/tax payers.

\(^1\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 286, English Documents, letter dated 22nd May 1743 states that 'the Nawab has begun to plunder the merchants giving an obligation by way of borrowing'. He extorted a sum of Rs. 1,50,000/- \(\text{Ibid.}\), letter dated 24th May 1743

\(^2\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 318. \(\text{Ibid.}\); English Documents, letter dated 16th September, 10th and 22nd October 1743 and 16th February 1744.

\(^3\) Mirat-i Ahmadi, II, p. 452.

\(^4\) English Documents, dated 8th April 1744 and reply to it.
CONCLUSIONS

The resurgent class of zamindars was inheriting the disintegrating Mughal empire and it may be regarded as the most-distinguishing characteristic of the ongoing restless period (1700-50) in the history of subah Gujarat. During this period the zamindars replaced the declining Mughal authority by their own in the countryside. But the process of inheriting the imperial authority was neither smooth nor free of internal or external constraints. It was marked by a multiple struggle for acquiring supremacy over the sources of revenue. The struggle, as regards the zamindars, looked more individual in nature as almost every zamindar due to persisting disunity amongst them, had to fight the government individually. But in effect the resistance was collective in nature—despite being disunited and fragmented the class (vis a vis the Mughal government) had uniformity of outlook and interest which, under the prevailing circumstances, seem to have forged a kind of uniformity of approach among them. Thus without coming closer to each other or evolving a common strategy, the zamindars moved about and reacted the same way. But the struggle was simultaneously marked by inter-class and intra-class as well as inter-strata and intra-stratum conflicts which in turn had their own qualifying effects on the process.
In spite of commanding vast resources and superior military might the empire had its own limitations to deal with the ubiquitous class of zamindars. Topographical barriers, position of zamindaris in the imperial-provincial strategy, political character, caste and clannish affiliations, socio-economic roots and other sources of zamindar's strength in terms of men and material beside productivity and manageability had qualifying effects on the empire's capacity to acquire and retain complete hold over each one of them and, or, strike uniformity in all aspects of its pattern of relations with each segment of the class. Proceeding pragmatically the Mughal state took these ground realities into account and then, accepted and continued the general pattern of relations with the zamindars earlier established by the provincial kingdom which was subsequently absorbed within the Mughal empire.

The empire could not do away with the existing variations, whether inter-regional or intra-regional and inter-strata or intra-stratum. Rather it sought to regularise and accommodate them into its over-all administrative framework. Therefore one comes across the class of zamindars

1. These factors might have a bearing on the Sultan-zamindar relations also. S.C.Misra, op cit, pp. 204-6. It also seems that the mode of relationship as established under the Gujarati kingdom, might have acquired some kind of acceptability with the passage of time.
having definite signs of differentiation and a well marked order of gradation which, among other, manifested in the mode and proportion of share in revenues and relative hold over the sources thereof. The gradation is further reflected from the way different nomenclature and varied appellations having definite connotations are used to designate the holdings, their holders and imperial share in the revenues. The same may be regarded as the salient features peculiar to the zamindars of subah Gujarat.¹

The Mughal state laid a definite claim to a (major) share in the revenues of zamindaris and sought to utilise zamindars' men and material for promoting and preserving its interests. The zamindars were assigned a well defined position vis-à-vis the state, as also among themselves, a position regulated by the dual policy of assuring them a (subordinate) share in the revenues and forcibly checking any attempt on their part to transgress the limits set by the state. This had created a 'balance of interests' between the state that sought to maintain it by exerting continual administrative pressure and the ubiquitous class of zamindars which was basically averse to a rigid control.

¹ Whether such or similar variations existed in other parts of the empire is difficult to answer. Its study however, may constitute an interesting subject of research.
With a view to calculating its proportionate claim in the produce and ensuring smooth flow of revenues and simultaneously regulating zamindars' shares, the empire endeavoured to reach the peasantry directly. In this way, the empire sought to contain the sphere of zamindars' influence and to control them. In this, the empire met with considerable success. Still the degree of success i.e. magnitude and extent of imperial control over the zamindars and resources at their command, widely varied, ranging from thorough subjugation of zamindaris to a nominal command.

During seventeenth century, particularly its later half, the empire made arduous efforts to tilt the 'balance' more in its favour.¹ It attempted to intensify its direct control over the sources of revenues. The administration made a determined bid to enter into direct dealing with the riyā and thus to reduce the zamindars to size. The imperial move amounted to curtailing the zamindars' influence in the revenue matters and regulating, even reducing their actual share. Besides, the state dislodged some zamindars, dismembered other zamindaris and super-imposed on some of them the others who were duly vested with superior (such as watand-

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¹ For an empire-level observation to the same effect, see Satish Chandra, The 18th century in India: Its Economy and the Role of the Marathas, the Jats, the Sikhs and the Afghans, Revised edn., Delhi, 1991, p. 21.
rights over and above the existing zamindari rights. Despite these attempts which were made increasingly, though within logical limits and, on a limited scale, the empire could not erode socio-economic base of zamindars to an appreciable extent. The policy of seeking thorough subjugation of the zamindars by bringing extra-pressure to bear from above without making equally effective inroads into the bastions of their power, failed to bring a qualitative change. The empire, in a way sought to reduce the zamindars to, and assign them a position which does not appear commensurate with their strength. The move was bound to invite retaliation.

Some significant changes in the position of zamindars vis a vis the Mughal state (as also the riaya) took place as a result of the inter-action of two forces representing mutually inconsistent interests and operating in diametrically opposite direction, the latter seeking to acquire greater control and the former struggling to repel it. The process led to a thorough subjugation of a number of zamindaris, relatively vulnerable, more productive and easily manageable ones. These zamindars were virtually pushed a little lower on the ladder of social gradation, though the nomenclature denoting the status was by and large retained. On the contrary some other zamindars who commanded greater
resources and enjoyed more favourable geo-social position successfully repelled the administrative pressure, thus forcing the empire to concede greater autonomy and freedom to deal with the peasantry under them. Technically retaining still the same old position, these zamindars moved upward the social ladder and thus effected a virtual change in their position. Consequently the features that distinguished one stratum of zamindars from another tended to be blurred and the intra-stratum signs of differentiation gained roots, and the existing one became more prominent.

Imperial attempts to bring extra-pressure, in a way, proved counter productive. The zamindars reacted increasingly and thus forced the empire to over-stretch its resources. As a result rigidity and non-compromising attitude gave way to compromises and leniency. Gradually the empire showed signs of fatigue and loss of vigour. Although the administrative grip over the zamindars appeared to be

1. During this period of time emperor Aurangzeb was too involved against the Marathas and elsewhere in the task of suppressing uprisings to spare resources and energy for dealing with the emerging situation in Gujarat effectively.

2. Please see Prof. S.Nurul Hasan's observation that "the numerous measures adopted by the Mughal government to resolve these contradictions worked well, but only for a time. Gradually the government had become too weak to maintain the equilibrium between the conflicting interest". S.Nurul Hasan "Zamindare under the Mughals" p.29
quite strong, but actually it had started deteriorating before the onset of the eighteenth century.

The process of decline of imperial control was still in nascent stage and confined to select zamindaris. It looked as though it had set in for the period that followed.

The swift movement of events and the changes that took place during the first few years of the eighteenth century acted as a catalyst, providing added momentum to the ongoing process. The process went on unabated and soon acquired unmanageable proportions. Reversing the trend of acquiring greater hold over them in their favour, the zamindars repelled the administrative control of empire over the countryside almost completely.

The new pattern of state-zamindar-riaya relationship emerged speedily but in and, at times, over-lapping stages, and in consonance with the strength and position of the different strata of the class of zamindars. The lead was provided by the stronger and more resourceful of them; viz, the Superior zamindars, in the same order of gradation (i.e. zamindaran-i sarkarat-i peshkahi, zamindaran-i ismi and the zamindaran-i mahin-o kahin) which they enjoyed vis-a-vis state and each other. Then the primary zamindars who were less resourceful and less powerful but more ubiquitous
followed the pattern. The intermediary zamindars were the last to join the fray.

In their determined bid to come out of the imperial net the zamindars refused to share their military might and serve the empire. The step met with complete success.

In spite of disunity the zamindars' stand for withdrawing military assistance to the empire reveals the uniformity of their outlook and interests beside indicating a kind of relationship between resourcefulness and the act of defiance. Since it met with complete success, it had significant potential: It reduced the military capability of the empire, rendered meaningless the highly systematized institution of watan and tankhwah jagir as linked with the military assistance and virtually undid one of the basic conditions of holding zamindaris.

The zamindare, then, attempted not to volunteer their services as intermediaries between the Mughal government and the rlaya under them. They thus, displayed their determination to withhold payment and stop remittance of revenues to the treasury, or at least bargain the amount and pay less than due. The administration could not cope with the emerging situation systematically, much less successfully. The

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1. For a similar trend at the level of empire, S. Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars Under the Mughals" p.27.
The state turned to *ijarahdars*. Of them most of the officials-turned *ijarahdars* and other outsiders failed miserably. The ancient hereditary zamindars in their own right, or else the ones of them who acted as sub-*ijarahdars* appear to have emerged as the beneficiaries at the cost of the *ijarahdars*.¹

The *peshkash* and, then, *mai-i wajib* which were duly assessed and demanded regularly, came to be exacted only now and then. Gradually the state's demand acquired the character of a casual claim, enforced by the actual use or show of force. On their part the zamindars offered it as the price of forebearance, rather than as a duly established claim of the state. The amount of *peshkash, salami* and *mai-i wajib*, the distinction between which claims gradually and increasingly was becoming extinct, came to be determined in accordance with their relative strength as distinct from the actual capacity to pay. The capacity of the administration to enforce its claim came to be inversely related with the resourcefulness of zamindars, i.e. the stronger and more resourceful the zamindar the lesser the magnitude of state demand. Zamindars' own resourcefulness and capability to

1. N.A. Siddiqi's observation that "the total effect of the practice (i.e. *ijarahdari*) on a large scale was the ruin of a large number of ancient hereditary zamindars" (*Land revenue Administration*, p.139) does not stand the test of evidence available for the *subah* of Gujarat.
resist emerged as a prominent factor in deciding the amount and chances of making or evading payments.

Then, the stronger of them happened to be the first to cease as economic partners of the empire. The others followed suit.

The capacity of the administration to effect collections deteriorated rapidly in direct proportion to the zamindars' resistance and evasion of payments and it increased rapidly and consistently. Hence the administration could extort less and less. This development must have had damaging effects on the provincial administration which, on its part, had encroached upon all accessible sources of revenue.

The zamindars also endeavoured to acquire complete autonomy and to consolidate their position internally. In this direction their efforts met with appreciable success. The zamindars could successfully replace the hold of the administration over the villages with their own. The zamindars terminated the direct state-riaya relationship which the Mughals could establish after making long and arduous efforts and themselves assumed the position which otherwise was held by the state officials. They thus emerged as the authority that effected assessment and collection of revenues, dealing with individual land-holders independently of
the state. Helplessly the administration accepted them in their self-assumed position as the unit of assessment, the agency of collection, and in brief, as the de facto head of the riaya under them. Under the emerging situation the Mughal administration had to depend increasingly upon the zamindars.

But the zamindars do not appear to have succeeded in their attempt to establish them as the sole authority over the whole of village(s) under them. Any perceptible challenge, came from within. In this, relations of hostility developed between the zamindars and the riaya. The zamindars seem to have succeeded against the relatively vulnerable sections of riaya, particularly the pais whose resources the zamindars utilised to consolidate their socio-economic base. But they seem to have compromised their position and made tacit adjustments with the relatively, presumably prosperous and stronger stratum of the riaya that sought to acquire zamindar-like (such as salamiyah) position and restrained the otherwise over ambitious zamindars from having a free hand within the village. This stratum of peasantry, probably the khudkashtas rose in the social scale. Affluent and strong ones of the countryside might have gained in strength and stood in their own right. In any case the sphere of
imperial control shrank rapidly both in terms of intensity and extent.

Along with their endeavour to acquire hold over and autonomy within the villages of their possessions and/or their own possessions, the zamindars also sought to gain freedom of action in matters external. They sought, with considerable success, to destroy and occupy symbols of imperial control that were increasingly becoming ineffective and replace them with their own ones. This step completely reversed the process of acquiring and retaining control over them and all the achievements made in this direction were undone. Again the process was initiated by the stronger and more resourceful of them and carried on further by the rest.

The phenomenon of 'sub-infeudation' is also noticeable during the period. The zamindars sought to extend the boundaries of their possessions and the sway of their rights which came to be determined by their capacity to strike. The empire miserably failed to extend protection to relatively weaker zamindars beside the raiyat and govern inter-zamindar relations. The zamindas thus came to enjoy virtual freedom to make encroachments and go their own way. They fell upon each other. The weaker of them were obliged to purchase protection and accept a sub-ordinate position under the stronger ones of them. In the anarchy that prevailed a
number of zamindars lost their rights outright and other
passed under some others' control. The situation thus
facilitated the rise of sub-feudation on an increasing
scale.

This development led to the emergence of certain new
zamindari positions and rights. Moreover, it blurred the
features that distinguished one stratum of zamindar from
another all the more. Along with it the intra-stratum signs
of differentiation gained deeper roots and became quite
prominent. In fact, inter-strata and intra stratum mobility
was a characteristic feature of the period—position of many
old zamindar families underwent a drastic change, every-
where; bold, adventurous and resourceful men with or without
any title to land and or to power were forging ahead.

No less, if not equally important feature of the period
to note is that despite the ongoing uncontrolled process of
change and fluctuations, each category of zamindars emerged
out of the strife and continued to survive. Changes did take
place, both within and without, affecting the positions of

1. Particular mention may be made of the desais who hardly
enjoyed a social base to fall back on. They seemed to
have depended on the state's patronage for their posi-
tion. During the period under review they manoeuvoured
to acquire patronage and protection of stronger zamind-
dars, or else the power that be, for ensuring their
survival. Similarly the out-siders who acted as ijara-
dars failed to ensure their survival for want of a
power base.
individual zamindars directly and indirectly. Even then no category as such, did become extinct.

Particular mention may be made to the distinct section of the holders of madad-i ma'sh, most of whom were planted as holders of superior rights in land from outside. The section, for all practical purposes, seems to have gained sufficient resilience to be able to cope with the effects of the extinction of Mughal authority. The grantees suffered at the hands of other zamindars and almost collectively were exposed to bear the burden of illegal extortions levied by their own patron, the Mughal government. But as a distinct category holding superior rights which had virtually acquired the position of zamindaris, the revenue grantees managed their survival. Obviously, they had acquired roots in the soils of the land.¹

Here it seems worth mentioning that in the ongoing multi-cornered struggle the contestants had their own limitations. The zamindars who virtually emerged as a monolithic block of power against the Mughal state, remained a divided lot, indulging in infighting which cut across family, caste,

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¹. For a similar tenacity shown by the grantees elsewhere, see, Muzaffa Alam, "Some Aspects of the changes in the position of the Madad-i Ma'sh Holders in Awadh, 1676-1722" Essays in Medieval Indian Economic History, New Delhi, 1987, pp. 72-80.

569
clan and community barriers. They could not forge unity among themselves at any stage of Mughal rule in the region. In the struggle among themselves and against others (viz, Mughals, Marathas, defiant state officials the peasantry in particular), they tried not to pull the matter to extremity and sought to accommodate one another. Vis a vis the Mughal state and its defiant official the zamindas' obvious preference were the latter who, like them, were equally interested in coming out of the imperial administrative net and localising power. The phenomenon of converting official positions into hereditary ones marks the entrance of a new element - the Mughal officials--into the category of (Superior) zamindars. Following the policy of conciliation and coercion towards the other contestants, the defiant officials volunteered concessions to the locally influential and powerful segments of society. Above all they identified themselves with the prevailing trend and grew roots in the soil of the land. Local elements' prejudice against the Mughals and predilection for the local officials turning zamindars seem to have been one of the bases of the latter's strength.

1. Did this represent a regional or popular reaction against the empire's centralising tendency? Satish Chandra, *The 18th century in India*, p.21. But it hardly appears to be the uprising of peasantry.
Even after the inception of the revenue-grantees and Mughal officials in the class of zamindars and the emergence of new rights, its overall social composition does not appear to have changed radically. These changes were confined to the castes which already held zamindaris'. Though here and there they passed under the control of new entrants and the stronger ones among themselves, the Rajput-Koi combine still continued in the dominant position. It is also evident that no caste or community lost the rights outright.

It may also be seen that the Mughals at no stage of their rule in the subah, could manage to avoid their dependence on and undermine the institution of zamindari. Instead they continued to lean heavily and increasingly on their support. The emerging pattern made the Mughal all the more dependent upon them. They accepted them in their new position and changed role rather helplessly, as fait accompli. Further the Mughal administration sought to build new bridges to re-establish its weakening, breaking and broken links with the zamindars. Here the state sought to utilise the services of some as ijarahdars but they could not succeed. It then fell back upon its own locally influential officials who were pressed into service as go-betweens.

1. S. Nural Hasan, "Zamindars under the Mughals" p.29.
between the administration and the zamindars. In their turn these officials endeavoured to carve out their own principalities and identify themselves with the zamindars. And lastly, the administration found in the 'sacred' person of Bhat and Charan the ray of hope and through this feeble agency which was equally beyond its effective control, it sought to reach the zamindars.

It is also evident that the Mughal state did not make any tangible efforts to resolve the crisis, or else to come out of the tangle. The state could not go beyond allowing its officials rather conceding them the right to corner more than one official positions into one hand. The process of downward devolution of power (viz, sub-ordinate officials grabbing the powers of their superiors) solved hardly any problem and created more for the empire. Those who had thus grabbed power at the provincial and lower levels, oppressed, whenever possible, the riaya within easy reach with impunity.\(^1\) Well devised system of 'checks and balances' was rendered defunct. Channels of redress otherwise available were closed down. These developments added further momentum to the on going process of deterioration of administrative

\(^1\) Please see also Harbans Mukhia's 'Extortions from peasantry, Artisans and Menials' in Perspectives on Medieval History, N. Delhi, 1992, pp.206-16.
control, and, to cap it all, to the erosion of its credibility.

The process of downward devolution of power seems to have stopped at the level of the zamindars at the village level. A significant feature of the process and the crisis that followed appears to be that every echelon of the ruling class remained part of the same struggle, the same confusion that the crisis was leaving behind. None seems to have come out of the cage. The zamindars who had seized the initiative against the empire, emerged as the largest single but badly divided group of beneficiaries, still remained a part and continued to stick to the same socio-economic pattern.

Thus replacing the Mughal authority by their own, the zamindars succeeded, to a significant degree, in assuming independence by stepping into the shoes of imperial government at local level. Long before the extinction of Mughal garrisons from Ahmadabad, they had pushed the Mughals out of the interior of the province where they had come to establish their own authority.

The break up of Mughal empire was a momentous event in the history of India and as such it was certain to touch all aspects of contemporary life. Its effects on society were as multifaceted as the causes of its decline were diverse. In many ways the class of zamindars possessed those critical
elements which could have allowed it to emerge in triumph from the crisis that had overtaken the empire during the first half of the eighteenth century. The zamindars had a permanent and hereditary title to their lands and all their rights; any enhancement of agricultural production would have been in their long term interest. In large number of the cases, a caste affinity tied the peasants to the zamindars. Their local roots were of an enormous advantage to them. They also possessed the resources necessary for investment in land. There was neither a scarcity of cultivable land, nor of labour, though between the two the latter was slightly less easily available. The subsistence level in India being very low, the cost of labour was almost ridiculously cheap. Land, on the other hand, was extremely fertile.

As the mighty hand of the Mughal empire, which had kept the zamindars on a tight leash, was loosening its grip, this class was perhaps capable of evolving a new mode of agricultural production altogether—hiring wage-labour, producing for the market and reinvesting the surplus. However, what it really did was not to break away from the old political and economic system but only to strengthen its own bases within the existing system at the cost of other sections of the ruling class. Its conflict with the ruling class could
never acquire any shape other than the conflict between
positions within the same ruling class. During heyday of the
empire the zamindars held a dual position within the ruling
class: as revenue collectors and as tribute and/or revenue
payers. It was not an inter-dependent position which was the
reason why the zamindars had always remained a very turbu-
lent part of the ruling class. So they wished to shake off
the latter part of their relationship with the empire. In
this, they had succeeded within the first half of the eight-
eenth century as the empire collapsed and they felt no need
to go any further. It is not surprising, therefore, that
among the new states founded by the zamindars, as amongst
the provincial states inherited from the collapsing empire,
there was a remarkable continuity of the Mughal institu-
tions.1 The zamindars provided a leadership that remained
essentially conservative from the point of view of long-term
social and economic change.

But then it is a moot question whether any element in
Mughal society was capable of taking it forward to a new
stage of development.2

2. See Irfan Habib, *Potentialities of Capitalistic Devel-
opment in Mughal Economy*, *Enquiry*, Fall, 1971; Harbans
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2. Diwan Ranchhodji Amai : Tarikh-i Soeth, S. H. Desai, Junagadh (Original MS); and BBRAS (Central library) Bombay M.S. No. 10


4. Anonymous Dar-Madakhil-o mahasil-i Hindustan (Haqi qat-hai Hindustan), K.R. Cama Institute (Rehtasek IV) S.No. 60 (Prachin Panchyat library collection) Bombay). M.S is dated 1204 AH, it covers upto Muhammad Shah's reign. The work reproduces the statistical accounts of the Supplement to Mirat-i Ahmadi but contains additional information also.

6. Anonymous
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8. Anonymous
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M.S. No. 191/1, Apparao Bholanath collection, Ahmadabad (Title page missing) Abridgement of the Mirat-i Ahmadi. It contains some additional information about the Marathas and the emerging Nawabs in Gujarat.

10. Anonymous
M.S. No. 245. pt.11, Apparao Bholanath collection, Ahmadabad. (Title page missing) A late 18th century work. It seems to be a summarised version of MS No 191/1.

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A (1) Records preserved by State Agencies

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2. District Record office Bhaonagar. The collection mainly consists of personal letters, Vanshavli, a dastur-ul amal, treaties concluded between Bhavnagar and the E.I.C.

3. District Record Office Junagadh The documents are available in Files, known as Settled Cases (Barakhli). These files contain copies of farmans, hasb-ul hukms, nishans, parwanas, arzdashts, dastur-ul amals, Sale-deeds, documents concerning land grants, desaigirl muqaddami and other zamindari rights. A few documents belong to the 14th century, most of these appertain to the 17th - 18th centuries.

4. District Record Office Palanpur There are available a few documents concerning muqaddams' perquisites and appertain to the 18th century. We have particularly consulted Liki Rawli parwanas, Huzoor office Files Numbered WTN/SR/627; F. F.14,22; Aghat parwano and Ravli parwanas.

5. District Record Office (Fort) Surat The Alienation Register is the only important document which furnishes summarised information about the revenue grants which were made by the Mughals and later on by the Nawabs of Surat. There are also available a few files which contain a few documents concerning land grants which have summarily reproduced in the Alienation Register.
6. **District Museum Bhuj** Mr. D.K. Vaidya (Curator) is in possession of a copy of *Ruqat-i Harkaran* belonging to one Sh. Munshi of Bhuj. There are also preserved the coins from the period of Gujarat Sultans down to the British days. Also, the collection contains *mahi-o marathies* and a drum which the Mughal Subedar, Sarbuland Khan was forced to leave behind.

7. **Maharashtra State Archives** (formerly Peshwa Daftar) - Pune (Farsi daftar): The collection is very rich. It contains *farmans, hasbul hukms, nishans, muchalkas, dastaks, wajib-ul arz; raqba-band, qist bandi, documents rahn-namas, sale deeds, dastur-ul amals, naqlganwat, mawazna-i subah, mawazna-i dehat, mawazna-i deh sala, jama subajat, jama-o kharj, awarja jama-o kharj; yad-dasht, haqiqat and nuskhas of various description, fard-i hisab, khasra mazruat, accounts of jagirs and other documents from the level of Governor/Subah down to the level of zamindar-cultivator / villages. These documents appertain to the 16th -18th centuries and are of great use for a study of agrarian relations for Mughal Gujarat and other parts of the empire. The documents are bundled together in Roomals (1-71) and have yet not been classified/catalogued.

8. **Rajkot Record Office (Gujarat) Rajkot** There are available a few (Persian) documents concerning land grants from the period of Gujarati sultans to the Maratha days. These documents are arranged in a poor manner rendering it difficult to trace one.

9. **Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner** Well known *Akhbarat-i darbar-i mualla* and *Vakil* reports.

10. **Apparao Bholanath Collections, B.J. Institute, Ahmadabad** The collection contains a number of sale-deeds, private letters, mortgage deeds. Most important of these is the MS No. 227 which is a systematic compilation of various documents covering almost every aspect of revenue
matters. It is an extremely rich source of information for a study of zamindars in general and the sarkar Ahmadabad in particular for the Mughal period. Documents and other MSS are systematically arranged and preserved.

11 (a) Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society (presently Central Library) Bombay.

(b) Forbes Gujarati Sabha, Bombay.

(c) Jama Masjid Bombay Library, Bombay.

(d) K R Cama Institute (formerly Mulla Firoz Library and Parsi Panchayat Library collection), Bombay.

(e) Pir Muhammad Shah Library Ahmadabad collection contain good deal of documents our Mughal Subah of Gujarat.

(f) Excepting the 11 (a) where it is difficult to locate even the duly catalogued documents, rest of the collections are systematic and well preserved.

(iii) Private Collections (Individuals) Some farmans, nishans, hasb-ul hukms, hukm, parwanas tamassuks, dastur-ul amals, chaknamas, sale-deeds, rahans-namas, and other documents concerning land-grants and revenue matters are also available with—

12(a) Hamid-ud-din Amir Miyan, sher qazi (Jama Masjid), Palanpur.

(b) Kale Khan pathan, Radhanpur.

(c) Karparbhari, (nawab) Palanpur.

(d) (Maharao), Sarad Palace, Bhuj (Secty of)

(e) (Nawab) Sultan Alam Khan, Surat.

(f) (Nawab) Radhanpur. (Karparbhari of)

(g) (Rawal) Bhaonagar palace, Bhaonagar (secty of).
SH Desai (last secty of Junagadh state) Junagadh.

Sajjada nashin, dargah Edroosia, Surat.

Sardas Saiyed Haider Inamdar of Bharuch

(Thakur), Dharangdhar palace, Dharangdhar

13. Private (present researcher's) collection. While on the study trip the present researcher procured a number of documents - Yad-dashts, khasra mazruat, haqiqa-t-i peshkash, nukha-i peshkash, tamassuks, parwana bandhari ragba bandi documents, mawaza-i dehsala, mawaza-i dehat, arz-dasht, ganwat dastur-ul amal and other documents concerning grantees, and revenue matters - from a number of individuals, particularly from a petty junk dealer (Sidhpur) who had bought the same as part of junk form the Radhanpur palace (i.e. present descendent of Jawanmard Khan, the last Mughal Governor of Gujrat). Procured at an extremely nominal, as also free of cost these documents one exactly similar to those of the Pune Archives and the ones indicated in MS No 227. of Apparao Bhoalanath collection.

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**Gazetters**