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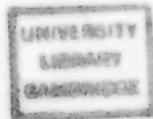
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Ph.d 13033

The Evolution of Agrarian Economy
in Gujarat, (India) 1850-1930

A Dissertation Submitted
in completion of the PhD programme
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This PhD Dissertation is a study of the evolution of agrarian economy in Gujarat, a region distinguished by its geography and culture, and by virtue of its location on the mid-west coast of the Indian sub-continent, an emporium of urban commerce for centuries. Peopled by small peasant landowners relying largely on the foodgrains they grew, and the victim of overtaxation and a Price Depression during the first few decades of the nineteenth century, the Gujarat countryside had to wait a while before it was to see any improvement in its fortunes.

The reduction of land revenue after 1850, the grant of the Thirty Year leases on the Ryotwari tenure, the penetration of a competitive market into the heart of the Gujarati village, and the increase in the prices of agricultural commodities on the world and in the home markets, promoted a rapid expansion of cultivation, and a faster growth in population without any deterioration in the living standards of the mass of the cultivators. On the contrary, the increase in the money earned by selling a large part of their produce, and the greater facility with which imports could now reach the district and the sofussil towns due to the start of the Railways encouraged the peasantry to spend on personal consumption by making items like Sugar, Tea, imported cloth, imported Rice, Spices etc., a part of the daily family budget. On the strength of its earnings in years of good harvests, a large part of this peasantry could now borrow with confidence to get through the 'bad' or lean years or indeed for spending on its marriage and death ceremonies ordained by the prevailing Hindu religion, and a significant means for the improvement of social status within the caste system. A lowering of interest rates consequent on increased imports of bullion and its wider circulation in the form of coin due to the expansion of rural trade meant that credit did not necessarily lead to an impoverishment or expropriation of the small peasant. The bulk of rural borrowers in Gujarat came from the well-off peasant castes and had neither to mortgage or sell their lands in repayment for their debts.

With a slowly growing population and reserves of land remaining even in the 1920s, tenancy in rural Gujarat was not a simple result of shortage of cultivable area. A growth in the area under tenancy was caused by diverse reasons and not accompanied by spiralling rents or a proliferation of short term leases. The need for more outside labor to sustain an increase in cultivated area and fulfil the increased leisure preference of many among the higher peasant castes was met largely by a greater flexibility in the traditional Hali system of maintaining hereditary farm servants and periodic or seasonal migration of small farmers from other areas, who could work as labourers in seasons when either their crops failed or they had no farm work to do.

This was possible, because most farmers grew one crop in a year and hence, they were free either in the Kharif or the Rabi seasons. Increased demand for such labor improved their wages. Low rents and better wages for field labor in turn implied that the late entrants into the agrarian economy, namely the Tribals, although much poorer than the bulk of the peasant castes were still better off than their kinsfolk in other areas of the Bombay Presidency.

The impact of the market improved the consumption of the peasantry without necessarily enhancing the productivity of agriculture. Yields of most crops remained stagnant during this period. The reason lay as much in the refusal of the peasantry to spend more on manure or the expansion of irrigation instead of buying more sugar and imported Rice or giving a larger dowry, as in the small amounts spent by the Colonial rulers on modernization schemes for the spread of improved varieties of seed and scientific education about agricultural techniques.


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PREFACE

In venturing on a PhD and completing it, the help of so many institutions and individuals is sought and in my case has been gladly given that to have to miss out mentioning any one can only be done unwittingly and for reasons of the word limit of a PhD Dissertation. At the same time, without the assistance of my late supervisor, Professor Eric Stokes, and even more the willingness of my present supervisor, Dr. Gordon Johnson, in having stepped in, when the boat could have got stuck in midstream, this Dissertation would never have been completed in the time available, nor had the advantage of their critical but sympathetic eye. The scholarship provided by the INLAKS Trust and the encouragement for working-on at Churchill College have had a major hand in the completion of the Dissertation as also do the trustees of the Ellen McArthur Fund, at Cambridge University whose generosity provided a studentship for a fourth year. Thanks are also due to the staff of all the Archives and Libraries mentioned in the Text.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.



Abbreviations and Notes

1. The footnotes have been put on the same page as the main narrative and are numbered anew from 1 for each separate page. The names of Journals are given in full the first time they are mentioned, and their abbreviated form mentioned within brackets. Subsequently only the abbreviated form is used. Appendices are put after each Chapter and numbered from I.

2. The most important source materials for the present research were the unpublished Diaries and Proceedings of the Revenue Department available in the Maharashtra Government Archives, (MGA) Elphinstone College, Bombay. In every case they have been indicated by RD, followed by the Year and the Volume number. RD refers to Revenue Department Records, which are indexed separately at MGA.

3. AAR, refers to the Annual Administration Reports forwarded each year by the Assistant Collectors and contained in the RD volumes. The main body of these Reports were after 1864 published as the General Administration Reports on the Bombay Presidency indicated by (GARBP).

4. All references to Parliamentary Papers have been preceded by the short form PP. They refer to the volumes to be found in the Official Publications Room of the Central University Library at Cambridge.

5. The Private Archives of Sir George Wingate to be found at the School of Oriental Studies, University of Durham have been referred to as GWP after the first time when the papers are mentioned with the name of Sir Wingate.

6. The Annual Reports of the Cotton Department in the Bombay Presidency were published by the Government and are listed as ARCD.

7. All District Gazetteers unless otherwise specified refer to the first editions of the Imperial Gazetteers of the Bombay Presidency published by the Bombay Government in the 1870s and 1880s. All references to them are preceded by the letters DG.

8. References to Reports of Committees or Survey Reports have been shortened after their full title has once been mentioned. Thus, the Report of the Bombay Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee is referred to as (RBPBEC) and Census of the Bombay Presidency as Census, Bombay etc.

9. Very often the exact place where a document was found has been listed in brackets.

IOL	-	India Office Library, London
NAI	-	National Archives of India, New Delhi
OPR	-	Official Publications Room, University Library, Cambridge
MGA	-	Maharashtra State Government Archives, Bombay.

10. Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government have been shown by the letters SMBC. In some places for reasons of space, the Land Revenue Settlement Reports have been indicated in the footnotes as SR.

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of the agrarian economy in Gujarat has been the subject of two previous studies.¹ M. B. Desai's work concentrated on different aspects of the agrarian economy as it existed in the 1920s and the 1930s. It provided a very competent survey of that period and enabled us to glean the end result of processes that had obviously been at work for some time. It concluded by suggesting, that the landowning peasantry in Gujarat was holding its own. This raised the question about the period, in which this peasantry might be said to have started on the road to relative prosperity or to put it slightly differently could we outline the phases of evolution of the agrarian economy in Gujarat in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries and spot the crucial variable or variables which distinguished Gujarat from other regions in India?

There was also a difference of emphasis between Choksey and Desai. According to the former, the 1890s and particularly the famines around the end of the nineteenth century had delivered a near mortal blow to the Gujarat peasantry from which most sections had barely recovered before the Great Depression once again put back the economic clock. Was this an appropriate measure and metaphor for comparing the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century in Gujarat or could the construction of detailed indices

¹Choksey, R.D., Economic Life in Rural Gujarat, 1968; Desai, M.B., The Rural Economy of Gujarat, 1948.



about per capita trends give us a greater insight into the fortunes of the Gujarat peasantry?

A study of the Gujarat agrarian economy could be made the context for looking at some of the wider questions being debated within the historiography of colonial India. Did a rich peasant elite grow up in Gujarat and if so was that at the expense of a middle or a poor peasantry?¹ How were these terms to be defined, if at all it was legitimate to use them? There was a broad agreement about the rich peasant elite being a social category, which even if it had existed in an embryonic form in pre-British India, had since greatly expanded its economic and political power. But how was the middle peasant any different from the khud-kasht owner-cultivator of the Indian villages, someone who had been laid low on many occasions by political tyranny only to recover in periods of peace and population growth?² At any rate was there a necessary connection between the greater benefits derived by rich

¹The concept of a rich peasant elite was proposed in two studies of South India. Washbrook, D., The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, 1976; Baker, C.J., The Politics of South India. The idea that the middle sections of the peasantry had suffered due to the economic developments in rural Gujarat was put forward by David Hardiman in his article on the Kheda peasantry. Cf. Low, D.A., ed. Congress and the Raj, 1972. For an excellent survey of the debate see Stokes, E.T., The Peasant and the Raj, 1978, Chapters I and 12.

²The idea of a khud-kasht peasantry as used here and discussed in Chapter I is the same as that first described by Nurul Hasan. Cf. Hasan, N., Zamindars under the Mughals, Frykenberg, E.R. ed, Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History.

peasants from an expanding market and the supposed decline of the middle peasantry or could both have gained from the market in varying degrees?¹ What impact did the social context of caste have on the emergence and functioning of the rich peasant elite? Did its economic gains differentiate it sharply from its sub-caste, itself often ridden with economic inequalities or did caste in the form of a kinship group impose obligations on rich peasants and others which they respected, sometimes at the expense of profit maximization?

There are still other questions raised by recent doctoral research which need to be considered in a monograph on agrarian economy in Gujarat. Dr. Sumit Guha has suggested that growth in the Bombay-Deccan economy was strictly conditioned by demographic factors in all the phases that the period from 1818 to 1941 may be divided into.² In his wideranging comparative study of the performance of agriculture in Punjab and Bombay Presidency, Dr. S. C. Misra has suggested that "the domination of the peasantry by merchant capital provides the single most important explanation of differences in agricultural growth in Bombay and Punjab over much of this century."³ Were these generalizations applicable to

¹In one form or another these questions were also raised in the writings of Neil Charlesworth. Charlesworth, N., Agrarian Society and British Administration in Western India 1847-1920, Cambridge PhD, 1974; idem, Trends in the Agricultural Performance of an Indian Province, Chaudhuri, K.N., and Dewey, C.J. eds. Economy and Society, Essays in Indian Economic and Social History, 1979; idem, The Russian Stratification Debate in India, Modern Asian Studies, Vol.13, 1979.

²Guha, S., Agrarian Economy of the Bombay Deccan, 1818-1941, Cambridge PhD, 1982.

³Misra, S.C., Patterns of Long Run Agrarian Change in Bombay and Punjab, 1881-1972, Cambridge PhD, 1981.

the agrarian economy in Gujarat and if so, why or why not?

It will be invidious to suggest, that the present Dissertation provides a satisfactory answer to all of these questions or even one of them. In what is essentially an ongoing debate, a monograph on a regional agrarian economy can at best hope to clarify the specificities of a region and a period and attempt to explain them in terms of a coherent framework. Whether this Dissertation even does that must be left to the judgement of other more competent opinions.

CHAPTER 1

Gujarat Between 1800-1850

Given its geographical compactness, linguistic and cultural uniformity, Gujarat stands out as a distinct region lying on the mid-western coast of the Indian sub-continent. During the period covered by our study, this unity remained without any political substance. Gujarat was then divided between the British ruled and the Princely districts. The former included the districts of Ahmedabad, Kheda, Surat, Panchmahals and Broach covering the central and southern parts of the present day Gujarat state.¹ The rest of the area was occupied by the states of Baroda, Bhavnagar, Rajpipla and several other minor Kathiawar states. In the course of the nineteenth century, this region was to pass through several contrasting phases of economic decline and growth. While the thirty years between 1820 and 1850 were to see an intense price depression, the next twenty years included not only a rapid expansion of cultivated area (1850-1860), but its further escalation following a price boom caused by the American Civil War. This was followed by

¹The present day state of Gujarat was created only in 1960. The districts constituting British Gujarat which existed till 1947, occupy the larger part of contemporary Gujarat. In the 1870s, they had the following area.

District	Government Villages	Alienated Villages	Total Number	Area in Square Miles
Broach	410	15	425	1458
Surat	817	41	458	735
Ahmedabad	831	53	884	3854
Kheda	559	80	589	1600

a descent into slower growth, but now on a higher plane than that of the 1850s. The nineteenth century in Gujarat culminated with a long run of poor seasons leading up to the tragic famines of 1899 to 1901.

An examination of the causes and effects of these phases of economic evolution requires a detailed empirical analysis. One of the reasons for restricting the scope of this study to 4 of the 5 districts of British Gujarat, Broach, Surat, Ahmedabad and Kheda is that these alone provide a continuous source of information in the nineteenth century.¹ In comparison with the princely states, these British districts were not only to develop a uniform administration and taxation structure, their records provide a rich and relatively standardized source of information. Moreover, most of the transfers of areas during the course of later administrative reorganizations in these districts were between the four districts of Broach, Surat, Kheda and Ahmedabad.² Hence, the data for them, when considered over a period of time makes possible an attempt to put together a long term profile of agrarian society in Gujarat.

Mere ease of statistical analysis should not be thought of as the main reason for selecting British Gujarat as the theme

¹By the time of the Treaty of Poona in 1817, most of the areas later to be included in the Kheda, Ahmedabad, Surat and Broach districts had been acquired by the East India Company. Only the Panch Mahals district and the Mandvi taluka of the Surat district were to be acquired later.

²Large parts of Broach, for example, were transferred to and returned from Surat on several occasions before 1869, after which year the district boundaries were finally settled.

DG, Surat and Broach, pp. 478/479

of this Dissertation. Geographically and climatically, it was clearly distinguished from the Bombay-Deccan. As a region, the whole of Gujarat provides a transition from the Deccan tableland and the mountains and hills which shield it, to the marshy coastline of the Arabian Sea. In contrast to the greater mixture of lateritic soils of the Deccan, Gujarat is made up of the alluvial plains of the many rainfed rivers which flow down the Western Ghats and its northern offshoots.¹ The best part of these plains lies in central and Southern Gujarat. Here, they have a less uneven surface than in the north, where lateral and vertical stream erosion, wind blown sand and loess is more in evidence.² This tends to reduce variations in yields caused by different soil composition and leads to a more secure agriculture than in the Deccan. Besides, peasants in central and southern Gujarat also benefited from the character of the monsoon. Although rainfall varies over Gujarat, it is almost everywhere adequate for cultivation. In the extreme south of British Gujarat, sometimes 60 to 70 inches of rain could fall every year. However, in the centre, the city of Surat got 41 inches and in the north Ahmedabad had just 29 inches.³ Yet this was still a more liberal total than that which the Bombay-Deccan received.⁴ Almost

¹Deshpande, C.D., Geography of Maharashtra, passim.; Spate, O.H.K., and Learmouth, A.T.A., India and Pakistan, A Regional Geography, 1951, pp.650.

²Deshpande, C.D., The North Gujarat Tube-well scheme, Bombay Geographical Magazine, No.5, pp.6.

³Spate and Learmouth, loc.cit.

⁴Between 1883 and 1899, the annual average rain falling on the plains of Poona district varied from 28 inches in Pune City to 10 inches in the Sirur taluka. In Ahmednagar, it varied from 28 inches in the city to 18 inches in Kopergaon. This meant a much lower aggregate than in Gujarat. Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency for 1922/23.

nine-tenths of the rain fell in the four months between June and September, half of it in July. As one account pointed out, these were the "hottest weeks in the year when the sun moved southward". Hence, the combination of heat and moisture well suited plant growth.¹ What was more, as compared to the Deccan areas in the interior, the rain in British Gujarat normally varied by only about 30% from one year to the next. This generally meant that good and fair years were more common than bad ones.²

The annual amount and the monthly distribution of the rainfall was particularly important because neither in the Deccan nor in Gujarat could the rivers be easily used for irrigation. The Nurbada and the Tapti, the two largest and biggest rivers of Gujarat, for the most part ran between high banks. The streams of Sabarmati and Mahi, the other prominent rivers were too thin.³ Such irrigation as there was came from wells which were expensive to construct and manage. Moreover, the soils of Gujarat were not too retentive of moisture and responded well only to measured and timely doses of water supply. Consequently, the limitations on irrigation would have had serious implications for cultivation had it not been compensated for by the pattern of rainfall.

The alluvium itself was of 3 types classified locally

¹Marshall, T., A statistical account of the Purgunnah of Jambusar in Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay, volume III, 1823, p.342.

²In the Deccan with a 50% variability of rainfall two out of three seasons were often bad ones, for example between 1820 and 1844. Spate and Learmouth, op.cit. p.651.

³Choksey, R.D., Economic Life in the Bombay Gujarat, 1968, p.3.

according to depth and texture. The kali, or black, which occupied almost sixty percent of the area was the most clayey. It caked easily in the summer and clogged in the monsoons, if the showers were continuous and heavy. It needed more ploughing than the besār (medium) and gorāt (light) soils. These were deeper but lighter and the gorāt was, when irrigated, considered the most fertile. Except where intermixed with sand or pebbles, they were more productive than the kali even with small amounts of rain.¹ A combination of poor drainage and alluvial soils made Gujarat well suited for dry farming. Indeed, the successful cultivation of cotton, tobacco and other crops not needing large supplies of water, besides the small amount which government was prepared to spend, in itself inhibited the growth of irrigation from wells. Even during the early twentieth century, the proportion of irrigated land in an average year did not usually exceed five percent of the cropped acreage.² A successful regime of dry crop farming had therefore a self-perpetuating logic. This success was, however, clearly seen only in the late nineteenth century.

Better rainfall and soil conditions had always distinguished Gujarat from the Bombay-Deccan. So had its dynamic

¹As in Ahmedabad "The black soil could easily belong to the khokar variety with a subsoil of modular limestone, kankar and gravel. It is shallow and much impregnated with alkali, khar". As elsewhere in this district too "The light soils are well supplied with springs, which after the early harvest has been reaped enable the cultivators to have cold weather (rabi) and even hot weather (hari) crops." DG Ahmedabad .p.49. In Surat too, the govat "was the richest soil". DG Surat . p.59.

²Crop and Season Reports of the Bombay Presidency. These are discussed in Chapter III.

oceanic commerce flowing through its seaports such as Broach, Surat, Dholera and Cambay. Ahmedabad, although not a port-town was a historically major center of inland trade and manufacture. From the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the entrepot trade of the Gujarat towns began to shift to Bombay and they become more dependent upon their coastal trade. Signs of an economic downturn were to be seen everywhere. Dr. Hove, A Polish traveller, wrote about Cambay in 1787 "This town 20 years ago was next only to Ahmedabad. At present it is nothing else but a heap of ruins - the houses either deserted or pulled down by the Nawab's orders when the poor inhabitants were not able to discharge the exorbitant taxes demanded by him."¹ In 1817, when Mr. Dunlop the first British collector entered Ahmedabad he found it a 'melancholy picture of ruin'.² Ashin Das Gupta's analysis of the decline of Surat in the eighteenth century is applicable to the other Gujarat towns. He points out that after 1707 Gujarat became cut off from centers like Agra, Lahore and Benares, which had supplied important items of export and which in turn constituted centers of demand. Then the Maratha dominion over the countryside first forced the Mughal administration to retreat into the towns and then turn to squeezing the merchants "in a desperate attempt to share the profits of a disintegrating commerce."³

¹Dr. Hove, Tours for scientific and economical Research, made in Gujarat, Kathiawar and the Conkun, 1787-88, quoted in Choksey, op.cit., p.30; idem, SRBG, V/23/12, (IOL).

²DG Ahmedabad, pp.90. Kenneth Gillion has discussed the causes for the decline of Ahmedabad. Gillion, K.L., Ahmedabad: A Study in Indian Urban History, 1968.

³Das Gupta, A., Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat C.1700-1750, 1979, p.9.

The decline of the towns in Gujarat was only enhanced during the first phase of the East India Company's administration. The dismantling of the Peshwa Raj implied a concomitant loss of urban population and hence of consumers. As Dr. Bayly has pointed out with respect to North India, almost fifteen to twenty percent of the overall population had depended for its livelihood on the expenditure of the army.¹ In Gujarat also disbanded soldiers trekked back to farming and were joined by the retinue not only of the Peshwa's court, but also that of the host of jaghirdars and revenue farmers, who no longer held political and financial assignments.²

The decline of high urban and court consumption and the increase in cultivation following additions to working hands in the villages was one important element contributing to falling prices especially of foodgrains between 1820 and 1850. If we take Jowar prices as an example we can see, that compared to 54 pounds per Rupee between 1813 and 1820, the average price for the next 26 years was 73 pounds per Rupee or about 35% less.³ In the case of

¹ Bayly, C.A., Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars, 1983, p.55.

² Pune city was alone said to host jaghirdars with a retinue of almost 30000 men. Evidence of Major General Sir L. Smith before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. PP1831, Vol.2, pp.544. This may be assumed to be true of cities like Surat and Ahmedabad.

³ Jowar Prices in Ahmedabad (Pounds per Rupee)

	1813-1820		1821-1826		1827-1837		1830-1846		1847-1854	
	Index		Index		Index		Index		Index	
Jowar	54	100	58	93	86	41	74	72	78	56

DG Ahmedabad, pp.78.

A detailed discussion of prices will be made in Chapter III.

cotton, the lowest part of the trough occurred between 1841 and 1847 when prices ruled about 44 percent lower than the mean for the years 1810 to 1820.¹ The depression of cotton prices was not caused necessarily by overproduction: it was the growing sale of American cotton in this period which pulled down the price of cotton on the world market.² This meant that the income from cotton could no longer pay for that portion of the land revenue which it used to. As the collector of Broach observed in 1828, because of the fall in cotton prices "grain of all sorts has been forced into the market until it has almost become unsaleable."³ Exports did not provide a way out. Demand in the world market was just beginning to rise by 1840 and the fall in prices elsewhere in India had also cut into purchasing power reducing existing levels of trade.

Another internal cause deepening the Price Depression in the first half of the nineteenth century lay in the changes made by the Company's administration in land revenue payments. Previously, even when assessment was reckoned in terms of cash-rates, at the local level the peasants often paid their share in kind, either to

¹Average price of Gujarat cotton in Bombay in Rupees per bhar of 960 pounds (Index)

1810-1820	54	=	100
1833-1840	46	=	85
1841-1847	30	=	56
1848-1854	34	=	63

EL Jenkins, Collector Broach to Revenue Commissioner PP1857, vol. xxxi, pp.1088.

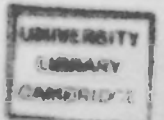
²Dantwala, M.L., A Hundred Years of Indian Cotton, 1936.

³Jenkins, E.L., loc.cit.

the village headmen (patel), or to the revenue farmer, or manotidār the urban banker (Sarraf) who might stand surety for the timely payment of the land revenue. This meant that, as under the Pudgur system prevailing in the Kheda district, the agents of the banker often delivered the revenue to the local ruler directly at the district headquarters of the area concerned. Before putting in their bid, the mamlutdār or the revenue farmer, if he was distinct from the mamlutdār had got the Banker to underwrite the maximum amount he might bid for. The manotidār or the banker then did not need to wait for revenue to be collected before paying the amount agreed upon to the treasury. If the person in power had already taken a loan, the payment of the annual revenue could occur as a simple bookkeeping transaction on the part of the banker.¹ This was quite feasible after the reign of Peshwa Baji Rao II, when the financial pressures on the Maratha court had forced it to resort universally to a system of auctioning out revenue farms, to try to increase the amount of revenue it could get from its lands while avoiding the onus of collecting it directly from the villages.² The revenue farmers could pay their full instalments on time only rarely, since fluctuations in seasons caused large variations in cropped area and output per acre. Hence, they were invariably asked to name a monied man as a guarantor (manotidār). The manotidāri and the farming system were mutually interdependent, and in practice the cultivators did not have to sell their crops

¹RD, 1820, Vol.153, pp. 1844 to 1891.

²John Morrison, Collector of Surat to Mr. Farish, Chief Secretary, Bombay RD121, 1820, pp. 5484 to 5516; Also Wink, A., Maratha Revenue Farming, Leiden University, Holland, Mimeo.



themselves to raise the revenue. The revenue farmers or their agents would often collect the revenue in grain or cotton and then sell it to wholesale traders or exporters.¹

The Company moved quickly to abolish the revenue farming system and instituted 5 to 7 year leases under which the Patel gave pattas or documents to each cultivator or ryot telling them which land they had the right to occupy and the amount they had to pay. This initial ryotwari settlement was made on the basis of existing rates and lasted until the new surveys after 1837 provided a fresh classification of soils. Now the revenue had to be collected in cash from the cultivators.² They had to sell their produce locally while the wholesale buyers were located in towns. This meant that an increasing amount of marketed produce competed for the scarce amount of currency locally available, inevitably depressing prices further.

The contrast between increases in marketable and marketed output and scarcity of coin available to buy it was enhanced in the

¹The functioning of this system can be seen in many local practices. In the Ahmedabad district, it was common for crops to be harvested under the supervision of the Patel and stored in the village khalli or grain pit, from where they were released only when the instalment was paid by the manotidar. RD, 1822, vol.26/50, p.103. Until about 1826, the East India Company usually accepted kapas or seed cotton in lieu of land revenue. In 1817/18, for example, "the whole of the kuppas produced in the Jamboosar purgunna" of the Broach district was given to the commercial department in lieu of revenue. RD1821, Vol.8A, p.5.

²These settlements made jointly by the collectors, the mamlutdars or district level officials and the Patels or village heads involved an annual count of the area actually cultivated while the rates were fixed on a 5 to 7 year basis. Committees of persons nominated by village punchayats were set up to adjudicate if disputes arose. Rogers, A., The Land Revenue of Bombay, Vol.I, 1892.

first half of the nineteenth century for another reason. The many seizures of merchant wealth by local Mughal officials had encouraged the monied men to convert large parts of their current incomes into "gold, silver and precious stones" and cut down on any display of wealth or extravagant consumption.¹ The political chaos and wars preceding the British takeover had led to the closure of some mints. This laid the grounds for a medieval liquidity crisis. When the Company annexed the Gujarat districts, its officials were surprised at the acute scarcity of coins in an area, which had been an emporium of commerce for centuries.² The net imports of bullion and the proportion minted before 1840 were obviously lower than the requirements and certainly much lower than the average level in the succeeding period.³ The different types of coins in circulation made the situation even more complicated. Each usually had a small radius of acceptance, so that a surplus of coins in one area could not be easily used in another. The varying age of separate coins too resulted in different values being assigned to them.⁴

¹Gokhale, B.G., Capital Accumulation in Seventeenth Century Western India, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, Vol.39/40, 1964/65, New Series.

²Even in Ahmedabad and its neighbourhood in 1817, the British "found the mint closed and the supply of circulating medium so low as seriously to impede trade." In Gogha, commerce "was paralyzed by the scarcity of currency, the old Surat Nawab's rupee, the only coin allowed to be in use often selling at as high a premium as 25 percent above the ordinary Surat and Bombay Rupee, though very slightly superior in purity and weight." DG Ahmedabad, p.72. In Kheda, in 1806, "so scanty was the stock of money, that it was usual for weavers and cultivators to barter their wares." Kaira DG, p.61.

³Table on Bullion Imports, Exports and Coinage, 1801-1864, PP1864, Vol.XLII, p.23.

⁴As Henry Sykes pointed out in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee in 1831/32 "Rupees of the same mint and of the same standard coined in different years have a different marketable value agreeably to their age, the oldest being the most depreciated." Apart from the official Surat or Bombay Rupee, "there were the Ankosee, Belapoor,

It was not until the eighteen sixties that effective standardization of currency was achieved in the British areas. Since the revenue was collected only in one currency and the cultivators often paid in an inferior one, they had to put more of their produce on sale to make up the difference in value.¹ The shortage of currency was also exacerbated by the ending of indigenous systems of credit like Ant, which had facilitated money transactions on paper.² All these factors had a further depressing effect on Prices.

Matters were not helped by the absence of any policies which might have reduced the amount of produce that had to be marketed in order to pay government taxes and village dues. In this respect during the first phase of their administration, the Company not only continued the revenue rates prevailing in the last phase of Maratha rule. They sometimes increased them. It is important to analyze the Revenue system before 1850, in order to understand the changes which occurred in it after that year.

According to Irfan Habib's reckoning, within the Mughal Empire, although "the shares of the crop taken under the bhaoli or kankut system varied with the crops and localities, one-half in the less fertile regions and substantially more in the more fertile regions seem to have represented the norm."³ This was just the mal

Footnote cont.

Wapghaon, Chandwur, Shree, Gondee, Jureeputka and 50 others, each of them divided into Nirmul Chapee and Solakee or 'clean' 'stamped' and 'proved' all differing in value. There is also a varying rate of exchange even between district and district: in one district, the rupee shall be worth 76 pice and in the next maybe 80." PP1831/32, Vol.XI.

¹DG Surat, pp.204; DG, Ahmedabad, p.72.

²DG, Ahmedabad, p.73.

³Habib, I., Agrarian Relations and Land Revenue in North India, The Cambridge Economic History of India Volume I, 1982, p.238; also Land Revenue Demand under the Mughals, Indian Economic and Social History Review, (IESHR), Vol.II, No.4, 1965.

or the land revenue proper. Miscellaneous taxes called jihāt could often add up to a quarter of the amount paid out as land revenue.¹ In the Gujarat region, Shivaji had fixed the revenue rate from one-third to two-fifths of the gross produce. By the middle of the eighteenth century, it had been raised to two-thirds of the produce in at least some parts of Gujarat.²

The revenue farming system, especially in its later stages had encouraged competitive bidding and enhanced the land revenue assessment. In a minute of 1805, the Bombay Council described the working of the Farming system. In 1782, the East India Company had got Rupees 602,154 as revenue from the Broach district. In 1783, once it had been temporarily transferred to the Scindiahs, Gopal Rao, a banker, rented the district on a seven year lease at Rupees 850,000 per annum plus taxes or veras amounting to 12% of the Jumabundy or aggregate amount. Within one year, therefore, Broach was subjected to an increase of 58 percent in its assessment. In 1797, the next successful bidder Lalloo Bhai offered to raise Rupees 10,000,000 from the same area. Despite the increases he effected in the taxes, Lalloo Bhai could not, in one year when the harvest was bad, meet his obligations and had to borrow Rupees 40,000 to do so. When he did not repay this debt within the stipulated time, the revenue farm was forfeited to his creditor.³

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³RD 1806, Vol.48A, pp.: 169 to 180.

The method of realizing the revenue had progressively become more arbitrary. Alexander Rogers noted the impact of the Farming system in neighbouring Baroda in 1853, when it was still being used there. Here too, the revenue farms were held by "some wealthy Baroda bankers or influential landholders." Each year with the help of the desais and wuzmoondars, both district level officials, the revenue farmer fixed a certain sum to be levied from each village to give him a net profit. The means for their collection were then decided by the Patels or the hereditary village headmen. "If they cannot make up the sum demanded, the Patels borrow money themselves or throw in additional cesses called khote verā or deficit tax or sell or mortgage the village lands. This was the origin of the vechania and gerania. sale and mortgage tenures of Goozerat."¹ A survey of these alienations in 1778 discovered 5153 acres of such land in the Broach district.² In so far as these alienations or sales of land freed their holders from revenue payments, Without any authorization from the government, they only did so by throwing that burden on the holders of the assessed lands.

The Patels extracted the revenue in two forms. First of all, the traditionally recognized share of the State was to be collected. Next, the other taxes or veras were accounted for. By the early nineteenth century, most sources agree, that the state was given half the gross produce in kind or its equivalent in cash, especially on the zerayet or drycrop lands constituting more than 80 percent of the cultivated area in Gujarat. The collector of

¹Rogers, A., op.cit., pp. 18/19.

²RD 1806, Vol.48A, op.cit.

Surat, John Morrison, noted that the Government had the right to demand half the gross produce or its value in money on the zerayet lands.¹ Around the same time, in the Neriad taluka of Kheda district, it was pointed out, that "The work of jumabundy or assessment is done by Patels, who undertake to pay the revenue in money by instalments. Failing this, the crop is attached and divided into half between the Sirkar and the Ryot."² The survey conducted in the Dehej purgunna of the Broach district in 1818 also pointed out that the revenue there had to be paid by the Patels. "The money payment is considered a commutation for one-half the gross produce of the government lands."³ Monier Williams pointed out that this was true for all the subdivisions of the Broach district.⁴ In a Minute dated 6 April 1821, the Governor of Bombay noted that in Ahmedabad and Kheda "Government is entitled to one-half the crop raised in the rainy season and from one-third to one-fifth of that cultivated in the dry weather, if raised by irrigation; if not irrigated a larger portion is taken."⁵ A. Rogers, in his study of land administration in the Bombay Presidency pointed out, that Rice and Garden lands paid from two-fifths to one-third of their produce. On the Dry Crop lands, the

¹Mr. Morrison, J., op.cit. Emphasis Ours.

²DG Kheda, p.110.

³RD 1821, Vol.8A, pp.41.

⁴Report on Broach by Monier Williams, PP 1831/32 Vol.XI.

⁵DG, Broach and Surat, p.215.

Company took "as a rule one-half share of the produce."¹

In addition to the land revenue proper, the zubtee cultivators or those who owned their lands on a hereditary basis, paid two other kinds of direct taxes. The first type had really originated in the desai's or the mamlutdār's attempts to pay off the revenue or enrich themselves through ingenious exactions.² In due course these impositions had become established as customary dues. Examples may be had from S. N. Sen's list compiled from original Marathi documents: Miras puttee, a tax on Meerasdars or the hereditary cultivators and owners of land imposed once every three years, Inam puttee, a cess occasionally levied on alienated lands, Vihir koondā, a similar levy on irrigated lands to raise additional money, Luggum tikkā, a tax on marriage, and Ghur puttee, a tax on houses.³ Among others mentioned, for instance, by the Kheda Gazetteer were the plough tax, Hal vera, or the tax on armed classes, Dharala vera.⁴ Collectively, these taxes were called Saudir Warid puttee meaning those cesses which could be levied "to pay off the expenses of the district not provided by the government."⁵

¹Rogers, A., op.cit, p.19.

²It must be noted that these taxes or veras or puttee as they might be called were levied on each holder of land and hence also on those who held alienated land. Cruikshank, op.cit, p.90.

³Sen, S.N., Administration System of the Marathas, 1923, p.45.

⁴DG, Kheda, p.110.

⁵Settlement Report (SR) of the Chicklee Taluka, Surat District, 1866, para. 65.

Sometimes the Saudir warid puttee came to be levied for the personal benefit of the mamlutdar. A case in point was a cess called durbar kharch or antasth. This was originally used by the Mamlutdars to try and win the favours of ministers or auditors. Soon it had been made into a regular charge whose amount varied according to the personal convenience of the mamlutdar. They used other ways to generate a personal income, for example, "concealment of receipts for the fees and fines they were allowed to levy, false musters, non-payment of pensions."¹ Their offices being hereditary and no check existing in the form of officials directly appointed by the government, like the talatis later would be, the revenue farm was often treated as a local fiefdom. In Surat, the desais are said to have appropriated large sums of money by alienating government lands nominally to the village servants, but themselves drawing the revenue from it. They were known to levy excess collections and taxes. "Shepherds had to pay them in wool, butter and milk, oil sellers in oil, the rahbaris had to lend them cattle without hire, etc."²

The second type of dues mainly involved a payment for services within the village. These could be divided into those connected with the revenue system of the day and others which would outlive its demise. Thus, payment for the weighing and valuation of the produce and watching over the grain stored in the village pits or khallis resulted from the system of allowing the peasants to take away the grain only when a large part of the revenue had been paid. The dhara or rentroll of the Puranteej taluka in the Ahmedabad district in 1814 showed that 2.82 seers per maund or about 7 percent of the gross produce was used to pay for such

¹RD 1806, Vol.48A, op.cit.

²Rogers, A., op.cit., p.6.

cesses. More was still needed for remunerating village specialists like barbers, carpenters and the priest for their personal services.¹

The amounts collected from different areas varied with change of revenue farmers and in different years rates of revenue often had little in common from one locality to the next. In the Chicklee taluka of the Surat district, for example, the old hoondabundy or lump sum payment had, in the eighteenth century been replaced by a system of "varying crop rates known as the toolwaree beegotee." As the following table shows, the difference between these rates was very great.²

Beegotee Rates Prevailing in the

Surat District in 1822

Taluka	Rupees per Beegah				
	On Rice Class I	On Cotton	On Sugar	On Rice Class II	On Tobacco
Bardoli	8 to 9	-	-	14.5	-
Bugwara	3 to 10	-	8 to 12	-	-
Bulsar	2 to 22	-	-	3 to 5	-
Chicklee	3 to 20	2 to 22	22 to 50	2 to 5	2 to 3.25
Olpad	5 to 18	3 to 8	17 to 21	-	2 to 3.25

There being very little uniformity behind these rates, their effect would undoubtedly have been to create differentials between villages and individual peasants. This seems to have happened in other areas too. Monier Williams recorded, that Broach was taxed at almost

¹RD 1805, Vol.45, op.cit.

²RD, 1867, Vol.248, para 65.

double the rate prevailing in the Dehej taluka of the same district, when these two had a soil with similar productiveness.¹

These differentials, however, did not follow any regular pattern. In some cases the crop rates would have hit the poorer sections of the village, in others the better off. The existence of separate rates for different castes namely the Oojliparaj and the Kalipuraj further complicated matters. In Surat, "the rates respectively applicable to these two classes were known as 'Bumunia' and 'Doriya'. They bore to each other, roughly speaking, a proportion of two to one and a half."² The fairer castes who paid the higher rates included mostly the 'dominant castes' of the region.³ The most prominent dominant castes in Gujarat included the Anavla and Bhatela Brahmans, the Desais, the Pattidars, Kunbis, Rajputs and groups like the Bohra. Muslims, who formed endogamous enclaves.⁴ As the zubtee cultivators or hereditary owners of their lands, members of these castes bore the main burden of paying the extra cesses or veras. And yet, it were others from these dominant castes who enjoyed the privileges of

¹ Monier Williams Report, op.cit.

² SR, Jalalpur taluka, Surat District, 1862, p.13.

³ The term 'dominant caste' is used here in the sense Professor Srinivas gives to it. He defines it as "owning a sizeable amount of the arable land locally available, have strength of numbers and occupy a high place in the local hierarchy." Srinivas, M.N., Social Change in Modern India, 1966, p.11.

⁴ Enthoven, R.E., Tribes and Castes of the Bombay Presidency, 1920.

holding lightly assessed or rent free alienated lands. These alienated lands then were a factor promoting differentiation within the prominent landowning groups. The extent of legal and illegal alienations of land and income by the state or its functionaries grew significantly in the eighteenth century.¹ Hence, it must be considered at some length.²

The main categories under which alienated lands were held were wantā, wuzeefā or lnām, paseetā, vechaniāh, guraneēāh, chakureeā and vuldaneēāh. It is essential to note these distinctions and the land held under each head, because different privileges were assigned to various categories.³ The data on the extent and

¹ Commissariat, M.S., Political and Economic condition of Gujarat during the seventeenth century, Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings, Vol.III, January 1921.

² In a useful article Frank Perlin has also sketched out the impact of these alienations of land on the Deccan village peasantry. According to him the main persons who benefited from a growing devolution of power were "the leading ministers of the state and their close kin; regional hereditary officers such as deshmukhs; government and household officers, military officers with saranjam (lands or villages in temporary gift) in the countryside; financiers and traders" and "within the villages, the headmen and their establishments". Frequently "a variety of function and occupations were concentrated in one family." As Perlin considers only the pre 1800 period, he cannot comment on how this process was interrupted by the intervention of the British colonial state. Perlin, F., Of White Whale and Countrymen in the Eighteenth Century Maratha Deccan, Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol.5, No.2.

³ The meaning of these terms as used by the British administration was as follows:

- a) wantā - one-fourth of the village lands left to the original holders of rent free lands, when these villages were annexed by the Muslim conquerors. Held Rent free.
- b) wuzeefā - Grant in perpetuity without any service attached and paying a small sulamee or tribute.
- c) paseetā - Lands either held rent free or paying a small quit-rent for support of religious institutions or service by village and district officers including kumbhars sweepers etc.
- d) chakreeāt - A synonym for Paseeta except that it was always held rent free.

distribution of these alienated lands is not very comprehensive. However, we do have two detailed pieces of evidence which throw some light on this question. The first one consists of a list of 122 villages in the Broach taluka detailing the categories under which alienated land was held in 1803/4. This list is reproduced as Appendix I to this Chapter.¹

According to this list, of the total cultivable area of 349,907 beegahs 20 percent was alienated under different heads. In 39 villages, the proportion of alienated land was 15 percent of cultivable area or less, in 61 villages, it was between 15 percent and 30 percent, in 17, it was between 30 percent and 50 percent and in 5, it was above 50 percent.² The other bit of evidence concerns portions of the Duskroee and Dholka purgunahs in the Ahmedabad district. This shows clearly how the incidence of alienated lands was greater in the more fertile areas. In the 66 Dholka villages situated on more productive land, 40 percent of the land was alienated, while in 146 Duskroee villages, this proportion was 26 percent, including 11 villages entirely alienated.³

Footnote cont.

- e) vechaniāh/guraneēāh - Village lands alienated illegally by Patels to raise the revenue. Held rent free.
- f) vuldaneēāh - Alienated land resumable by government at the end of a given period.

Robertson, E.P., Glossary of Gujaratee Revenue and Official Terms, Bombay, 1865.

¹RD, 1805, Vol.45, pp. . 162 to 171.

²Appendix I to this Chapter. It must be noted that in this case 50 percent of the total alienated land was held as wantā and another 36 percent as buseetā.

³Cruikshank, J., Reports on the portions of the Dholka Purguna situated in the Ahmedabad and Kheda collectorates, Bombay, 1853, pp.31.

Who owned these lands? It would appear that most of them were in the hands either of the members of the dominant castes, officials, or the money-lenders. A breakdown of the Dholka figures showed that 28517 beegahs or 27 percent of the alienated lands were in the hands of the Kunbi patteedars and the Brahmins, both part of the locally dominant castes. These were mostly vechania and guraneeah lands, alienated by the Patels from the public lands of the village and for which the other zubtee cultivators would have had to pay the assessment.¹ Another 38 percent in the form of wanta was held by the Rajpoot Girassias. "Syeds, Seepaees (soldiers)" had 20% more leaving 6 percent for the kolis or smaller cultivators and 2 percent for the moneylenders or the bunees. The remaining 7 percent was shared out between the muzmoondar, the Ameen patel, the temple gosaeen or priest and other members of the village establishment.² Most of these lands were either held free or paid a nominal salamee or tribute of about 1 Rupee per beegah, when the average assessment was at least 2 or 3 times more.³ Clearly, when these alienations were later resumed or commuted into fully taxed freehold property, sections of the district elites were the ones to loose out. This will be discussed later.

Before the 1840s, when the new Ryotwari survey began

¹The Patels were hereditary heads of villages who collected the revenue and saw to the safety of the residents. Usually male elders of the families who founded a village all called themselves Patels. They usually selected one from among themselves to act as the official Patel. The latter often had to share the prerequisites of his office with the others. Robertson, op.cit.

²Cruikshank, op.cit., pp.30.

³Ibid, p.67/110.

to function in Gujarat, the new British administrators proceeded with a good deal of caution in dealing with land revenue. Although hard pressed to pay off the recurring debts owed to the Bengal government, the Bombay officials at first accepted Elphinstone's argument that "The Maratha system, if cleaned of abuses and vigorously acted on will do very well for the people."¹

In practice the Company's attitude came to mean a policy of controlling the village level officials and the process of land revenue collection. This inevitably meant the abolition of the revenue farming system as well as the manotidāri one. This was done in 1806. The administration which had grown up around the farming system too was reorganized.

As many desais were revenue farmers they lost out with the abolition of that system. In addition, district collectors were appointed and an official circular of 26 July 1821 instructed them that "where they had been superseded, the Desai's functions as agents between the government and the cultivator should not be revived and where they were still employed they should be allowed to fall into disuse."² The Civil and police powers of the desais could not continue to exist alongside the new structure built around the district collectors, courts and judges.

The main victim of the new revenue administration was the village patel. The patel's hereditary right to office was now

¹Elphinstone to Erskine, Ballhatchet, K., Social Policy and Social Change in Western India, p.30.

²Ibid, p.105; also RD, 1820, Vol.163, p.49.

strictly circumscribed. Section VI of Regulation XII of 1827 formally abolished all the hereditary emoluments of the Patels. Only one person from the families of the Patels was to be selected by the collector to be the miukhi or chief patel who was given some official duties to perform. The patel now could be dismissed by the government.¹ Whereas previously the patel could take over the lands of extinct or migrant families, had the power to allocate all unoccupied land in the village and paid lower rates on his own plots, now his duty was effectively reduced to just one. The patels were to check the accuracy of entries of fields and tenures shown in the number khurdar or register and supply information asked for by the collector. The patels were now paid according to the revenue for which the villages in their jurisdiction had been assessed. The annual minimum paid was RS.25 for a unit yielding a revenue of Rs.500 and the maximum was RS.200 for units yielding over Rs.9000.² After 1814, the responsibility for the maintenance of accounts and the issue of receipts was given to the Talatis. These were either newly appointed or as in the Broach district, the old office of the mehta was given a new name. In either case not only were they formally made subject to appointment by the government but a real attempt seems to have been made to break their dependence on the patels. A talati was appointed to every village yielding over 2000 Rupees in revenue. He was to stay in the village for the entire year. The collectors were empowered to remove him with the approval of the government. Rowles and his

¹ Previously the Chief Patel had been voluntarily selected by the heads of the various hereditary landowning families often themselves called Patels. This made him obliged to them. Bombay to Court of Directors, RD 1813, Vol.93, p.1667 to 1770.

² DG, Broach and Surat, p.219. Rs. refers to Rupees.

successor John Dunlop, both collectors of Kheda, began the practice of retaining very few of the existing talatis on the grounds that they were subservient to the patels.¹ Shubrick, the collector in Broach in 1820 noted, that "many talatis are discharged every year ... for giving false accounts, and keeping back money they have wrongly recovered."²

Another new practice was to import talatis from neighbouring areas. In 1828, "substantial reform was inaugurated in Broach by the appointment of men brought down from North Gujarat as village accountants on annual cash salaries and of village revenue peons similarly paid."³ The chief of Dholka complained that the talatis were prepared to receive complaints from the ryots.⁴ Their appointment was nonetheless proceeded with. The reason was pre-eminently financial. Talatis were proving successful in blocking leakages of revenue. In the Nadiad taluka of kheda district, village headmen protested against the appointment of the Talatis. On enquiry, it was found that their complaint was a fairly material one. Since the Talatis had assumed office the amount claimed for village expenses had declined from £2350 to £586 or by nearly 300 percent.⁵ A comparison of the emoluments of the patels and the talatis would reveal that with time the latter had achieved a better salary. For the first 1000 of assessed revenue, the patels were paid 3 percent or RS.30, the

¹Rowles to Warden, RD 1814, Vol.101, p.651.

²Ballhatchet, op.cit., p.178.

³Ibid., p.169.

⁴DG, Kheda, pp. . 95/96.

⁵Ibid.

talatis 5 percent or Rs.50, for the second 1000, they were respectively given 2 percent and 3 percent of gross revenue; and for third 1000, 1 percent and 2 percent each and so on.¹ This would tend to enhance their status and independence. In 1828, talatis were appointed in all Bhagdari villages as well.² These measures also laid the basis for the collection of new information when it was decided to resurvey the lands from scratch after 1837.

Another measure the Company used to enhance its revenues was the resumption of illegally alienated lands. Regulation III of 1814 had recognized the validity of all alienations held **as** wazeefā, wantā, or inām, but decided to resume all the guraneēāh vechaniāh and puseetā lands. Monier Williams survey alone uncovered 40000 beeghas of puseetā land and 17900 beeghās of excess or unregistered cultivated land. A large proportion of these were resumed or later made to pay a quit-rent. Some of these were also returned in later adjudications, as would be shown in another chapter. However, the government succeeded in resuming most illegally alienated lands.

These measures certainly enabled the Company to increase its share of the revenue collected. The 162 villages of the Broach taluka, for example, are said to have yielded Rupees 886,392 in 1803/4 and Rupees 828,046 in 1804/5. By the time Colonel Cruikshank

¹Rules for the valuation of existing emoluments of the Patels, Naiks and kulkarnis or Talatis, Appendix IVA, Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual, Vol.II, 1917, p.499.

²These were the villages where the main landholding families continued to have joint responsibility for the revenue payment. In Broach of 400 villages, almost 71 percent were Bhagdari. RD 1805, Vol.45, p.302.

completed his survey in 1826, the same set of villages was yielding a land revenue which net of collection charges was thirty percent more than that of 1803/4, without this period having seen any major expansion of cultivated area.¹

Although it increased its own revenue earnings, the Company's policies before 1850 did very little to lower the burden of revenue. In fixing its own assessment, the Company's officials usually took the total collections of the Revenue farming days as a benchmark, deducted the most oppressive of the extra cesses and scaled them down in proportion of the price trend of 10 years preceding a settlement. Captain Robertson, the officer in charge of the 1820 Survey in Surat emphasized, "that as a general rule existing rates were those selected for permanent confirmation", and in the case of some crops for which high prices were then prevailing, these were even raised."² Though some reductions were made in 1825 and 1831 in response to a fall in prices, these were never sufficient to restore the revenue level to that prevailing even before 1820. The collector of Surat pointed out in 1829, that while the value of jowari grown in 2 bigahs of land was Rs.36, the revenue demanded was RS.25 or about 69 percent of the gross produce.³ Another review of the past settlements in the Soopa and the Jalalpur talukas of Surat district pointed out that due to the prevalence of crop rates or the 'toolwaree beegotee' in "Chorasi, Kurode, and Sarbhon, the government share of the

¹Rogers, A., op.cit, p.142.

²SR, Chicklee, op.cit. para 65.

³Rogers, A., op.cit, Vol.II, p.184.

estimated produce of a ryot's holding was fixed at 60 percent. In all the other districts, including Soopa and Parchol, the share of the government was 70 percent."¹

The reasons for continuing overassessment were many. In some cases people had held illegal tax free land, and this had enabled them to pay high revenue charges. Now they lost these lands. Borsad and Mehmadaabad talukas in Kheda district suffered for a long time, because of the continuation of the farming system. In the other Kheda talukas, the rates had been made to include even the minor cesses.² In Chorasi taluka of the Surat district, the rate derived from lump assessments on fields was applied per unit of area. Thus, a field of 4 estimated or Asra bighas paying 16 Rupees was still made to pay a rate of 4 Rupees per beegha, even after it was discovered that it actually measured 5 beeghas. This anomaly arose because of absence of standard measurements and was found to be widespread in Ahmedabad even in the eighteen forties.

Given the short periods for which the 5 or 7 year lease was granted, it had often to be renewed. Short term price fluctuations would affect it considerably. A typical example of how short term leases increased the revenue demand was to be found in the Broach district. Going by the temporary rise in prices in the mid eighteen twenties the demand was actually increased in Broach from Rupees 14,50,740 for the 9 years ending 1834/35 to Rupees 19,14,118 for the 9 years ending 1843/44.³ As chance would

¹SR, Jalalpor, op.cit, para 55.

²DG, Kheda, pp 97/104.

³AAR, 1849/50, RD 1852, Vol.14, p.102.

have it, the prices between 1837 and 1845, declined further.¹ When this is taken into account revenue assessment in Broach between 1837 and 1847 increased by at least 60 percent. The District Gazetteer noted how at that time, it had "become impossible to realize the revenue." In many villages, the cultivators were giving up tilled land.² Remissions, which since the Mughal days had been given in bad years now had to be granted even in the better seasons. In Broach alone, the annual amount remitted between 1833 and 1848 ranged from 9 to 20 percent of the total revenue in different years. Uncollected balances amounted to another 9 percent of the revenue leading to a regular loss of at least 20 percent of the aggregate demand. This was the general picture in the other districts as well.

The first forty years of the Company's rule in Gujarat had done little to cure the economic ills, which affected most social groups in the villages, whether these were classified as Nurwādaree, Bhagdāree, Khatābundy, Beegotee or Taluqdāri.³

¹As compared to the 1827-1835 period in Broach, the prices between 1837 and 1845 were about half in the case of raw cotton and 30 percent less for rice and pulses.

²AAR, 1823/24: The fluctuations in cultivated areas were enormously increased by overassessment. Since the peasants now had the option of giving up occupied land at the beginning of the season, a lowering of prices immediately resulted in the throwing up of many acres of occupied land. The 1823 Jumabundy Report in Broach pointed out that "a great decline of cultivation this season had been occasioned by the overassessment of 1820/21." Almost an equal number of 28,698 beegahs were given up in 1822/23 as well. AAR, 1822/23, RD 1823, Vol.25/77, p.158.

³These terms refer essentially to the different forms in which the responsibility for revenue payment was arrogated. In the Nurwadaree, and the Bhagdaree units, the responsibility for paying the revenue was jointly held by all the direct descendants of the original founders of the village, who distributed the revenue burden among themselves, and also owned most of the lands. In the Khatabundy and Beegotee villages, revenue payment was the individual

Although the village functioned as a community under the leadership or authority of the dominant caste, within itself, it was split up essentially into 3 sections.¹ There were the main body of the cultivator-owners (khud-kāsht), many of whom were members of the dominant caste; there were the tenants-at-will - usually settlers from other villages (pahī-kasht) - and other tenants with stronger customary rights; lastly there were the service castes of the jajmani system who served the other two sections.²

A word is necessary about the distinction between khud-kāsht and pahī-kasht. These words were synonymous with mee-rāsi and ūpari used in the Bombay Presidency. The khud-kāsht peasant not only owned his land on a hereditary basis and could return to it even if he left the village for a long period. He could do this as long as he paid his dues. In this sense he was the prototype of the later day Ryotwari peasant. He also owned a house and his oxen, and was exempt from some of the imposts paid to the Patels, for example, the marriage tax.

The pahī-kasht mostly consisted of tenants-at-will. They paid one-third of the produce as rent. This amount was

Footnote cont.

responsibility of each owner of a registered field or khata. In the Taluqdari villages, the Taluqdar functioned as the landlord as long as he could pay the assessment levied on his villages. Its collection was solely his responsibility till the Act of 1863.

¹ Professor Ravinder Kumar has aptly described the manner in which the village functioned as a community when paying the service castes or constituting a panchayat to settle a dispute between a vani (moneylender) and a cultivator. Kumar, R., Rural Life in Western India on the Eve of the British Conquest, Indian Economic and Social History Review, (IESHR) Vol.II, No.3.

² Nurul Hasan, Zamindars under the Mughals, Frykenberg, E.R., ed., Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History.

exacted only after some years during which the pahis were granted concessional rates.¹ If they took up land, which was not occupied by any khud-kāsht family, their rent went towards the payment of the village servants or the village revenue.² The tenant-at-will pahī could be ejected from his holding at the end of a harvesting season. There were other tenants called pahī, but recognized as having stronger customary rights, who could stay on their fields as long as they paid their rents.³ If a pahī stayed on after the lease required him to pay the full rent, which could be in the third or fourth year of his stay, he could acquire customary rights. According to the Kheda Gazetteer, "If an upari kept on tilling the same field, he would have to take on a running lease or Chalu Ganvat", which obliged him to pay a fixed amount on that field, whether he tilled it or not.⁴

In the conditions then prevailing none of these three types of tenure holders could cultivate very large holdings. The tenants-at-will lacked the resources to expand cultivation by employing new servants. Even for the other landholders this option was limited by the natural increase in the numbers of the service

¹Chandra, S., Some aspects of village society in Northern India during the Eighteenth Century, Indian Historical Review, Volume I, Number 1.

²In the Pitlad purguna of the Kheda district, the nurwadars or the families of the hereditary landowners regularly collected "Bhara" or house rent from other inhabitants, "the whole of which is carried to their own account for payment of veras." Cruikshank, op.cit., p.100.

³Character of Land Tenures in the Bombay Presidency, SRBG XXVIII, New Series, 1894, p.10.

⁴DG, Kheda, pp.86. Most of the khud-kasht peasants belonged to the dominant castes. Even amongst them there were differences in the size of the owned and cultivated holdings.

castes.¹ Only a small section of the service castes did agricultural labour for their patrons and jajmans and this further limited the pool of labour available for cultivation.² The slow growth of population in the first half of the nineteenth century did little to increase labour supply. With a lot of spare land and the existence of different political states, the halis, if overexploited could still flee from the village. Expansion of cultivation was limited as much by considerations of labour supply as by the Price Depression of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Gujarat was and remained a land of small or medium scale peasant farms, whether these were self owned or cultivated by tenants. The specific area which might be defined as small or medium varied even within Gujarat. In a taluka like that of Dholka in the Ahmedabad district, where the soil was exceptionally productive, the leading peasants had more resources and the service castes "exceed the proportion usual in other well peopled purgunnas", the average size of holdings was larger.³ As we have mentioned

¹It must be noted, that at this time there were invariably many more among the landowning castes than among the service castes. In the portion of the Dholka taluka lying in the Ahmedabad district, there were 54992 persons of the landowning castes including the Muslims and about 28612 among the service castes excluding the Banias. In the portion of the Dholka taluka situated in the Kheda district, the respective figures were 9323 and 3293. In the Mehmoodabad purguna of the Kheda district, the proportion of landowners to those of the service castes was 4583 to 2191. In this situation the peasant castes had to compete for the services of the low castes rather than overexploit them to expand cultivation. Cruikshank, op.cit., pp. 44/54/63.

²Only the domestic slaves or tied labour like the halis could be used for field labour. Others like the barber or the priest provided specialized services on their own.

³Cruikshank, op.cit., p.32.

earlier the total strength of the mainly landowning and cultivating castes in Dholka, that is of the Bohra, Kanbi, Rajput, Brahman and Koli castes was said to be 54992. They were estimated to have occupied 126798 beegās or 74520 acres of land.¹ Assuming an average of 8 persons per family, we get 6874 families and about 11 acres of occupied land for each of them. Data given separately for the Kunbi caste, however, clearly shows their leading position. The Kunbis of the Lewa and Kadva type numbered 11283, but occupied 30614 acres or an average of 22 acres per family of 8 persons. They also had 3912 houses, 2374 ploughs and 635 wells. This made them a typical dominant caste from which the rich peasants of the twentieth century would arise. The effect of this pattern of land distribution would be discussed later.

In other areas of Gujarat not as well endowed as Dholka, the owned and cultivated holdings were more modest in size. In the Pitlad purgunna of the Kheda district, the 3444 acres of land occupied in 1826 were divided into 500 shares, each share being held by a separate family. Here, in the village of Anand, the land was divided into 2 principal shares each paying RS.50 as total revenue when the average rate was RS.6.25 per acre. The share of Hureedas Seeodas had been divided into 3 equal subshares of 2.7 acres each and that of Nurseedas Bhaela into 2 parts of about 4 acres each. It is clear that given the law of equal subdivision of lands between all the sons, it was the demographic structure of different families and their continued residence in

¹One standard beegā, then being used in Ahmedabad was equal to 0.5877 statute acres. Ibid., p.50.

the village which determined the size of the cultivated holding.¹ Interesting studies have shown that in the early nineteenth century, in the Deccan villages there were usually 4 owner-cultivators to one tenant.² This low ratio existed in spite of large uncultivated, but arable tracts. As Appendix II to this chapter (which summarizes the results of the surveys in Gujarat before 1872) shows, even in the most intensively cultivated Broach district 20 percent of the known arable land was unoccupied. Much more arable land was later to be discovered. In Ahmedabad, the known unoccupied arable was 57 percent of the cultivable area. The Taluqdari villages in Ahmedabad occupying at least half its area were said to be equal to supporting "a population at least four times as great as the number of the present inhabitants."³ Clearly, rural Gujarat was greatly underpopulated in 1826.⁴ The situation had not changed greatly by the eighteen forties. Surat, which had unchanged boundaries between

¹If one or more sons migrated to a different village or to an urban occupation their share of the land then became available for cultivation by other members of the family or by tenants. This would have increased the size of cultivated holdings.

²Professor Satish Chandra has shown how in the late eighteenth century even in the more backward of the Poona villages, of a sample of 34 villages, 16 had no gulkulias or tenants at will. In the rest, 968 mirasdars or hereditary owners had 128,300 beeghas, whereas 226 tenants cultivated 23875 beeghas. Chandra, S., op.cit.

³Cruikshank, op.cit., p.43.

⁴Yet, the government feared the extension of foodgrains cultivation because it further lowered prices. When in 1831, the area devoted to grains increased a little, the collector of Broach wrote that this would cause "further embarrassment in the realization of the general revenue" as this tends "to increase the supply of grain of which very little is exportable and to reduce the present insufficient prices to a still lower standard." AAR 1831/32, RD, 1833, Vol.16/484, p.139.

1822 and 1851 showed a population increase of just 8 percent.¹ Broach had a similar rate of growth.

Underpopulation and slow demographic growth were not the only problems besetting the Gujarat rural economy. Compared to the eighteen seventies the ratio of livestock, ploughcattle, ploughs, carts and houses per square mile were phenomenally low. In Kheda district which in the eighteen twenties had the highest density of population among the 4 Gujarat districts, there were in 1826 3.8 persons per house and 199 horned cattle, 31 ploughs and 19 carts per square mile. By 1872, another period of a relative economic downturn, there were despite a large increase in population after 1850 just 3.4 persons per house, 241 ploughs, 91 carts, and 1721 horned cattle per square mile.² Clearly, lack of stock and equipment was another reason for large spaces of unoccupied arable land.

Another feature which distinguished the depressed rural economy of Gujarat before the mid-nineteenth century was the character of the general rural indebtedness, which afflicted the main body of the peasants. The Revenue Farming and the manotidari system made borrowing a regular feature for the village community. Apart from the prevailing high rates of revenue, the manotidars were given 3 percent of aggregate revenue as premium. They could also charge the revenue farmers "a very high interest

¹In 1822 the population of Surat district was 454431. In 1851, it had risen to 492684. DG, Surat, p.47.

²Cruikshank, op.cit., p.117; DG, Kheda, pp.26. These figures show us the striking contrast which existed between the early and the late nineteenth century in Gujarat. They have also been put together in Appendix II of this Chapter. These figures will be referred to in later chapters.

rate of 211 percent, if they paid in advance on behalf of the village."¹ These commitments meant, that even the more backward villages borrowed heavily, often by alienating their lands and depressing further their living standards. In 1778, Captain Reynolds estimated that the 122 villages of the Broach purgunnah owed approximately 20 lakhs (20,000,000) Rupees to their manoteedars on account of balances of former revenue advances.² The survey of the Purantij purgunna in Ahmedabad in 1827 observed how the Thakurs or landowners there, had to borrow money paying "8 percent to 10 percent as manotee and 24 percent per annum as interest, added to which they must give the security of a Bhat, which is a charge of 15 to 20 Rupees more."³ These high rates of interest were the result of the compulsion to borrow because of heavy revenue charges, few sources of available credit and scarcity of coin. "Sometimes the peasants pay one and one-fourth maund or one and a half maund for every maund received 6 months ago."⁴

These debts were incurred at the cost of the consumption of even the better off peasants. Even in the early eighteen forties

¹Captain Reynolds' Survey of Broach in 1778, RD 1805, Vol.45, pps. 162 to 171. Even in 1840, in Kheda of a total revenue of Rupees 14,63,701 at least 74 percent was collected from Bankers and money-lenders who then recovered it from the cultivators. DG, Kheda, p.60.

²Reynolds, op.cit.

³Revenue Surveyor, Broach to J. A. Dunlop, Secretary Bombay Government, RD 1827, Vol.23/177, pp.196. The government abolished all debts owed to the manotidars in lieu of having provided security for revenue payments acknowledging only the ones made for personal reasons. In 1814, it also fixed the maximum rate of interest at 12 percent.

⁴Ibid, p.183.

landholders in Gujarat were said to be in debt to a large degree.¹ It was noted that "In government villages, the upper class of cultivators were in many cases deeply in debt, forced to stint themselves of every luxury, milk, butter and all their dairy produce. The lowest class of cultivators too poor to have any credit were often forced to forestall their crops to raise grain to keep them alive till harvest."²

The impression one has of Gujarat in the eighteen forties is of a depressed and unstable peasantry afflicted by the importunity of the state and the contumacy of the market. How these conditions changed after 1850 would be the theme of the other chapters.

¹DG. Ahmedabad, p.24. This was reminiscent of the situation described by Cruikshank in 1827 when he wrote that "The Patels and patteedars of most of the villages are involved to Sowkars and moneybrokers both personally and by bonds contracted in the name of the village community." Cruikshank, op.cit. p.33.

²DG, Ahmedabad, pp.164. The pattern of prevailing indebtedness in 1825 could be seen in Lony village near Pune City. Of the 84 cultivators living in Lony, 79 had taken debts from 4 Jain and 2 Marwari vanis or moneylenders. The others owed no money. Most of the loans were between RS.50 and 500. The 3 leading families, however, had borrowed an average of RS.500 each. Kumar, R., Western India in the Nineteenth Century, 1968, p.27.

A Land Survey of the Broach District Showing extent
of Alienated land in Different Villages in 1803-04.

Name of the Village (1)	No of beegas Wanted as measured in 1778 (2)	Wanted Pasetta (3)	Wanted Pasetta Wuzeefa (4)	Wanted Pasetta (5)	Wanted Pasetta (6)	Wanted Pasetta (7)	Wanted Pasetta (8)	Wanted Pasetta (9)	Alienated Land as % of total land (10)	Waste land (11)
Allepretty	881	26	45	126	25	-	123	345	39%	186
Vazelpoorputty	1222	-	150	600	-	-	-	750	61%	200
Dungareeputty	1433	-	-	-	-	-	612	612	43%	297
Sulmwagaputty	820	-	48	74	11	-	76	209	25%	186
Cufsuchputty	726	-	101	90	-	-	-	191	26%	164
Qamarah	1574	171	199	-	-	-	-	370	24%	72
Anganshwa	1805	140	196	-	-	-	-	336	19%	769
Alchum	3086	400	314	-	540	75	76	1406	46%	1032
Maher	3466	175	280	111	-	-	-	566	16%	119
Mawala	1956	245	242	-	-	-	-	467	24%	633
Maganma	7938	864	242	-	-	-	-	1106	14%	1119
Asemnaghur	1154	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Qorah	4363	1193	536	-	181	400	-	1912	44%	1280
Eker	6571	250	340	77	-	-	-	1738	26%	1884
Qopraler	1458	716	127	24	-	-	-	352	24%	752
Amerpoor	1875	716	117	-	-	-	-	844	45%	576
Anan	4998	-	412	-	-	-	-	412	8.2%	3496
Awbote	2496	632	266	-	-	-	-	898	36%	661
Wasa	4168	574	354	45	-	-	-	873	21%	1170
Boosee	2322	125	95	45	-	-	-	265	11%	1042
Paleree	1563	150	198	-	24	20	-	312	20%	770
Bagusana	1000	-	123	-	-	-	-	123	12%	696
Vernachasade	3020	204	228	-	36	-	-	468	15%	1341
Pepphar Cade	3440	178	218	100	-	-	-	496	14%	1217
Bagdolee	1045	68	64	-	-	-	-	132	13%	330
Vansum	6514	1032	392	50	-	-	-	1407	22%	2252
Watusap	3410	6803	234	-	-	-	165	1030	32%	1553
Balatoon	1515	76	149	336	25	-	-	586	39%	128
Bambooser	1355	387	171	-	49	-	-	607	45%	480

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
agra	6905	1199	395	-	372	-	140	2106	30%	1176
achanade	2853	361	225	-	-	-	-	586	20%	1215
areathe	3660	121	93	-	79	-	-	-293	8%	1564
allendiah	2457	443	2259	51	51	-	-	804	33%	566
urdalah	2276	-	278	20	-	-	-	298	13%	1295
arcade	4892	925	187	-	-	-	-	1112	23%	1142
arulan	2228	118	166	130	199	-	-	485	22%	506
asana	2597	154	367	-	-	-	-	727	28%	1586
owrah	6345	219	238	-	74	-	-	477	7.5%	3426
alode	2451	546	226	-	-	-	-	844	34%	908
rallsah	7569	861	536	130	-	-	-	1528	20%	2425
ankarea	6001	-	219	-	-	-	-	219	4%	1381
eeekariah	2150	-	245	-	-	-	-	245	11%	1084
alsumund	1616	210	162	-	100	-	-	462	28%	299
aneshwa	6508	97	259	-	-	-	-	356	6%	3367
hanwagee	2545	13	197	120	-	-	-	330	13%	781
hucklade	3759	-	362	20	455	-	-	537	14%	1421
umqarh	3293	261	271	87	-	-	-	619	19%	1352
unade	2186	467	183	-	-	-	-	650	30%	900
asenpoor	911	-	99	27	-	-	-	126	14%	464
ansemappoor	1729	300	269	-	-	-	-	569	33%	359
atrull	1111	104	118	30	-	-	-	242	22%	443
abalee	1563	141	198	-	18	-	-	357	23%	575
arole	4922	169	368	163	-	-	-	700	14%	1929
uaderah	3130	36	297	-	7	-	-	250	8%	480
arah	6649	186	600	339	-	-	-	1125	17%	2898
andah	5198	1325	250	-	-	-	-	1618	31%	869
agaun	3196	-	128	43	-	-	-	171	5%	893
eeepun	1896	154	168	141	5	-	-	468	25%	791
ufsulpoor	4289	-	156	-	-	-	-	156	4%	1386

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Rahada	3378	269	132	15	-	-	-	416	12%	1039
Chlickeepoor	6970	-	193	-	-	-	-	193	3%	4854
Shapoor	2055	250	229	-	-	-	-	479	23%	623
Sonoma	1655	231	169	-	25	-	-	425	26%	779
Sumnebaben	2469	268	143	-	-	-	-	411	17%	665
Suffohedeen Hafson	554	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	182
Sundoda	10507	65	210	-	20	142	-	310	3%	747
Samaloda	3346	110	174	-	-	-	-	384	11%	1151
Sumneratrade	5212	335	350	-	-	-	-	683	13%	1396
Shanpoor	784	-	28	5	175	-	-	33	4.5%	220
Sohadra	932	127	101	-	-	-	-	353	38%	421
Sunnala	2446	1301	170	-	226	-	-	699	59%	47
Shabad	6924	-	486	-	-	-	-	486	7%	3738
Shubone	8284	509	504	-	-	-	-	1013	12%	2771
Shutpone	4066	277	153	-	-	-	-	430	11%	1475
Soonn	3262	618	273	-	-	-	-	891	27%	1169
Shree Cotee	2470	527	182	-	20	-	-	729	30%	1114
Shemalena	1990	410	116	-	-	-	-	526	26%	363
Sanen	1499	195	131	50	-	-	-	374	25%	448
Shaickwa	2736	600	240	60	-	-	-	1002	37%	758
Sachan	2633	723	342	-	101	-	-	1065	40%	966
Saladra	2538	864	228	-	-	-	-	1093	43%	712
Mleypoor	639	42	83	25	-	-	-	150	23%	356
Kanta	2884	439	195	25	-	-	-	670	23%	-
Kefslow	2715	461	159	-	-	-	-	820	30%	533
Kumbolee	2024	119	134	-	-	-	-	305	15%	921
Goree	1873	250	109	-	-	-	-	359	19%	726
Kundalee	2539	420	121	-	-	-	-	541	21%	991
Koondhar	1715	108	-	-	-	-	-	108	6%	774
Kemauh	3149	-	157	-	-	27	-	185	6%	1741

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Kroda	153	-	27	-	-	-	-	27	18%	-
Kafsud	3395	95	307	100	-	-	-	502	15%	1140
Koorla	1423	257	145	-	-	-	-	402	28%	92
Kahana	2269	141	181	-	-	-	-	322	14%	598
Kalode	4903	870	268	-	-	-	-	1138	23%	964
Ghumnade	4125	607	249	145	-	-	-	992	24%	1780
Kifsane	3061	633	248	102	86	15	-	1084	35%	1108
Koluwateestah	1959	-	288	-	-	-	-	288	15%	924
Kulamau	2090	95	76	-	-	-	-	171	8%	470
Kefsan	1807	150	168	129	-	-	-	447	25%	477
Kingot	4869	277	27	-	-	-	-	3074	63%	976
Kumtanoih	2372	-	100	-	-	-	-	100	4%	741
Kolehalishah	3016	380	213	-	-	-	-	593	20%	753
Korelah	4036	56	195	-	-	-	-	253	6%	1182
Koonchien	3690	302	203	-	-	-	-	565	14%	1944
Kundalen	490	341	10	-	-	-	-	351	72%	55
Kunda	1223	532	140	7	33	7	7	227	19%	777
Lohara	-	532	140	-	33	-	-	227	19%	777
Neomber	3717	-	275	-	-	-	-	275	7.4%	273
Moatch	1585	352	119	-	-	-	-	471	30%	343
Moorsadabad	1506	-	186	238	-	-	-	424	28%	857
Munfsrah	1959	181	337	-	52	-	-	815	42%	780
Moosumpoor	304	20	20	7	-	-	-	27	9%	159
Modudala	7816	204	126	-	-	-	-	330	4%	385
Nundalone	1380	70	189	122	-	-	-	381	28%	282
Nande	1390	186	168	-	-	-	-	354	25%	764
Nehorah	3207	127	265	-	154	-	-	547	17%	713
Bhahulu	3167	242	195	67	-	-	-	504	16%	849
Valul	7251	1455	574	-	-	-	-	2029	28%	1811

Appendix II Population and Stock in Selected Gujarat Talukas in 1826 and 1872

District and Taluka	Number of Villages		Av. No. of Inhabitants Per Village		Av. No. of Cultivated Acres Per Village		Number of Houses in The Taluka		Av. No. of Persons Per House		Number of Cultivated Acres Per Horned Cattle		Number of Cultivated Acres Per Plough		Number of Cultivated Acres Per Cart	
	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872	1826	1872
<u>Broach District</u>																
Broach	162	99	604	652	1052	1076	22753	18290	4.3	3.5	NA	3.7	NA	18	NA	25
Ankleshwar	50	99	515	638	864	1010	6001	18355	4.3	3.4	2.5	2.4	15.5	12.6	NA	19
Jambusar	99	82	469	992	946	1091	12723	25966	3.7	3.1	4.6	2.3	26.5	15	49.4	18
Amod	42	51	389	728	1195	1408	4075	11367	4	3.3	4.8	3.8	28.6	21.2	56.5	28
<u>Kneda District</u>																
Mehmadabad	11	57	251	1504	872	1022	2094	25817	4.1	3.3	3.3	1.2	17	7.5	54.7	17
<u>Ahmedabad District</u>																
Daskroi	146	148	486	1684	739	1332	21721	40870	3.3	6	2.02	1.6	14	9.4	42.5	35
Parantij	66	157	291	681	413	523	5527	29175	3.5	3.6	1.5	0.9	14	5.6	75.8	29.6
<u>Surat District</u>																
Olpad	143	116	332	571	463	865	10572	15746	4.5	4.2	2.9	2.5	17.5	17.6	32	16.4

N.B. 1. Horned Cattle means the total of Oxen, Cows and Buffaloes.

2. These figures are from Captain Cruikshank's Survey published in 1826 and referred to above and from the Chapter on Subdivisions in the 1878 edition of the Bombay Presidency District Gazetteers.

3. Since Total Area was to change drastically due to later surveys, cultivated area provides a better indices of comparison between 1826 and 1872.

4. Changes in the number of villages would mostly be on account of administrative changes.

5. NA means Not Available.

CHAPTER IIThe Ryotwari Revenue System in Gujarat 1850 to 1930

By 1840, it was apparent to even the most conservative among the Company officials, that overtaxation of the land was having a counter-productive effect on the Bombay government's finances. Robert Pringle's attempt to fix the revenue on the basis of Ricardo's law of differential rent in the Indapur taluka of the Poona district had resulted in a sharp contraction of cultivation.¹ Pringle's experiment only further highlighted the harmful effects of overassessment which in some areas was already leading to a decline in net collections of land revenue. It also showed the dangers inherent in enforcing theoretical principles formulated in the context of western capitalism on a small-holding peasant economy like that of the Bombay Presidency.² Robertson's enquiry into Pringle's settlement, undertaken in 1839, also revealed a widespread misclassification of soils resulting from the collusion between the village officials and the hereditary landowners or meerasdars.³

¹The nature of Pringle's settlement has been analyzed by Ravinder Kumar. The difference between his principles and those of Wingate and Goldsmid are discussed below. Kumar, op.cit. (1969), pp. 66-71.

²Pringle assumed that per acre costs of cultivation across different holdings would be the same. In his scheme, the only factors which influenced the determination of average profit on different types of plots were differing soil fertility and distance from markets. However, costs of cultivation were also affected by variations in the use of hired labor, to take but one example. This was determined by the number of working members in a family and the kind of work they were prepared to do. Some of the castes would not touch the plough or let women work on the fields.

³Kumar, op.cit., 1969, pp. 104-107.

Robertson emphasized the need to set up a separate Survey conducted by a team of trained Indian and English officials.

Overassessment of land was a worry not only for the Company's officials. With an increasingly uncertain political situation in North America, the more thoughtful of the British industrial and commercial classes were looking towards India as a possible alternative supplier of raw cotton. These were the years when various institutions and individuals ranging from Alexander Mackay to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce enquired into the prospects for a more rapid growth of cotton cultivation in India. The Bombay Presidency being a traditional supplier of cotton naturally attracted their attention.¹ It was the general consensus, that the heavy burden of land revenue discouraged the peasants from growing cotton since they were not assured of the profits of cultivation.² These pleas seemed to have had a definite impact on government policy. The new thirty year Ryotwari settlements of the 1840s were first introduced in those areas, which were considered most suitable for the expansion of cotton cultivation. Evidence to this effect is to be found, for example, in the extensive personal archives of Sir George Wingate, for many years, the Superintendent of Revenue Operations in the Bombay Presidency. In one of his memoranda, he pointed out that in 47 of the 79 talukas settled by 1853, the Revenue Settlements had been introduced

¹Breaking the Maratha monopoly over the supplies of handicrafts and raw cotton was an important motive behind the English annexation of Gujarat. Nightingale, P., Trade and Empire in Western India, 1970, pp. 136 to 176.

²Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Memo to Bombay Government, Report of the Select Committee on the growth of cotton in India, PP, Vol. 9, 1847/48, p.9.

because they were "the most important in regard to the future extension of cotton cultivation." According to him "The introduction of the Revenue survey settlement had also been followed by a steady extension of cotton cultivation."¹

George Wingate collaborated with Goldsmid to produce the first draft of the Joint Report published in 1840. In 1847, the principles laid down in the Joint Report were declared to be the official basis for the work of the new survey and settlement which was to cover the entire Bombay Presidency. As opposed to Pringle's advocacy of Ricardo's theory of rent, Goldsmid and Wingate were influenced by Richard Jones' ideas on peasant tenures. Jones had argued, that peasants produced in order to recover a given wage or subsistence determined by the existing standard of living. It followed that any taxation of agriculture could succeed in encouraging peasant cultivation, only if it did not cut into peasant subsistence.² However, if this condition was met, the peasants would be encouraged to accumulate capital. In order to accomplish this aim, the Joint Report proposed a number of steps.

First the Ryotwari Settlement was to be based on an entirely new survey and classification of soils. The rates then decided on were to be introduced in every village and guaranteed

¹Memo to Bombay Government, Papers of Sir George Wingate, Box 117, File 2, 1853.

²The influence of Richard Jones on Goldsmid and Wingate has been discussed by Eric Stokes. Stokes, E., The English Utilitarians and India, 1957, p.127.

for 30 years during which the occupants of different fields would pay no additional tax even if they carried out improvements on their land. Although the rates according to which the revenue was to be assessed were fixed, the actual amount each cultivator paid in any year was dependent on the extent of land he occupied and the condition of the harvest. At the start of the revenue year in July, the cultivator could decide to give up a part of his lands or undertake to cultivate some more. Revenue was to be paid only on occupied area and after an annual inspection had determined whether the season was a normal one. Provision was thus made for remitting a part or whole of the revenue, if the crops had been damaged by drought, disease or pests. In 1884, this principle was codified into the anna valuation system, whereby a district standard yield, revised every five years, was used as the criterion to assess the current state of the crops. After 1899, remissions of revenue were made according to the anna value ascribed to the harvest.¹

The occupant under the Ryotwari system could mortgage, sell or bequeath his fields as long as he paid the annual assessment on time.¹ He occupied either one or more survey numbers, or a part of one, which was called a pot number. Initially, the survey number consisted of that area which could ordinarily be tilled by a pair of bullocks. Later on this rule was qualified to say that the survey number should not include more than 5 sub-occupancies even if their total area was less than that which would be tilled by a pair of bullocks.² The occupants of separate fields, whether these

¹Goldsmid and Wingate, Joint Report, October 1840, pp.VIII, Para 44, Papers Connected with the Bombay Revenue Settlement, Calcutta 1883.

²Survey and Settlement Manual, op.cit., Vol.I., p.221.

consisted of survey numbers or pot numbers were responsible for paying their dues to the Patel. Any unauthorized arrears were to be met with action against individual occupants except in the Bhagdāri and Narvadāri villages, where joint village responsibility was still recognized.¹ However, if any pot number was relinquished, it had to be taken up by the other occupants of that survey number or else they had to pay the assessment. This was obviously a revenue saving device and it was also hoped that it would slow down, if not prevent, fragmentation of land into tiny plots. Later, it became clear that the law of equal division of land between the surviving male heirs and the further growth of tenancy was creating a discrepancy between those registered as revenue payers and the actual occupants of the land. The Record of Rights was introduced in 1903 to enumerate the existing owners and the tenants. It was made the official basis for assigning revenue liabilities by Act V of 1913. In this way, the Ryotwari system in Gujarat strove to ensure that the owners of the land paid the revenue and that this burden was not passed off onto the tenants, unless it was made part of the rent.²

The fundamental innovation started by the Joint Report was the system of soil classification and the grouping of villages into relatively homogenous ones, each of which was subject to different maximum and minimum rates. More than anything else, it was this systematization which overcame the medley of rates that had plagued the revenue settlements before 1840. It is therefore

¹The Survey was conducted in these villages as well. Each field had its assessment fixed, although its actual payment was made the collective responsibility of the co-parcenary body of the hereditary land owners.

²Survey and Settlement Manual, op.cit., Vol.I, p.236.

necessary to consider this aspect of the revenue survey at some length.

The measurement of fields was now done by cross-staff and chain according to the standard acre.¹ The soils were, as traditionally, divided into three types, Dry Crop, Rice and Garden land. The Dry Crop soil was dependent on the rains. Rice lands had sufficient water to grow that crop. Garden soils not only had irrigation facilities, but also the soil to grow the more valuable crops like sugarcane, fruits and vegetables. Since the classification of Rice and Garden lands was done mainly according to the nature of their water supplies, they were treated on their own. The Dry Crop soils, which constituted an overwhelming proportion of cultivated land in Gujarat, were divided into three types according to colour - Black, Red and Gravelly - and each of these further into three subtypes according to depth. They were then given values on a 16 anna scale divided into 9 sections in such a way as to keep the ratios of their difference equal to one another. This was a major break from the kind of scale used earlier by Robert Pringle. He had left an equal margin between each class (100, 89, 78 and so on) and thereby wrongly weighted the lower classes. In his scale, the figure 100 was supposed to correspond to a field with the maximum assessment. The difference between the first and second type of soils was 11/100 or 11 percent, but that between the eighth and the ninth type was 11/23 or 50 percent. In the new scale used by Wingate, the difference between the various classes was so fixed as to reduce the values ascribed to the lower categories of soils. If Pringle's

¹A special Survey Department supervised by English and Indian officials was set up. Hence, there was no longer any need for relying on village officials who might favour the local elites.

scale descended from 100 to 89, 78, 67, 56, 45, 34, 23 and 12, Wingate's scale ran from 100 to 81, 64.8, 51.2, 39.5, 29.7, 21.7, 15.2 and 10.2.¹ Whereas in the case of Pringle's classification, the lowest four soils had an average value of 28.5, in that of Wingate, they had an average value of only 19.2, a good 33 percent lower. Since the maximum rate for a group of villages was calculated by comparing its soil classification with those that had been made previously in other settlements in the region, the values assigned to various types of soils affected the pitch of the revenue rates imposed on them.²

The classification of soils was further adjusted for faults like the presence of salt, lime or poor drainage, each one of these meriting a certain reduction on the 16 anna scale. In dividing the villages into groups, their distance from the prominent market centres in the neighbourhood was also taken into account. Indeed in those cases where two groups of villages had similar soils but lay at different distances from the local markets, they were put into distinct units each having its own maximum rate. The effort of the settlement officers seems to have been to make the revenue rates proportional to the cost of production on separate plots, so that cultivators growing the same crops might get an equal profit from an acre or beegāh of cultivated land. Thus, allowances were made on

¹Survey and Settlement Manual, op.cit., Vol.I, p.47.

²The maximum rate for a group of villages was the basis for deriving the rates applicable to other orders of soil within that group. In order that the maximum rate itself should be determined in a judicious manner, the Survey was divided into the Deccan, the Konkan and the Gujarat Surveys, each corresponding to a broad geographical and climatic region and having an administrative establishment of its own.

the 16 anna scale for the distance of a particular field from the village, this being taken to mean the place where most of the peasants lived. The farther the field, the greater would be the difficulties and cost of cultivating it. Often, "the classification values of poor lands was lowered proportionally more than that of the richer lands for distance from the village."¹ Or else, if poorer villages happened to be situated among groups of villages with richer soils, separate maximum rates were adopted for different areas within the same village. "In the Bardoli taluka of Surat, for instance, the villages of the kaliparaj or the poorer castes, in addition to having the benefits of lower rates of assessment, have distance scales applied to their fields, which still further reduced their assessments relative to those of the Ujaliparaj or the higher castes."² Once again in this case it was hoped that the lower castes would see these concessions as an incentive to produce for the market.

The "original settlements" in Gujarat conducted on the basis of surveys recommended by the Joint Report saw a large reduction in the rates of revenue. What is more, the rates for the poorer soils were often reduced by a greater margin than those for the richer soils. A notable example of this was to be seen in the talukas of Ahmedabad settled between 1853 and 1863.³

¹Ibid, p.127.

²Ibid, p.128.

³DG, Ahmedabad, pp.178.

Ahmedabad Survey Rates (1853-1863)

Sub Division	Dry Crop Rates (per acre)				Rice Land Rates			
	Highest		Lowest		Highest		Lowest	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p	Rates Rs-as-p
Dholka	19-0-3	2-6-0	0-11-0	0-3-0	17-6-9	8-6-0	1-9-6	0-12-0
Dhandhuka	4-15-11	4-0-0	1-12-11	0-3-6	-----	3-3-0		2-10-6
Viramgam	3-3-0	2-0-0	0-6-9	0-4-0	7-3-7	6-7-0	1-4-5	0-11-6
Gogha	1-4-5	1-15-6	0-10-2	0-5-0				
Jetalpur	10-5-0	3-0-0	0-6-9	0-2-6	15-13-4	9-3-0	1-4-5	0-8-6
Parantij	3-6-5	2-8-0	0-10-2	0-2-0	3-6-5	4-4-0	0-13-7	0-12-6
Daskroi	7-3-10	9-13-6	0-6-9	0-5-0	14-15-9	13-2-0	1-7-9	1-4-0

In the case of the Dry crop rates, two talukas saw an increase in the maximum rates; the rest together were reduced by 48 percent. The lowest rates, presumably applied to the poorer soils, were reduced in every case by an average of 56 percent compared to the old rates. For the rice crop rates too, the maximum was reduced on the average by 28 percent, but the minimum was reduced in each case by at least 36 percent.

The rates prevailing in Surat in 1876 had been levied during the course of the settlements in the 1850s. When compared to the rates prevailing in the 1820s, the new ones showed a substantial reduction.

Surat Survey Rates (1876)

Year	Dry Crop		Garden		Rice	
	Black Soil	Light Soil	Black Soil	Light Soil	Irrigated Soil	Unirrigated Soil
	Rs-as-p	Rs-as-p	Rs-as-p	Rs-as-p	Rs-as-p	Rs-as-p
1822						
Minimum per acre	0-13-7	0-13-7	2-8-10	1-11-2	6-12-10	3-3-0
Maximum	19-5-4	22-1-0	24-10-8	30-9-8	30-9-8	28-1-1
1876						
Minimum	0-1-6		1-2-6		9-15-0	
Maximum	15-5-0		25-5-0		23-1-6	

In this case, the various rates of 1822 were consolidated into one rate. Here again, the maximum rates for the Dry Crop, Garden and rice lands were reduced respectively by 28 percent, 10 percent and 20 percent. The corresponding margins for the lowest ones were 92 percent; 28 percent and 81 percent.¹

The new classification of soils alone was not responsible for the large margin of reduction in revenue rates in Gujarat. Another major reason concerned the very period (1850-1863) during which most of these settlements were made in the Gujarat districts. This period had been preceded by a severe price depression. The average prices of the preceding decade were now used for estimating the likely value of the gross product in the following thirty years. Since the price level rose steeply after 1860 and continued even after that to be much higher than that of the 1840s, the share of land revenue in the gross agricultural product declined even more than was indicated in the reduction of revenue rates.²

A better idea of the extent to which the burden of land revenue payments diminished may be had from the reductions in the aggregate revenue demand. In Ahmedabad, for example, the revenue demanded decreased as follows:³

¹DG. Surat, p.222.

²Cf. Appendix II to this Chapter.

³DG, Ahmedabad, p.178.

Ahmedabad: Aggregate Revenue Demand				
Taluka	Year of Settlement	Old Revenue Rupees	New Revenue Rupees	Percentage Difference Rupees
Dholka	1853-58	213389	133689	-37%
Dhandhuka	1856	46241	32578	-29%
Viramgam	1857	112658	89749	-20%
Gogha		2223	1969	-11%
Jetalpur	1858-63	156384	126789	-17%
Parantij	1860	80564	78517	-2.5%
Daskroi	1860	200969	185225	-7.8%
Total		812428	651506	-20%

It also did so in the Broach district.¹

Broach Aggregate Revenue Demand			
Taluka	Pre 1848 Average Demand Rupees	Annual Demand In 1848 Rupees	% age Difference
Broach	414860	371043	-10.5%
Ankleshwar	146550	133985	-8.5%
Wagra	391356	345484	-11.7%
Amod	142424	109398	-22.8%
Uambusar	427890	350340	-18.1%
Hansot	141472	140628	-1%
Total	1,664,552	1,450,878	-13%

Even when the aggregate revenue rose due to new area being brought under the plough, the rate per acre nevertheless went down. This happened in the Kheda district.

Kheda Survey Financial Statement						
Taluka	Year of Settlement	10 yrs.avg.	Year of Settlement		Survey	System
		Collection Before new Settlement Rupees	Total Collection Rupees	Rate per acre Rs-as-p	Total Collection Rupees	Rate per Acre Rs-as-p
Mahudha	1862/63	170264	190739	3-10-11	203487	2-12-1
Matar	1862/63	174085	202765	3-8-11	241071	3-11-0
Nadiad	1865/66	215017	213132	4-2-1	230515	4-6-2
Borsad	1866/67	319100	319455	4-12-4	328913	4-14-3
Kapadvanj	1863/64	64742	72844	1-9-4	100353	1-8-0
Thasra	1863/64	133411	144511	2-12-3	166806	2-6-8
Total		1,076,621	1143447	3-6-4	1271147	3-3-4

As may be seen from Appendix II to this Chapter, the three

¹DG, Broach and Surat, p.492.

talukas which experienced small increases of 5 percent, 6 percent and 2 percent at the same time saw a much larger rise in the average price level during the same period.¹ The rest of the talukas in the Kheda district saw a reduction of 8%, 4% and 14% bringing down the average for the district by about 6%.² Soon afterwards the practice of restricting increases in revenue to below the extent of the rise in prices was made law by a Government resolution of 29th October, 1874. This law limited the overall increase permitted on the dry crop lands of a taluka or group of villages to 33 percent, on a single village to 66 percent and on an individual holding to 100 percent.³

Limitations on the rise in revenue rates were not in themselves sufficient to enable the cultivators to benefit from a lower assessment. The weight of revenue was affected by the timing of the instalments, because even a small demand could force the cultivators to borrow at high rates, if revenue was collected before the harvest. This was often the case prior to 1850. In 1833, a Report on the Jalalpur taluka described the prevalence in Surat of "collecting the revenue upon a system called the 'cutch oopuj ni virut' which necessitated the realization of instalments upon the approximate yield of crops i.e. demanding the kist before the produce was sold, and in many instances before it had ripened."⁴

¹ Compared to the prices prevailing between 1851 and 1855, the Index of prices for Jowar, Rice and Wheat was at least 100 percent higher for the following period. (Appendix II).

² DG, Kheda, p.112.

³ Papers on Bombay Revenue Settlement, op.cit., p. XLIX.

⁴ SR, Jalalpur, 1862, op.cit., Appendix p.10.

The Broach taluka Administration Report for 1855/56 noted, that before 1848, "The cultivator was often called upon to pay before it was possible for him to dispose of the produce."¹

The Joint Report began a reconsideration of the question of fixing the dates on which land revenue was to be paid. In Para 27, it proposed that the Revenue instalments should for the kharif districts be collected on 15 December, 1 February, 15 March and 1st May. These dates fell after the main harvesting period. Even in the case of a late harvest the cultivators would have had to borrow money for paying only one or two instalments. For the Rabi districts the days of payment were to fall at an interval of one month starting from 15 January. According to Wingate, their purpose was to enable the ryots to pay their dues "from bonafide sales of product" and to distribute the collections over 6 instead of 4 months as then in vogue.² These dates were still not entirely suitable. In Gujarat, the kharif crop was always harvested after December, so that there was no *raison d'etre* for trying to collect the first instalment on the fifteenth of that month. More significantly, the exact period of harvesting could vary not only from one area to another according to the crops grown, but it also depended on the timing of the rainfall in any given year. The rigidity of the dates was bound to trouble the cultivators.

¹AAR, 1855/56, RD Vol.II, 1860, p.123.

²Papers on Bombay Revenue Settlement, op.cit., p. XLiii. The exact periods of harvesting separate crops will be discussed in the Chapter on the cropping pattern.

Following objections raised by the collectors in 1875, the Bombay Government empowered the collector, in consultation with the Revenue Commissioner, "to fix instalments for each village or groups of villages as may be best suited to its circumstances."¹ The collectors could change the new dates which were now fixed as 10 January and 10 March for the kharif villages and 10 February and 10 April for the Rabi villages.² Evidence given before the Famine Commission confirmed that these dates were being observed.³ Instances were not lacking when collectors did change the dates for the payment of instalments. For example, in 1895, in Broach because of excessive rain, the cotton, wheat and laung crops were a month late. Accordingly, the date for the collection of revenue was shifted from 10 March to 1st April.⁴ The same year in Surat, the collection of an amount as large as RS164251 was transferred from 10 March to 10 April.⁵ Earlier on receipt of a petition from some inhabitants of Jambusar complaining, that being wheat growing villages in the midst of a cotton area, the dates fixed for Rabi areas were still too early for them, the Government agreed to fix 10 April and

¹Letter No. 5929 of 1874, RD Vol. 104, 1875.

²Letter No. 726 of 5 February 1825, RD Vol.104, 1875.

³Letter No. 1412, RD Vol.118, 1882, p.222.

⁴Memo from Commissioner, Northern Division, No. 6386, 22 August 1895, RD Vol.240, 1895, p.123.

⁵Ibid. The Administration knew that this flexibility would only help in the collection of the full revenue amount. In his Administration Report for the Broach taluka in 1888/89, the Assistant Collector observed that "the postponement of last years' instalment in some of the villages of Broach, Amod and Jambusar had proved beneficial with the result that this year the whole of the postponed revenue had been paid." AAR 1888/89, RD Vol.25, 1889, p.37.

10 May as the new dates. This change applied to 10 villages in Broach, 25 in Wagra, 6 in Amod and 22 in Jambusar taluka.¹ Given these practices, it is not true to claim, as David Hardiman does, that the mamlutdars in the Surat district were in the habit of always collecting the revenue in one lump sum, and that too before the harvest.² In 1884, in fact, the government introduced a scheme of giving discounts of 3 1/8 percent on advance payments of revenue instalments.³ As one Administration Report pointed out "A large proportion of instalments were now being paid up about the time of falling due and a considerable number in Amod before they fell due, the tenders of prepayment being voluntary."⁴

It must at the same time be emphasized that the very dependence of the system on the personal discretion of the Commissioner or the collector also laid it open to occasional

¹Petition from Sulayuman and other inhabitants of Moujey Deora, Jambusar, to Revenue Commissioner, Northern Division, 14 November 1866, RD. Vol.32, 1867. In 1888/89, the collector was of the Opinion that despite a less than fair season, the people in Jambusar had been sufficiently well off to avoid having to work on the Drainage Channel being built by the Public Works Department. Nonetheless, since in the Bara villages or the less fertile tracts, they had complained a great deal about their inability to meet the revenue demands in 10 villages the payment of revenue was postponed." RD Vol.25, 1889, p.40.

²Hardiman, D., Peasant Nationalists of Gujarat, Kheda District, 1917 to 1934, 1981, p.51.

³Letter No. 6526, 13 August 1884, RD Vol.270, 1884.

⁴AAR, 1855/56, RD Vol. 11, 1860; Also, AAR 1888/89, RD Vol. 25, 1889.

misjudgement, misuse and inefficiency. For example, the Revenue Commissioner reprimanded the acting collector of Poona for trying to collect the revenue instalments before they were due. The collector was accused of having agreed to the opinions of the mamlutdar without inspecting the fields himself, thereby "constraining the ryots to dispose of their kharif grains for prices unduly low and as regards the Rubbee forcing them to raise money before the harvest."¹

Clearly, the refusal of the local bureaucracy to postpone the revenue collection in 1918 and 1930 played its part in provoking the peasants into supporting Gandhi's satyagraha.² This was not, however, a necessary or recurring malaise, but rather a local and occasional one.

Some of the surveys conducted by advocates of nationalism made similar observations. Kumarappa found, that whereas the rice growing villages in the Matar taluka of Kheda district found it convenient to pay the first instalment in January, those growing tobacco, cotton and wheat did not. Yet, in spite of the fact that his survey took place in the midst of the great price depression of the early 1930s, it was only the dates of the first instalment which were being complained about. In Kumarappa's sample, a large number of the peasants had to borrow money to pay their revenue.³ This

¹RD Vol.74, 1890, p.202.

²The facts of the case have been stated by David Hardiman in various publications. His interpretation of complaints about the burden of land revenue being a manifestation of the very nature of the revenue system or a longterm economic decline in Gujarat are open to doubts. Hardiman op.cit.; idem, The Crisis of the Lesser Patidars: Peasant Agitations in Kheda District, Gujarat 1917-34, in Low, D.A. ed. Congress and the Raj, op.cit.

³Kumarappa, J.C., A Survey of Matar taluka, Kheda district, 1931, pp. 81 to 83.

reflected not only the existing fall in prices, but the cropping pattern dominated by foodgrains, which yielded a much lower income than the other cash crops.¹ The extent to which local conditions varied was shown by another survey of the Olpad taluka in Surat carried out at about the same time as the one by Kumarappa.

According to J. B. Shukla's detailed investigations, borrowing for the payment of land revenue formed just 0.35 percent of the debts taken for agricultural purposes. Being a cotton growing area, the conditions in the Olpad taluka were more representative of general conditions in Gujarat than those prevailing in the Matar taluka.²

By the later nineteenth century the collection of revenue had become more systematic and more subject to check. Overtime, several officials came to oversee each other within small groups of villages. By the 1870s, a district like Surat had one collector and three assistant collectors. There was one mamlutdar for each of the talukas or subdivisions, but none was hereditary. Of the 763 village headmen, (Patels), 638 were paid through government stipends. The 403 Talatis were each to look after 1245 inhabitants

¹The conditions prevailing in the cotton tracts were best brought out in an enquiry conducted by the Indian Central Cotton Committee. With respect to Broach and Surat districts and some other areas, its investigations clearly showed "that loans are required only at or before the commencement of cultivation operations. In Middle Gujarat and the Punjab no loans were taken, the land assessment and the water rates being paid out of the sale proceeds of early pickings." Indian Central Cotton Committee, General Report on Eight Investigations into the finance and marketing of cultivators' cotton, Bombay, 1928, p.9.

²Shukla, J.B., Life and Labor in a Gujarat Taluka, 1937, p.231. None of the other surveys in this period, apart from that of Kumarappa mention the payment of land revenue as a cause for peasant indebtedness. Mukhtyar, G.C., Life and Labor in a South Gujarat Village, 1930, p.291; Desai, M.B., The Rural Economy of Gujarat, 1948, p.148.

paying Rupees 5554 as annual land revenue.¹ A specific feature of the Bombay administration was the strict insistence that the Assistant collectors spend seven months of the year touring within the talukas in their charge.² Evidence given before the Decentralization Commission suggested, that these tours in normal years did act as safety-valves for ventilating local grievances.³ By 1890 circle inspectors and Bhag karkuns had been added to the revenue inspection and land registration machinery. Each taluka had at least two such officials for every four villages. In Broach, there were 753 patels or village headmen, 210 talātis or accountants and 5851 village servants for 410 government villages.⁴ Since 1850, most of them had been informed about official rules and procedures. A. Malet, when he was chief secretary at Bombay even got copies of the Joint Report translated into Marathi, Kannada, and Gujarati. These were then lithographed "at the government press for the use of every district officer and kulkarni."⁵ After 1904, it was made compulsory for wamlatdars to do

¹DG, Surat and Broach, p.225.

²Report of the Royal Commission on Decentralization in India, Vol.I, p.199, PP, 1908 XLIV.

³R. C. Artal, a Deputy Collector in Belgaum pointed out, that he received many more complaints while touring than during his stay at the district headquarters. He also described, how every year the camps were held at 6 or 7 places in the different parts of the taluka. As the location and timing of these camps became known, they discouraged the growth of local despotisms. Evidence given in Bombay, before the Royal Commission on Decentralization in India, pp. 29/30, PP, 1908, XLVI.

⁴Rogers, op.cit., Vol.II, pp. 188/211.

⁵Circular by A. Malet, George Wingate Papers, Box 115, File 3.

a two year stint as probationary officers before being granted permanent appointments. During this period, they had to pass departmental examinations and acquire practical experience by working with senior officials.¹ The emphasis was on efficiency which would foster a reliance on rules meant in this case to recover the stipulated revenue and encourage the peasantry to expand cultivation.

Ultimately, the impact of the original settlements can only be assessed in relation to the situation prevailing before 1850. Certain broad features of the changes which occurred may be noted here, leaving their detailed treatment for other chapters of this dissertation. The year of settlement everywhere signalled a steep decline in the overall amount of remissions. These now became restricted to bad seasons or years with floods or to areas suffering from longer term problems like soil salinity, not unknown or unexpected in the coastal districts. Again all the districts saw an expansion of cultivated area leading to an increase in the total land revenue.² So also was there a corresponding increase in houses, cattle, and carts. These facts were subsequently made the basis of increases in the revenue rates at the time of the first revision settlements, in the 1880s. At that time revenue rates were also raised, because instead of charging for the average area irrigated,

¹Lamb, R.A., Chief Secretary, Bombay Presidency, Evidence before Decentralization Commission, op.cit., p.10.

²The Surat district yielded £197506 in 1827/28. By 1874/75 this had increased by 26 percent. In the Broach district, the average annual amount collected as land revenue was £147479 between 1830/31 and 1839/40; £160563 between 1840/41 and 1849/50; £148800 between 1850/51 and 1859/60 and £177430 between 1860/61 and 1874/75. The reduction in

a new system of assessing dry crop soils for subsoil water was started.¹ Yet, the increases effected were generally well below the 33% imposed as a ceiling for individual talukas in the government regulation of 1874.

The extent of the increase in the burden of revenue may be gauged from the following Tables:

Impact of first revision settlements in Gujarat

Taluka	Year of Settlement	Ahmedabad		Average Rate on Rice Land Rs per Acre	% Difference from original Rates
		Average Rate Dry Crop Land Rs per Acre	% Difference from original Rates		
Dholka	1888/89	1-13-0	31%	4-11-6	23%
Dhandhuka & Gogha	1889/93	1-13-2	38%		
Daskroi	1889/90	3-1-6	48%	6-1-7	3%
Viramgam	1890/91	1-6-6	37%	3-5-1	29%
Parantij & Modasa	1892/93	1-7-4	21%	2-11-2	34%
Sanand	1892/93	1-15-2	55%	4-9-2	14%
		Kheda			
Matar	1894/95	3-11-0	25%	7-11-8	21%
Mehmadabad	1894/95	3-9-4	29%	5-9-10	5%
Nadiad	1895/96	4-6-8	29%	6-3-2	19%
Ananad	1895/96	4-8-8	22%	6-12-11	22%
Borsad	1895/96	5-3-6	38%	7-6-9	16%
Thasra	1895/96	2-5-6	9%	3-15-5	9%
Kapadvanj	1895/96	1-10-2	20%	3-1-9	NA
N.B. Where the sign - has not been put before the % figures, it must be taken to indicate a plus or an increase of assessment.					

Footnote cont.

the revenue between 1840 and 1860 was caused by the initial impact of the lowering of rates in 1849. However, as more land was taken up for cultivation, the total land revenue increased. Between 1859/60 and 1872/73, 41266 acres of waste land were taken up for cultivation. This process was repeated in Ahmedabad and Kheda, DG, Surat and Broach, pps. 244/391/515.

¹ Survey Manual, op.cit., Vol.I, pp. 166/167.

Taluka	Year of Settlement	SURAT:		Average Rate on Rice Rs per Acre	% Difference from original Rates
		Average Rate Dry Crop Land Rs per Acre	% Difference from original Rates		
Chorasi	1897/98	6-6-2	13%	10-8-6	7%
Bardoli	1897/98	3-6-0	17%	8-7-2	14%
Chikhli	1899/00	1-10-9	4%	8-4-2	12%
Jalalpur	1902/03	3-10-3	2%	11-6-3	-5%
Bulsar	1902/03	1-4-4	23%	8-10-2	7%
Pardi	1904/05	0-11-5	-15%	5-15-8	3%
Olpad	1900/01	4-13-0	5%	9-2-0	3%
Mandvi	1904/05	1-9-1	3%	4-0-8	16%
		BROACH:			
Broach	1903/04	4-10-11	-6%	7-10-3	-22%
Ankleshwar	1901/02	4-1-9	No change	8-5-5	No change
Vagra	1903/04	3-0-9	-15%	5-13-0	-6%
Amod	1903/04	4-5-9	5%	6-7-5	12%
Jambusar	1905/06	3-14-11	-13%	5-14-11	-4%
N.B. Where the minus sign - has not been put before the % figures, it must be taken to indicate a plus or an increase of assessment.(1)					

Further evidence for estimating the effective weight of revenue after the increases of the First Revision Settlements is provided by the crop cutting experiments conducted by the Department of Agriculture. The data has been summarized and put together in the form of Appendix III of this chapter. The Appendix shows the results of more than 150 experiments from the four districts between 1880 and 1907, a period which includes the impact of bad seasons, especially when they appeared bunched together in the 1890s. The data refer separately to crops above 12 annas or those having more than three fourths of the estimated normal yield and those below this level. Cotton, for example, when below 12 annas paid only about 18% of its gross value as land revenue, and when above 12 annas about 13%. For Jowari, the respective figures were 16% and 18%, for wheat 12% and 10%, for rice,

¹These rates have been published in Part B of the original District Gazetteers.

23% and 13%. (cf. Appendix III). Poorer crops seemed to have paid a lesser proportion of their value.

The systematization of rules regarding suspension of revenue and remission of arrears followed the report of a government committee in 1899. It was decided, that in Gujarat, all suspended revenue which exceeded one year's revenue demand, would be entirely remitted. The rest would be collected as follows.

<u>Anna Classification of Current Crop (16 is 100%)</u>	<u>Amount of suspended arrears to be collected</u>
11 annas and over	Equal to the revenue demand of one year
8 annas to 11 annas	Half of revenue demand of one year
Below 8 annas	No suspended revenue to be collected

Any arrears which could not be collected for three successive years too were to be remitted. In addition, if a crop was between 4 and 6 annas, half of the revenue was to be suspended. When it was below 4 annas, the entire revenue was to be remitted.¹ The effect of this policy was to be seen in the remissions actually granted:²

¹ Anderson, F. G. H., The Land Revenue Rules in Bombay Presidency, 1940, p.118.

² Part B of the Original District Gazetteers.

Current Remissions plus Arrears written off
as % of Revenue Demand Ahmedabad

Year	Ahmedabad		Kaira		Broach	
	Revenue Demanded Rupees	% written off	Revenue Demanded Rupees	% written off	Revenue Demanded Rupees	% written off
1893/94	1699938	1%	20226611	1%	2315952	5%
1894/95	1717361	5%	2062054	2%	2308869	6%
1895/96	1681671	6%	2127979	2%	2306928	0.5%
1896/97	1682826	0.6%	2135845	0.2%	2339741	0.5%
1897/98	1656646	1%	2164117	0.2%	2346031	0.5%
1898/99	1637485	1%	2163128	0.1%	2369964	0.6%
1899/00	1562856	1%	2130665	0.1%	2441605	0.6%
1900/01	2740968	52%	3369009	19%	4244499	16%
1901/02	1918488	52%	3325942	37%	4110239	43%
1902/03	2094890	19%	3422498	37%	3581505	22%
1903/04	1841206	8%	3934000	26%	2865476	10%
1904/05	1791909	19%	2952000	14%	2515448	19%
1905/06	2557951	9%	3807400	2%	3120229	7%
1906/07	2218975	13%	3966900	11%	2422674	5%
1907/08	1792393	13%	3451700	1%	2153863	5%
1908/09	2441234	7%	4114900	10%	2205179	5%

In the four years between 1900 and 1904 the government wrote off 33 percent of the revenue, whereas the average output in the four districts was estimated to be 57 percent of the maximum for the major foodgrains and 63 percent for cotton.¹ The government could have done better, but it put remissions of revenue against the fact that it had substantially increased the amount of interest-free or low interest loans given to the peasants and that the share of land revenue in the gross value of the crop was already low.² It is also

¹For this period the estimates of the harvests are mentioned in the Jamabandi Reports (O.P.R.) Major foodgrains here are taken to mean Jowar, Bajra, Paddy and Wheat. Harold Mann estimated that in Gujarat a harvest which yielded 57 percent of the maximum (represented by a 16 anna crop) was sufficient for meeting existing economic requirements between 1918 and 1925. Mann, H., Evidence given before Royal Commission on Agriculture in India Vol.2, Part I, (O.P.R.) p.16.

²Kumarappa points to the high proportion of land revenue in the net value of the produce in the year (1930) he surveyed the Matar taluka. He can, however, be faulted for not having considered typically good and bad years. He also forgets, that when poorer harvests may be followed by better ones or else a peasant may shift to growing higher priced crops, he can use his credit to borrow money in lean seasons, without permanently losing out to the moneylender. Without taking these factors into account, it is difficult to accept that land revenue constituted an excessive economic burden in Gujarat. Kumarappa, op.cit., p.86.

true, that following the 1899-1902 famine period, the seasons improved and enabled a quick recovery to take place. In the six years between 1905/6 and 1910/11, the average output of major grains was 66 percent of the maximum, and that of cotton about 60 percent.¹ Some remissions were still granted in these years. Those areas of Ahmedabad and Kheda which had witnessed a decrease in occupied area in the 1890s were granted remissions on a semi-permanent basis.² These remissions were made according to the system devised during the re-settlement of Igatpuri village in the 1890s. In the South Daskroi taluka of the Ahmedabad district, Group II villages had their revenue demand reduced by 17.4 percent and Group III villages by 24 percent, this being increased to 45 percent as it was felt that their rice lands were being affected by a lack of water in the nearby khari river. These remissions lasted till 1913.³ Similar reductions of revenue were made in the Mehmedabad and South Daskroi talukas.⁴ All these facts, show that the revenue system could be flexible.

It would be difficult to prove that the weight of land revenue increased in the twentieth century. For one thing, the average rise of prices far exceeded any increases in revenue rates.

¹Season and Crop Reports. These figures are contained in Appendix I of Chapter V of this Dissertation.

²In the Sanand taluka of Ahmedabad unoccupied assessed government land increased from 2040 acres in 1889/90 to 2046 acres in 1896/97 and 3689 in 1906/7 but declined to 1945 acres by 1919/20. In the Mehmadabad taluka of the Kheda district unoccupied assessed land increased from an average of 3818 acres between 1891 and 1894 to 16026 acres between 1901 and 1904 but declined sharply to 9032 acres in the next three years. SR, North Daskroi, 1921, p.18; SR, Mehmedabad, 1916, Appendix O (I) p.36.

³Anderson, op.cit., 1921, pp 117-119.

⁴SR, South Daskroi, 1921, pp 20/21.

A comparison between the rates shown below and the level of prices as well as the rate of their increase shown in Appendix II provides an interesting comparison.

Average Assessment per Acre in Rupees

Taluka	1886/87	1921/22	% Difference Between 1886 and 1922
Broach	4-8-11	4-11-9	4%
Ankleshwar	3-9-9	3-12-12	1.7%
Vagra	2-8-5	2-14-7	12%
Amod	3-3-3	3-2-5	27%
Jambusar	3-0-11	3-12-2	24%
Olpad	4-8-3	3-2-9	-26%
Chorasi	4-15-5	5-7-9	10%
Bardoli	3-7-5	4-2-5	20%
Jalalpur	4-12-11	3-9-6	-24%
Bulsar	3-0-0	2-1-6	-29%
Chikhli	2-1-2	2-7-9	21%
Pardi	1-6-4	1-6-3	No change
Mandvi	1-9-2	1-2-11	-24%
Daskroi	2-3-0	1-15-3	-11%
Dholka	1-2-1	0-14-4	-22%
Dhandhuka	1-0-0	1-2-8	19%
Viramgam	0-14-5	1-2-1	29%
Sanand	1-4-5	1-0-4	-20%
Parantij	0-15-8	1-1-9	20%
Gogha	0-8-2	0-8-4	No change

N.B. % figures without Minus sign (-) mean the Plus sign.

These figures, culled from the Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency, show that the maximum increase of revenue between 1886 and 1922 was in the Dhandhuka taluka of the Ahmedabad district. This amounted to 29%.¹ The average prices increased by a much greater margin in this period. (Cf. Appendix II)

Independent analysts surveying these areas provided interesting facts about the revenue system. J. B. Shukla's survey of the Olpad

¹Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency, 1925.

taluka between 1929 and 1932 showed, that Cotton paid 15.5% of gross value, wheat 17% and Bajri mixed with pulses 6.8%.¹ Mukhtyar's study of a South Gujarat village between 1926 and 1928 showed, that good paddy paid 11%, Nagli, a coarse grain 4%, cotton 6% of gross value as land revenue.² The initial reduction of revenue in the 1850s had come to stay. The realization of this revenue required few notices of distraintment. A diminutive portion, never more than one percent of the notices issued were ever carried into effect, except in a few years of political unrest. This may easily be seen from Appendix IV.

Finally, some comment must be made about the alienated lands, statistics about which began to be available after the Survey was introduced in Taluqdari villages from 1862. In the 372 Taluqdari villages of Ahmedabad district spread over its different talukas, the land, if assessed at rates current in the government villages should have been paying £103124. They were then paying only £35663 or 35% of the Survey Rates. By 1895/96 the survey had been introduced in 63% of 438851 acres alienated in Ahmedabad, in 85% of 366898 acres alienated in Kaira, in 91% of 193265 acres alienated in Broach and in 77% of the 110603 acres alienated in Surat. The general rule was then to assess these areas at about 50% of the Survey rates or even less.³ As far as land revenue was concerned, the alienated regions were much better off than government lands.

¹ Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.198-199.

² Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, p.89-93.

³ Jamabandi Report, 1895/96, p.35.

A brief glance is necessary at other taxes, which would have cut into the income of the cultivators. In order to get a proper estimate of all possible burdens on the cultivators, we will assume that ultimately the taxes on service classes like the traders were passed down either as additions to prices or as deductions from the cost price of raw materials.

To start with, many of the cesses in the villages were either abolished or included in the land revenue rates. The house tax, the plough tax, the marriage and the tax on soldiers were eliminated completely. Their weight had varied from area to area. Even when some of the miscellaneous cesses were included in the land revenue rates, their amount was considerably reduced, as in Ahmedabad.¹ In Kheda, the fixed quitrent paid by the village was distributed over different fields in proportion to their revenue assessment.² Another duty which was abolished was the transit duty on trade and custom charges to enter into major cities. Even in 1823/24 in Broach, these two cesses listed separately came to £26,758, amounting to 13% of the total government receipts.³ In Kaira, in 1819, transit duties considered alone amounted to £18,880 or 10% of gross revenue.⁴

In evaluating the weight of other taxes several points must

¹DG, Ahmedabad, p.151.

²DG, Kheda, p.110.

³DG, Broach and Surat, p.518.

⁴DG, Kheda, op.cit., p.111.

be remembered. Even in 1910/11, land revenue constituted 71% and 76% respectively of the district receipts paid to the government in Broach and Kaira. In Surat and Ahmedabad, where it was less, the reason lay in the income now provided by the urban municipalities. In Ahmedabad, in 1910, the share of the municipalities was Rupees 1,759,374 or 30% of the district receipts, whereas land revenue only provided 27%.¹ Furthermore, it must be remembered that by 1905/6, the government at the all India level was getting almost 33% of its revenue from Railway tariffs, an entirely new service, a large proportion of which lay in the Bombay Presidency. (cf. Appendix I). The dynamic sector of government revenue lay more in trade and in the urban, much less in rural taxation.

However, there were new taxes introduced affecting the rural sector and the impact of these needs to be estimated. Along with the 1840 settlements, every occupant was required to pay one anna for each rupee paid as revenue. The amount was to be spent within the district for repair and construction of roads, canals etc. Between 1872 and 1889, every person in the Broach district paid 3.5 annas or 0.22 Rupees per year as local fund cess. (cf. Appendix V). By 1910/11, the population in Ahmedabad, the population enumerated as rural paid 9 annas per year as local fund cess.² It added about 10% to the land revenue charge, but it might be argued that through improvements in their access to the district markets, the fund increased the income of the cultivators, and bettered their lives. The license tax paid by the traders and moneylenders for operating

¹DG, Ahmedabad, Part B, op.cit., pp 17/23.

²Ibid.

business establishments was split between the cities and villages. In Broach district, for example, of the 84,906 Rupees paid by 19155 registered traders in 1879, almost 32% was paid by the 3691 persons residing in Broach city. (Cf. Appendix VI). Overall, it added 4 annas per head to the annual tax bill. After 1886, when several of these duties were consolidated under the Income Tax Act II, the tax was grouped in 4 parts referring to salaries, company profits, financial securities and other sources of income. Separation between rural and urban incomes became difficult. At the same time the rate of the income tax was standardized at 4 pies in the Rupee on incomes of less than Rupees 2000 and 5 pies for those above, this being 2.08 and 2.6 percent of the income.¹ Those who paid land revenue were excluded from paying the income-tax.

Probably the two taxes whose burden fell more directly on the cultivating classes were the levies on salt and the excise duty on country liquor. A comparison of the weight of these taxes must be made in a historical manner, by estimating their amount in the past. The fact is that the Peshwas had also relied on both these levies. They were then included in the category called, sayer duties, and *abkaree*. The East India Company continued these taxes. In 1827/28 in Surat, for example, the duty on salt already yielded £28700 or 10% of gross revenue and that on spirits and drugs 5%. By 1875, they respectively added up to £51376 and £37371 or 10% and 7.2% of gross receipts.² The per unit cost of the levy seemed to have varied. In Bombay Presidency, the duty on salt fluctuated over

¹Section on Income Tax, Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, 1906.

²DG, Surat and Broach, op.cit, p.294.

time:¹

<u>Period</u>	<u>Duty on salt in Paise per pound</u> <u>64 paise equals 1 Rupee</u>
1858 to 1864	0.7
1876 to 1882	1.8
1882 to 1889	1.5
1895 to 1901	2.0
1907 to 1916	0.8

The duty on Mhowra or country liquor ranged from Rupees 0.75 to Rupees 3.75 per proof gallon.² What was of greater significance for the cultivators was the government monopoly of salt production, started in 1873, and its licensing of the sale of liquor. The consumption of salt increased by one and a half times between 1858 and 1918, while the combined excise earnings from spirits and country liquor increased in the Bombay Presidency by five and a half times between 1881 and 1919.³ These would signify increases in the actual consumption of salt and alcohol.

Revenue derived from stamp duty, however, did not signify progress or development. Formal registration and litigation clearly multiplied with the onset of a 'rule of law' and the law of contract under the British Raj. Here again, it was the money paid out for judicial stamps, and that too for litigation concerning land that

¹Financial and Commercial Statistics, op.cit., 1919/20, p.58.

²Ibid, p.174/175.

³The quantity of salt consumed in the Bombay Presidency went up from 362,342 maunds in 1858 to 9306359 maunds in 1918. The revenue from alcohol and country liquor grew from Rupees 4,788,240 in 1881 to Rupees 31, 086,552 in 1919. Ibid, pp. 128/129.

bore directly on the cultivating yeomanry. We do not have such a detailed breakdown of statistics regarding judicial stamps. The supplements to the District Gazetteers of the 1870s, show that between 1900 and 1911, about 50% to 60% of revenue from stamp duties was derived from the sale of judicial stamps. If we make the extreme assumption, that every one of the Rupees so spent was done on land cases in the countryside, then in 1911, the population classified as rural spent 4 annas or one-fourth of a Rupee each on the purchase of judicial stamps in Broach, Surat and Ahmedabad, and 2.5 annas in Kheda.¹

If we try and sum up this scattered information about indirect taxes, we would arrive at a figure of 3.5 Rupees per head for the population of Gujarat. When we see the diverse ways in which the weight of these indirect taxes could be distributed, and the returns they could give, it seems fair to conclude, that at most they made up for the taxes given up by the East India Company.

Given that land revenue was sharply reduced, it seems reasonable to say that after 1850 the British Raj taxed the Gujarat peasantry more lightly than the Peshwa's Durbar had done. Yet, it was clear that by encouraging the peasantry to expand cultivation, the British Government had succeeded in increasing its total income from land while lowering the per acre rate of revenue. It also enhanced the peasant's profits from land and hence its value, making land an attractive field of investment. The lowering of revenue and its collection in well timed instalments also meant that the

¹Part B Gazetteers of Bombay Presidency, op.cit.

burden of land revenue could no longer be held responsible for the indebtedness of the peasantry. What then accounts for the growth in the debts of the Gujarat peasants, which as we shall later see had grown substantially by the 1920s? This question will be tackled in a separate chapter.

APPENDIX I
COMPOSITION OF REVENUE - 5 YEARLY AVERAGES
(Figures for British India)

YEARS	LAND REVENUE (%)	TAXATION						COMMERCIAL SERVICES		OPIMUM (%)	TRIBUTES FROM INDIAN STATES (%)
		SALE (%)	STAMPS (%)	EXCISE (%)	CUSTOMS (%)	ASSESSED TAXES (%)	RAILWAYS (%)	IRRIGATION (%)			
1886-1891	29	9.2	4.8	5.7	1.7	1.86	19	2.3	10.0	0.9	
1891-1896	27	9.3	4.8	5.8	2.9	1.9	22	2.5	8.0	0.8	
1896-1901	25.5	8.6	4.8	5.6	4.7	1.9	23	3.5	6.2	0.9	
1901-1906	23	6.7	4.4	5.9	5.0	1.6	27	3.5	6.4	0.7	
1909-1914	21	4.4	4.9	7.6	6.5	1.7	33	4.0	5.2	0.6	
1914-1919	18	3.7	4.6	8.0	7.0	3.4	35	4.0	2.0	0.5	

Source: Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India

Index of Retail Prices of Selected Commodities
in Gujarat Districts (Pre 1860 Prices)

(Base Year Prices in Rupees per Maund of 40 Seers or 82.284 lbs.)

YEAR	TOBACCO	JOWAR				RICE			
	Kheda	Ahmed- abad	Broach	Surat	Kheda	Ahmed- abad	Broach	Surat	Kheda
1815	NA	100 (1.9)	100 (2.0)	NA	NA	100 (1.6)	100 (1.8)	NA	NA
1816	NA	99	81	NA	NA	105	104	NA	NA
1817	NA	99	79	NA	NA	86	93	NA	NA
1818	NA	81	79	NA	NA	83	91	NA	NA
1819	NA	99	88	NA	NA	72	91	NA	NA
1820	NA	188	132	NA	100 (1.5)	117	100	NA	100(1.6)
1821	NA	82	69	NA	93	90	131	NA	100
1822	NA	87	NA	NA	88	72	NA	NA	60
1823	NA	82	NA	NA	91	68	NA	NA	64
1824	100 (3.0)	68	NA	100 (2.0)	91	171	NA	NA	103
1825	100	94	NA	100	95	257	NA	NA	103
1826	100	53	NA	100	91	214	NA	NA	107
1827	100	48	NA	100	78	197	NA	NA	107
1828	86	43	NA	100	69	171	NA	NA	107
1829	86	36	NA	100	98	135	NA	NA	117
1830	91	36	NA	100	69	135	NA	NA	122
1831	100	38	NA	100	42	171	NA	NA	122
1832	100	38	NA	100	34	183	NA	NA	122
1833	91	50	82	100	69	257	104	NA	122
1834	100	111	93	108	157	257	104	NA	128
1835	86	85	93	100	84	190	91	NA	128
1836	100	87	82	117	91	214	83	NA	128
1837	91	75	50	100	73	190	56	NA	128
1838	100	72	114	73	78	257	56	NA	128
1839	100	77	80	100	100	234	83	NA	128
1840	100	70	56	73	100	223	83	NA	135
1841	100	58	50	108	91	171	71	NA	135
1842	100	52	44	108	77	191	63	NA	128
1843	114	42	56	100	66	139	56	NA	128
1844	88	50	44	67	59	156	49	NA	135
1845	110	54	47	43	69	143	70	NA	128
1846	110	70	56	82	81	191	70	NA	128
1847	110	62	44	68	69	197	83	NA	128
1848	100	79	54	43	58	197	89	NA	135
1849	98	49	47	48	69	214	87	NA	135
1850	91	40	54	82	78	223	87	NA	142
1851	100	62	47	56	61	197	83	NA	135
1852	100	62	59	68	54	191	80	NA	135
1853	100	38	59	56	69	191	83	NA	142
1854	100	40	59	62	69	183	80	NA	142
1855	152	69	72	96	55	197	169	NA	117
1856	136	69	56	96	55	197	123	NA	99
1857	136	83	78	87	69	206	169	NA	117
1858	152	85	98	96	86	245	104	NA	122
1859	196	94	93	87	88	270	115	NA	171
1860	171	90	100	87	110	343	115	NA	214

APPENDIX II PART A cont.

YEAR	WHEAT				PULSE (Tuver)				RAW COTTON			
	Ahmed- abad	Broach	Surat	Kheda	Ahmed- abad	Broach	Surat	Kheda	Ahmed- abad	Broach	Surat	Kheda
1815	NA	100 (2.3)	NA	NA	NA	100 (1.8)	NA	NA	NA	100 (4.6)	NA	NA
1816	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	93	NA	NA	NA	105	NA	NA
1817	NA	91	NA	NA	NA	83	NA	NA	NA	128	NA	NA
1818	NA	85	NA	NA	NA	86	NA	NA	NA	128	NA	NA
1819	NA	97	NA	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	137	NA	NA
1820	NA	210	NA	100 (2.2)	NA	127	NA	NA	NA	99	NA	NA
1821	NA	NA	NA	93	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1822	NA	NA	NA	76	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1823	NA	NA	NA	83	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1824	NA	NA	100 (1.8)	74	NA	NA	100 (2.2)	NA	NA	NA	100 (8.2)	NA
1825	100 (2.6)	NA	106	74	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1826	79	NA	100	101	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	91	NA
1827	69	NA	104	68	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1828	49	NA	100	58	NA	NA	103	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1829	57	NA	100	50	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1830	57	NA	100	50	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1831	49	NA	104	44	NA	NA	103	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1832	48	NA	104	44	NA	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	83	NA
1833	70	128	100	51	NA	127	100	NA	NA	94	91	NA
1834	127	97	104	138	NA	120	100	NA	NA	105	91	NA
1835	88	97	100	79	NA	103	NA	NA	NA	85	83	NA
1836	74	76	120	78	NA	76	NA	NA	NA	94	83	NA
1837	80	71	100	68	NA	76	NA	NA	NA	69	83	NA
1838	72	112	95	74	NA	103	NA	NA	NA	94	91	NA
1839	99	92	95	98	NA	85	NA	NA	NA	59	91	NA
1840	72	87	95	107	NA	85	NA	NA	NA	81	83	NA
1841	85	70	114	72	NA	76	NA	NA	NA	53	83	NA
1842	59	60	114	58	NA	76	NA	NA	NA	56	91	NA
1843	45	49	101	58	NA	85	93	NA	NA	60	91	NA
1844	51	55	76	55	NA	76	113	NA	NA	54	83	NA
1845	59	117	152	49	NA	100	113	NA	NA	53	83	NA
1846	70	112	163	98	NA	91	93	NA	NA	53	83	NA
1847	77	67	99	62	NA	66	104	NA	NA	56	111	NA
1848	85	76	99	58	NA	76	74	NA	NA	54	111	NA
1849	61	81	106	68	NA	66	98	NA	NA	66	111	NA
1850	83	65	106	83	NA	66	93	NA	NA	75	111	NA
1851	49	72	99	51	NA	83	98	NA	NA	60	111	NA
1852	62	60	99	53	NA	72	81	NA	NA	64	83	NA
1853	62	76	85	59	NA	91	121	NA	NA	69	111	NA
1854	75	60	114	75	NA	79	133	NA	NA	56	143	NA
1855	57	79	114	58	NA	109	105	NA	NA	72	143	NA
1856	62	78	130	58	NA	106	105	NA	NA	74	111	NA
1857	74	85	120	75	NA	115	66	NA	NA	81	111	NA
1858	83	89	120	75	NA	121	113	NA	NA	99	143	NA
1859	83	92	120	75	NA	143	93	NA	NA	105	145	NA
1860	88	112	138	101	NA	285	156	NA	NA	99	125	NA

APPENDIX II PART A cont.NOTES

1. These prices are included in the chapter on Capital in the original District Gazetteers of the Bombay Presidency. Figures in Brackets refer to base year prices.
2. These prices refer to the retail prices at which these items were being sold at the District Headquarters. Wholesale prices are not available for the period before 1860. The nature of the price data is discussed in the text of Chapter IV.
3. Different base years are used for different districts according to the year in which price data begins to be available, and also in order to avoid using years of scarcity as starting points. This procedure brings out the secular decline in prices of most commodities between 1820 and 1850. Indeed, scattered data available for the period before 1815 further underlines the sharp decline in prices in Gujarat after 1820.
4. Where complete data is not available for any crop, the District is omitted from this table.

APPENDIX II PART B

District Retail Prices in Gujarat 1861 to 1903

YEAR	RICE				JOWAR				WHEAT				(TUR) PULSE			
	Surat (4.7) 1861	Broach (1.8) 1815	Kheda (1.6) 1822	Ahmedabad (1.6) 1815	Surat (2.0) 1824	Broach (2.0) 1815	Kheda (1.5) 1820	Ahmedabad (1.9) 1815	Surat (1.8) 1824	Broach (2.3) 1815	Kheda (2.2) 1820	Ahmedabad (2.6) 1825	Surat (2.2) 1824	Broach (1.8) 1815	Ahmedabad (3.4) 1861	Kheda (3.5) 1861
1861	100	233	263	275	110	110	133	100	161	135	118	112	80	169	100	100
1862	100	211	280	250	115	95	113	142	183	96	127	127	NA	224	NA	99
1863	105	261	311	306	188	165	131	184	167	165	200	210	117	237	NA	101
1864	159	361	444	388	295	249	335	268	328	252	323	235	139	377	NA	107
1865	157	344	519	406	235	145	233	160	328	261	323	265	328	519	NA	178
1866	165	344	493	419	135	145	153	116	395	204	226	228	189	346	NA	237
1867	173	378	444	338	127	185	173	132	228	168	195	139	NA	332	NA	170
1868	151	294	493	381	165	140	206	126	278	168	218	186	130	244	NA	138
1869	163	333	493	375	145	185	280	222	261	176	242	212	152	319	NA	138
1870	164	261	363	375	207	140	175	226	328	191	200	205	152	319	NA	178
1871	138	256	278	375	219	135	187	148	224	143	223	158	NA	151	NA	142
1872	131	206	231	250	140	95	153	140	233	153	171	126	NA	NA	NA	57
1873	79	172	194	228	115	100	135	100	178	87	144	112	198	NA	NA	NA
1874	67	178	194	220	115	95	102	95	164	136	124	105	205	234	NA	NA
1875	86	194	200	219	115	105	107	90	172	143	136	92	161	154	NA	87
1876	93	200	283	288	190	120	133	100	178	141	128	96	156	153	NA	60
1877	120	250	319	319	205	170	220	163	233	170	187	159	267	292	NA	122
1878	143	261	331	375	210	205	280	208	311	223	222	196	285	332	NA	168
1879	120	250	288	322	100	195	220	189	294	226	239	196	298	311	NA	170
1880	95	220	183	248	100	115	120	95	217	140	139	112	132	310	NA	67
1881	102	189	175	175	125	100	107	79	172	109	127	96	140	166	NA	61
1882	100	172	163	263	125	120	140	116	174	135	146	112	183	145	NA	77
1883	102	172	175	194	105	120	153	121	117	144	160	123	152	195	NA	73
1884	104	172	219	219	125	125	100	111	139	144	146	106	158	167	NA	83
1885	104	189	200	225	115	125	147	106	127	113	123	96	157	184	NA	101
1886	84	200	256	225	105	135	141	105	156	113	141	104	140	195	NA	109
1887	85	205	231	225	125	120	154	132	188	148	173	142	182	145	NA	108
1888	98	211	213	244	145	110	167	142	189	144	143	146	191	197	NA	94
1889	106	228	247	244	145	120	173	132	211	165	130	135	152	171	NA	96
1890	99	222	244	288	125	110	143	126	183	165	142	127	124	127	NA	58
1891	101	211	225	256	140	120	131	113	194	156	150	135	123	123	NA	51
1892	108	283	248	269	130	120	140	116	200	157	168	146	132	156	NA	74
1893	101	267	223	225	165	125	153	116	211	140	140	119	114	133	NA	63
1894	104	217	182	200	130	120	160	100	179	127	121	104	92	117	NA	--
1895	102	205	203	189	130	115	160	121	156	117	133	119	123	123	NA	61
1896	109	228	257	251	130	130	173	147	228	165	164	154	160	189	NA	91
1897	130	261	315	329	225	199	192	200	331	205	218	212	263	289	NA	140
1898	104	222	288	278	195	115	173	116	234	183	159	150	160	183	NA	94
1899	96	217	252	251	120	120	187	142	217	152	155	150	160	178	NA	83
1900	90	228	278	278	210	210	267	205	311	213	223	167	241	283	NA	137
1901	82	221	244	244	244	126	149	126	300	187	205	139	245	272	NA	131
1902	79	186	238	228	182	137	177	147	252	148	201	131	200	224	NA	109
1903	85	221	270	244	195	97	127	96	194	152	127	105	200	217	NA	113

APPENDIX II PART B cont.NOTES

1. Figures in brackets refer to base year price expressed in Rupees per Maund of 82.286 lbs. All base years are the same as the ones in Part A of this table. Where the pre-1860 prices are not available, 1861 prices are taken as the starting point for constructing the Index.

2. The data for pulses in Ahmedabad is drawn from one taluka only. Hence, it is being omitted.

3. These district retail prices have been taken from the 1890/¹⁹¹¹ issues of the Prices and Wages series published by the Government of India. They are the averages of fortnightly returns of prices. Being retail prices, they indicate the price at which goods were being sold at different points in the district including the district headquarters. Hence, they are greater than the wholesale prices which were prices at which goods were bought. Wholesale prices are given only for Coal, Silk and Raw Sugar during this period and that too only for Bombay city. Hence, a comparison is not possible between district wholesale and retail prices. However, the possible difference between the two will be calculated for a later period and will be kept in mind while estimating the income of rural producers. Assuming that overtime the margin between wholesale and retail prices remained constant, this table still shows the extent of price rise during the nineteenth century. Given the diminishing margin of profit for the middlemen in the Gujarat rural markets, even the retail prices are a good indicator of the increase in income earned by the sellers of agricultural produce.

Index of Wholesale Prices (prevailing at harvest time)
Recorded at the Headquarters of 4 Gujarat Districts

	JOWAR 1				WHEAT				RICE			PULSE (TUR)			GUL (JAGRI)				COTTON CLEANED			TOBA- CCO		
	Ahmedabad (1.9) 1815	Kheda (1.5) 1820	Broach (2.0) 1815	Surat (2.0) 1824	Ahmedabad (2.6) 1825	Kheda (2.2) 1820	Broach (2.3) 1815	Surat (1.8) 1824	Ahmedabad (1.6) 1815	Kheda (1.6) 1820	Broach (1.8) 1815	Surat (4.7) 1861	Kheda (3.5) 1861	Broach (1.8) 1815	Surat (2.2) 1824	Ahmedabad (7.7) 1903/4	Kheda (5.0) 1903/4	Broach (7.5) 1903/4	Surat (7.1) 1903/4	Ahmedabad (22.2) 1903/4	Kheda (19.4) 1903/4		Broach (20.0) 1903/4	Surat (24.3) 1903/4
1903/4	84	113	91	104	100	114	141	179	243	250	224	93	108	202	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1904/5	123	168	128	135	123	144	140	207	241	260	216	92	110	211	87	129	105	108	93	93	104	93	99	100
1905/6	153	181	161	156	151	181	177	234	283	272	225	109	128	211	99	141	99	106	91	91	108	123	112	100
1906/7	134	145	151	156	143	180	134	243	274	279	241	118	144	251	99	145	112	115	90	90	118	130	114	100
1907/8	177	222	176	193	185	218	220	310	340	343	275	106	149	273	104	154	109	120	94	94	118	132	120	112
1908/9	179	218	187	192	182	223	243	328	295	323	254	141	157	302	104	103	117	115	90	90	118	123	108	119
1909/10	147	203	157	156	160	206	228	285	257	276	226	113	114	252	107	155	115	109	116	116	121	159	141	122
1910/11	132	163	143	140	155	205	180	226	260	310	180	115	101	222	109	160	111	113	131	131	124	177	NA	119
1911/12	175	232	182	188	157	224	202	247	327	356	315	110	117	251	115	160	118	118	122	122	133	121	NA	119
1912/13	177	210	187	201	157	226	208	239	337	401	315	107	150	285	116	171	118	113	119	119	141	158	NA	121
1913/14	183	215	171	188	165	223	201	265	388	320	285	134	154	291	116	151	117	108	111	111	132	148	NA	217
1914/15	182	250	175	190	209	280	300	320	384	340	278	136	164	318	124	152	113	111	65	65	99	90	97	239
1915/16	183	241	173	179	201	279	221	307	423	415	312	143	184	339	144	183	133	146	97	97	113	134	95	213
1916/17	146	162	164	175	191	267	212	297	465	408	357	149	152	342	148	187	144	128	NA	NA	169	177	133	245
1917/18	222	252	347	216	262	342	283	342	425	333	317	153	135	342	130	178	133	122	NA	NA	234	357	155	239
1918/19	NA	NA	500	525	372	580	568	574	646	625	403	231	229	412	358	229	164	158	NA	NA	254	229	262	NA
1919/20	421	NA	327	395	316	253	403	487	625	555	374	153	345	712	327	173	320	215	NA	NA	NA	230	238	NA
1920/21	340	NA	308	327	279	364	340	434	625	690	444	182	240	468	208	251	178	153	NA	NA	NA	128	192	NA
1921/22	396	NA	395	400	328	394	398	456	625	714	494	231	229	555	188	279	237	220	111	111	151	200	176	239
1922/23	199	268	169	188	228	313	147	209	548	769	444	231	143	366	198	198	213	205	240	240	NA	290	294	245
1923/24	201	NA	222	269	237	316	267	299	555	487	444	231	218	404	173	197	194	155	261	261	NA	289	329	330
1924/25	229	358	269	305	315	404	331	339	556	714	468	231	223	404	434	290	194	188	240	240	255	247	261	398
1925/26	257	NA	239	291	308	388	331	519	556	526	444	231	241	468	383	173	112	196	160	160	219	200	223	299
1926/27	278	399	286	294	273	354	313	439	556	556	413	239	238	494	493	148	178	170	144	144	165	153	138	478
1927/28	230	444	257	281	222	260	238	374	500	500	439	231	211	413	469	130	145	153	160	160	165	153	219	398
1928/29	234	358	237	254	296	404	293	391	500	500	433	210	254	444	415	229	119	142	169	169	206	153	203	398
1929/30	263	333	281	289	218	316	284	351	500	417	423	210	229	467	388	130	160	145	116	116	206	153	165	398

All prices in Rupees per Maund of 40 seers or 82.28 lbs.) 1903-4 to 1938/39

	JOWAR 1				WHEAT				RICE				PULSE (TUR)				GUL (JAGRI)				COTTON CLEANED				TOBA- CCO
	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	Ahmedabad	Kheda	Broach	Surat	
1932/33	150	267	131	173	171	193	211	238	357	370	329	123	143	299	303	104	96	104	89	79	96	190	94	94	398
1933/34	146	219	154	166	141	189	174	240	313	199	247	123	104	222	303	104	108	76	94	103	103	80	110	110	199
1934/35	150	214	NA	188	147	173	NA	247	278	175	NA	125	120	NA	266	130	133	NA	111	111	111	133	NA	119	171
1935/36	145	195	NA	177	185	159	NA	240	333	237	NA	115	127	NA	253	115	124	NA	113	103	118	NA	88	184	
1936/37	162	214	NA	258	211	246	NA	301	351	313	NA	119	135	NA	261	100	114	NA	97	107	127	NA	98	172	

1. Figures in brackets indicate base years and the prevalent price. All prices are in Rupees per maund.
2. Slight variations in prices between districts were due to their distance from Bombay, the extent of local demand in any given season and the quality of the product. What stands out is the closeness of the prices.
3. Every 1lb. of seed cotton yielded 0.33 lbs. of cleaned cotton. Hence, seed cotton prices were always about one third those offered for cleaned cotton.
4. Prices of separate crops having been recorded at the time of their harvest come closest to being the price offered to the peasants after making deductions for the middleman's commission forwarding and packing charges.

5. SOURCE: CROP AND SEASON REPORTS. (DPE)

Crop Experiments in Gujarat in some Bad Seasons in the late nineteenth century

The crop experiments conducted by the Department of Agriculture provide a very useful source of determining the weight of revenue as a proportion of gross produce. Conducted by different officials over a large area and in separate seasons, they relied on actually harvesting the crop in a small part of the field before determining the per acre yield of that field and only for that year. Table I gives detailed estimates for selected years, and Table II summarizes the results of almost 150 such experiments carried out between 83 and 1908 in the four districts of Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Khedda. As it is presented, the data allows us to see the weight of assessment on each of the main crops, which paid the government revenue in these districts.

Table I :

Year of experiments: 1878/79

<u>Collectorate</u>	<u>Taluka</u>	<u>Village</u>	<u>Crop</u>	<u>Value of crop per acre</u>	<u>Assessment per acre</u>	<u>Assessment as percent of gross value of crop</u>
				<u>Rs -as-paise</u>	<u>Rs-as-paisa</u>	
Ahmedabad	Sanand	Sanand	Rice	65-14-0	1-14-0	2.8%
DO	Do	DO	Jowar	19-4-0	1-8-3	7.8%
DO	Dholka	Maflipur	Rice	44-14-0	1-8-4	3.3%
DO	Dhandhuka	Dhandhuka	Wheat	21-0-0	2-12-0	13.1%
Kaira	Matar	Dhatal	Rice	115-0-0	8-9-2	7.4%
DO	Mehmedabad	Kaira	Wheat	71-12-2	7-4-0	10.2%
year 1892/93						
Ahmedabad	Daskroi	Barampur	Rice	36-5-6	2-14-7	8%
DO	Parantij	Pogulu	wheat	68-3-10	2-7-0	3.57%
DO	Viramgam	Hasalpur	Cotton	27-II-I	1-0-7	3.74%
Kaira	Kapadvanj	Sikhadlar	Korwa	11-5-9	1-5-6-	11.8%
DO	Matar	Matarpura	Rice	48-15-7	9-9-2	14%
DO	DO	DO	Wheat	18-15-4	2-9-9-	14%
Year: 1893/94						
Ahmedabad	Viramgam	Odhar	Wheat	16-5-3	0-14-4	5.5%
DO	Dholka	Maflipur	Sugarcane	561-0-0	2-8-7	0.45%
Broach	Broach	Bholao	Bajri	12-5-6-	1-3-1	9%
Broach	Ankleshwar	-	Rice	62-2-5-	II-4-0	18%
Surat	Bulsar	Bulsar	Rice	63-1-3	9-9-11	15%
Year: 1904/5						
Surat	Bardoli	Modhi	Cotton	37-0-2	4-2-2-	11%
DO	DO	Isroli	Jowar	23-15-9	5-7-4	22%
Kaira	Thasra	Padal	Wheat	61-0-0	4-4-1	6.9%

One of the letters from the collector of Kaira indicated that the calculation of costs was done on a fairly sophisticated basis. The current prices, the cost for maintaining a pair of bullocks plus the living cost of employing the necessary labor was not only included. The total cost was defrayed equally between the Kharif and the Rabi harvests in the case of those who had two crops from the same field. (Revenue Diary 69, 1883, Letter from Mr. J. Campbell to the Survey Commissioner). In addition, a Government order of 1881 required the Supervisor to personally conduct a special experiment, in which the weight of assessment was to be calculated on the whole field, i.e. on the family's total income. These provide a definitive check on the correctness of the statistics gathered from the other experiments, which are summarized in Table II. This takes the average of the experiments conducted in one year in the four districts. This is considered a valid procedure, because of the similarity of geological, climatic, and drainage conditions in the four districts, especially when compared to the Deccan areas.

Table II	APPENDIX III CONTINUED						
YEAR	RICE	JOWAR	WHEAT	COTTON	BAJRI	SUGARCANE	TOBACCO
83/84 @ &	(3) 15%	(3) 11.5%	(8) 7%	----	(2) 9%		
85/86 @ &	(I) 9%	(I) 19%	(I) 16%				(I) 5.7%
			(I) 8.6%				
86/87 @ &	(I) 48%						
	(I) 23%		(I) 11%				
89/90 @ &		(I) 16%	(3) 21%				
	(2) 8.5%	(I) 20%	(2) 15%				
890/91 @ &			(I) 14%				
	(4) 13%		(I) 8.6%	(3) 12%			
891/92 @ &	(2) 15%		(I) 7.5%				
	(4) 13%		(I) 13%				
892/93 @ &	(I) 31%		(I) 16%				
	(3) 18%		(4) 14%	(2) 16%			
893/94 @ &						(I) 64%	
			(2) 11.6%			(I) 30%	
894/95 @ &				(I) 30%			
			(I) 10%				
895/96 @ &							
896/97 @ &							
897/98 @ &							
898/99 @ &	(4) 22%		(2) 6.5%				
	(I) 13%	(4) 21%	(I) 3.7%			(I) 8.5%	
001/02 @ &				(I) 18%	(2) 19%		
			(2) 9%				
002/03 @ &	(3) 25%	(I) 27%				(3) 20%	
	(I) 8%	(I) 20%	(4) 14%	(2) 14%	(2) 9%		

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(2) 14%

1903/04	@			(2)	15%
	&		(6)	9.5%	(4) 11%
1904/5	@	(2)	18%	(4)	14%
	&	(I)	22%	(I)	2%
				(I)	11%
1905/06	@	(I)	19%		(I) 21%
	&	(I)	13%		
1906/07	@				
	&	(2)	10.5%	(I)	12%
					(I) 27%

N.B. @ Assessment as % of Gross value of crops rated as being below a 12 anna crop, when 16 annas was a normal crop, here represented by the sign & The figures in the brackets show the number of experiments of which the percentages represent an average. The experiments total 150.

APPENDIX IV

IMPACT OF COERCIVE PROCESSES IN REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

DISTRRAINTS AS PERCENTAGE OF NOTICES SERVED

DISTRICTS	1903 04	1904 05	1905 06	1906 07	1907 08	1908 09	1909 10	1912 13	1913 14	1914 15	1915 16	1917 18	1918 19	1919 20	1920* 21
AHMEDABAD	0.77	0.33	0.19	0.32	1.67	0.40	1.30	1.73	5.80	2.27	--	--	--	--	5.69
KAIRA	0.11	0.44	0.52	0.58	0.37	0.41	2.59	1.30	3.61	1.69	--	--	--	--	3.54
BROACH	0.24	1.87	0.23	1.63	0.57	0.06	0.94	0.03	0.38	0.03	--	--	--	--	0.08
SURAT	0.25	3.52	2.13	1.68	0.56	1.08	0.61	0.20	0.09	0.11	--	--	--	--	0.28

	1921* 22	1922* 23	1923* 24	1924* 25	1925* 26	1926* 27	1927* 28	1928* 29	1929* 30	1930* 31	1931* 32	1932* 33	1933* 34	1934* 35
AHMEDABAD	0.48	6.14	0.65	9.71	0.15	0.31	0.37	1.59	0.23	3.45	32.22	2.13	0.70	0.55
KAIRA	4.91	3.66	1.41	3.05	0.62	0.59	0.05	--	0.90	16.37	28.30	4.71	0.14	0.20
BROACH	0.11	8.71	--	0.26	16.19	0.69	0.06	0.09	0.18	5.58	14.07	7.72	0.84	1.36
SURAT	--	21.51	--	1.44	0.30	--	0.65	--	--	31.28	0.21	--	--	--

*Distraints as percentage of notices issued.

APPENDIX V

AMOUNT OF MONEY SPENT BY LOCAL COMMITTEES IN CHARGE
OF DISBURSING THE ONE ANNA CESS ON REVENUE PAYERS -

Aggregated Totals for 1872-89 or 16 years

(All figures in Rupees)

TALUKA	ORIGINAL WORKS			REPAIR WORKS			GRAND TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL PER HEAD OF 1873 POPULATION
	ROADS (1)	TANKS & WELLS (2)	TOTAL FOR ITEMS (1) & (2) + DHARMSALAS	ROADS (1)	TANKS & WELLS (2)	TOTAL FOR ITEMS (1) & (2) + DHARMSALAS		
BROACH	110089	85532	218076	38960	20305	66841	284916	2.78
ANKLES- WAR INCL. CHANSOT	83612	48183	141542	15471	15168	34577	176119	2.63
JAMBU- SAR	100694	70524	210508	26898	10328	45032	255540	3.06
AMOD	54399	51839	125770	15289	24015	47216	172986	4.60
WAGRA	35664	68763	114848	14896	21264	44327	159175	4.70

SOURCES: Respective AARs.

APPENDIX VIDISTRIBUTION OF PAYEES OF LICENCE TAX SHOWING
CONCENTRATION POINTS OF MONEY CAPITAL

	RATE OF ASSESSMENT PER YEAR	1878 - 1879						BROACH TALUKA EXCL. CITY	BROACH CITY ONLY
		DISTRICT TOTAL	JAMBUSAR	AMOD	WAGRA	ANKLESWAR	HANSOT		
I	200	25	6	-	-	3	1	1	14
II	150	10	3	-	-	1	1	-	5
III	100	23	7	1	-	4	-	1	10
IV	80	15	2	-	-	5	1	1	6
V	60	66	12	5	1	13	4	5	26
VI	40	126	17	8	5	21	11	14	50
VII	30	125	6	6	10	20	10	16	47
VIII	25	67	8	8	2	3	7	13	26
IX	20	236	28	13	11	58	13	48	65
X	15	375	39	40	35	22	25	62	152
XI	10	887	106	81	53	161	53	148	285
XII	7	1179	134	122	71	83	73	251	445
XIII	5	1941	427	217	245	279	161	525	487
XIV	3	4853	1295	485	663	475	369	899	667
XV	2	9227	3453	748	468	1154	686	1312	1406
TOTAL		19155	5543	1734	1564	2302	1415	3296	3691

SOURCES: Respective AARs.

CHAPTER III

Rural Markets in Gujarat 1850-1930

The emergence of an extensive market in rural Gujarat, that is of a large demand for agricultural produce and the means for its purchase and transportation, coincided with the start of the thirty year ryotwari settlements. In many ways, the buoyancy of this market was to be central to the success of the government's revenue policy. It alone ensured that good harvests would not depress prices and high prices in years of rising demand would actually benefit a substantial number of the cultivating peasantry. It was the guarantee of a higher level of cash income which increased the credit of many farmers and boosted their capacity to either repay their debts or limit them so as to retain the best collateral they had, their land and cattle.

Before analyzing the specificity of the rural markets in Gujarat, it is worthwhile to restate the existing opinion on rural markets in India when it was a colony. It has been a part of the argument of those who have held that colonization and external rule 'underdeveloped' India, that the cultivating peasantry could never establish a direct access to the world market. Either the money-lender, the landlord or the middlemen, all appearing as monopsonistic agents deprived the cultivating peasantry of a bargaining position in the market. Being in this subordinate position, the peasants could never benefit from the rise in the prices of the products they may be selling in the market. The argument is common to Gunder Frank and Samir Amin.¹ More particularly, it is implicit

¹Frank, G., Underdevelopment and Revolution, 1969; Amin, S., Accumulation on a World Scale, Vol. I, 1974, p.38.

in the model of precapitalist economy put forward by Amit Bahaduri.¹ For him a major mechanism for depriving the peasantry was the fluctuation of prices between the pre-harvest and the harvest seasons. Since most peasants had to borrow when the prices were high and repay when they were low, they were inevitable losers.² As opposed to these views, this chapter will attempt to show that the rural markets in Gujarat gradually became competitive after 1850, and this improved the bargaining position of a large section of the peasantry.

Our discussion of different commodity markets is divided according to the importance of a crop in the marketing schedule of the peasantry. Cotton was a leader in this respect not only because among the crops grown mainly for being sold, it occupied the largest area, but also because the high demand for it created more competition in the rural markets. Discussion of cotton is followed by a look into the marketing of tobacco, groundnut, oilseeds, and other products like milk, fruits, and ghi. Lastly, the foodgrains are considered as a group, primarily because variability in seasons most of all affected the share of their output, which the peasants could afford to market.

Before examining the nature of the markets for individual commodities some general factors need to be stated. The year 1850

¹Bahaduri, A., Towards a theory of precapitalist exchange, in Asok Mitra ed. Economic Theory and Planning: Essays in honor of A. K. Dasgupta, 1974.

²Bahaduri, A., Class Relations and Accumulation in an agrarian economy, Cambridge Journal of Economics Vol. V., No.1, March 1981.

may be said to have marked a turning point in several respects. As we have seen, it was after 1850 that the effects of the substantial reductions in revenue rates had begun to be felt. This reduced the amount of cotton or grains which had to be compulsorily sold to pay the land revenue. In itself, the fact that almost 60% of the harvest whether it be cotton or grain had no longer to be put on the market at about the same time helped to end the price depression, which had stretched into the 1840s. It also implied that selling on the market was to be more of an optional undertaking than before. There were several incentives on the demand side to encourage the sale of foodgrains and cotton.

The fifty years after 1850 were a period of rapid population growth. Whereas between 1822 and 1851, population in Surat and Broach increased by 17.5%, between 1852 and 1891 these two districts together with Ahmedabad and Kheda saw their population grow from 1,940,938 to 2,783,731 or an increase of 43%.¹ About 38% of this population in the 1870s was below 12 years, an age structure which was to be maintained by the renewed population growth after the famine of 1900-1902. This meant the existence of a higher proportion of consumers to producers than would be the case in a region or country with a lower birth rate.²

Another factor which had traditionally stimulated demand in the Gujarat region was the higher proportion of urban to total

¹Respective DGs; Appendix IV, Chapter V of this Dissertation.

²Ibid.

population. Gujarat had several major trading centers till the late eighteenth century - Surat, Broach, Ahmedabad. And although a large part of this trade was an entrepot trade supplying regions as far as Punjab and the Doab, it did have some impact on its immediate hinterland.¹ Some of the calicoes, indigo and opium, which comprised 70% of the English and Dutch exports from Surat came from Gujarat.² Part of the grain needed for these cities too was supplied by the rural areas. Not all of the grain requirements however were being met by Gujarat. We have definite knowledge of the European factories at Surat and Bombay in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries often importing wheat from as far as Agra and rice from Malabar.³ In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the demobilization of the Maratha armies and the ending of the Maratha courts plus the gradual shifting of sea trade away from Surat and Broach to Bombay had reduced the urban population.⁴ After 1850, the large scale extension of commerce now associated with the growth of the railways, plus the gradual growth of mill industry and a modern administration, increased the proportion of the non-agricultural population. From 21% in 1872, the share of those living in towns with a population of more

¹Pearson, M.N., Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat, 1966; Singh, O.P., Surat and its trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, 1977; Gopal, S., Commerce and crafts in Gujarat in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; Gokhale, B.G., Surat in the seventeenth century.

²Singh, O.P., op.cit., 1977, pp. 136-139.

³Gopal, S., op.cit., pps. 138/139; Statistical Account of the town and island of Bombay, Vol.II, 1881, pp. 60-65.

⁴Chaudhuri, K.N., The Trading World of Asia and the East India Company, 1978, p.98.

than 5000 increased to 24% in 1911.¹ Many non-agriculturalists lived outside these towns. A breakdown of the occupational structure by caste revealed that the share of the families of actual cultivators ranged from about 60% of the population in Kheda to 53% in Ahmedabad.²

It was in the markets for raw cotton, that the demand increased the most. The change in the cotton trade after 1850 can be put in its proper perspective, only if we briefly describe its configuration before that period. At that time, inland trade was not only invariably closed down by the monsoons, but also it was disrupted by the political chaos of the eighteenth century. This was accompanied by the growth of excessive custom duties and seizures of merchant wealth, which followed the increasing power of local political magnates. One author estimates, that if the internal custom duties had been abolished, goods brought from Burhanpur in the United Provinces to Surat would have been cheaper almost by half.³ The means of transport then available (pack animals) restricted both the volume and speed of the trade.

The East India Company's exports of raw cotton to China started in the second half of the eighteenth century, may be said to be the first instance of bulk trade which impinged directly on the

¹Respective Censuses of the Bombay Presidency.

²Chapters on Population, Respective DGs, op.cit.

³Gopal, S., loc.cit.; The Ahmedabad Gazetteer recorded that during the eighteenth century "The trade routes were clogged by transit duty stations and exposed to attacks by robber gangs." DG Ahmedabad, pp.89; Spodek, H., Rulers, merchants and other groups in the city states of Saurashtra, India around 1800, Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.16, 1974.

rural economy of Gujarat. It was also during this period, that the loss of the American colonies turned the attention of the British towards the import of Indian cotton. Yet, the inelasticity in the supply of raw cotton could be seen when the local factors of the Company failed to procure the 500,000 pounds demanded by the Court of Directors in 1788.¹ This shortage was at an end by the first quarter of the nineteenth century due to the expansion of cotton cultivation. In 1787, the export of cotton from Bombay to China was 60,000 bales of 400 pounds each. In 1803, this had increased by 44% to 86,500 bales.² There are other indices for estimating the extent of expansion of raw cotton exports. In 1764, India exported 2070 bales to England; by 1868, this was 42,800 bales. More precisely, between 1825 and 1847, an annual average of 146,451 bales of Indian cotton were sent to England.³ This ranged from a minimum of 32,215 bales in 1829 to 274,984 bales in 1841.⁴ 80% of this cotton was shipped from Bombay.⁵ At least half of the aggregate cotton exports to and from Bombay came from Gujarat.⁶

¹Choksey, R.D., op.cit., 1968, p.128.

²Nightingale, op.cit., 1970, p.215.

³Reports and Documents connected with the proceedings of the East India Company in regard to the culture and manufacture of cotton wool, raw silk and indigo in India, 1836, p.95 N.A.I.. ?

⁴Report of the Committee on the growth of cotton in India, 1847/48, PP 1847/48, Vol.9, p.73.

⁵Dantwalla, op.cit., 1947, pp. 15-19.

⁶In 1847/48, 1,94,745 bales, each weighing 3.5 cwt. were sent to Bombay from the Gujarat ports. This constituted 56 percent of the total cotton exported from Bombay that year. Cotton Committee, op.cit., 1847/48, p.96.

The increase in exports was reflected in the large proportion of area being devoted to cotton. Between 1834/35 and 1845/46, an average of 43% of the cultivated area in Broach and 22% in Surat was sown with cotton.¹ The proportion of area devoted to cotton in the 1890's and the early twentieth century remained similar. However, as the area cultivated itself would increase considerably, cotton cultivation in Surat in the 1890s was still about 60% more than in the 1830s and in Broach by about 40%.²

Why was it that the extension of cotton cultivation in the first half of the nineteenth century failed to produce the beneficial results which it did in the second half? The reason lay in the impact of revenue policy and a change in the structure of the market.

Before it was abolished, the East India Company was the single largest purchaser of raw cotton in Western India. As K. N. Chaudhuri has argued, the heavy cost of the Surat trade had been a longstanding problem for the East India Company. It had learnt to resolve some of these problems by laying a "strong, almost unscrupulous emphasis on monopoly and profiteering."³ In the nineteenth century, these problems were further compounded by the drastic decline in the sale of Indian textiles in Europe.⁴ Evidence given before the Parliamentary Committee of 1831/32 exposed the mechanisms through which the EIC operated. One of the witnesses

¹Cotton Committee, op.cit., 1847/48, p.73/74.

²The increase in cultivated area would be discussed in Chapter IV.

³Chadhuri, K.N., The English East India Company, 1965, p.55.

⁴Nightingale, op.cit., 1970, p.233.

pointed out that, "The Bombay Government on the occupation of the district of Broach took all the cotton produce on their own account in payment of revenue at the prices of the surrounding districts and prohibited the sale of it to others. The Commercial Resident divided the Kuppas or seed cotton into 4 classes and different prices were fixed for each."¹ Mr. F. C. Brown who had been for many years growing cotton in Dharwar wrote, "half the crop was taken in kind as revenue, the other half by the sovereign merchant (or the EIC) at a price much below the market price of the day."² The Parliamentary Committee of 1812/13 had been told much the same thing.³

Even when the trade had been thrown open at least formally to private traders after 1821, the East India Company could exercise a much greater leverage in the market by the sheer volume of its purchase, and the help it could muster from its local administration. In his evidence to the Parliamentary Committee of 1831, James Ritchie, a partner in the house of Ritchie Finlay and Co. of Bombay made some revealing observations. According to him, "the cotton growers and dealers will fix no price, nor enter into contracts until they ascertain whether the Company are or are not to come into the market." Once the Company has announced that its agents are to purchase "20 or 30,000 bales as the case may be", the price of the "remainder of the crop immediately rises, sometimes to an exorbitant rate and the

¹Public Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, PP, 1831/32, Vol.IX, paras. 77/78.

²Correspondence relating to cotton cultivation in India, Accounts and Papers of the East Indies, PP, 1863, Vol.XLIV, p. 352.

³Nightingale, op.cit., 1970, pp. 234/235.

private merchant is either obliged to go without his investment or pay a price which makes it a losing concern to him in the market of Canton."¹

There were several compelling reasons why a policy of paying lower prices to the cultivators or even the merchants was the best way for the Company to increase its profits from the cotton trade. As one source points out the freight on the Company's regular ships amounted to 7.13 pence per pound of raw cotton. Compared to this, the average freight on the shipment of American cotton to Liverpool ranged between 0.13 and 0.19 pence per pound.² Moreover, the Company had much less influence in determining the price of the commodities it sold in the European market, and as K. N. Chaudhuri suggests ended up by turning that price into the basis for its investment decisions in India.³ This meant that the price paid to the local suppliers in India was the only flexible element in its attempt to improve its trading margins, and one increasingly subject to its own political power in Western India.⁴ In the letter quoted earlier F. C. Brown produced evidence to claim that between 1809 and 1847, "from every candy of Surat cotton costing 80 Rupees in Bombay, the Government had taken 48 Rupees as land tax and sea duty leaving 0.75 pence per pound to be divided among all the parties from the

¹Report of Public Committee, PP, 1831/32, Vol.6, p.137.

²Nightingale, op.cit., 1970, pp . 23/24; Correspondence on Cotton, op.cit., 1863, p.352.

³Chaudhuri, op.cit., 1978, pp . 300-330.

⁴Nightingale, loc.cit.

Bombay seller to the Guzerat grower."¹ The method it adopted was briefly described by the Company's Commercial Resident in Broach. He wrote to the Bombay Governor in 1823, "Since 1818, the Hon'ble Company's purchases could only be obtained on the same principles as other merchants and according to the invariable custom observed in the cotton trade i.e. by giving advances to the peasants and then taking cotton as payment for revenue."² The extent of such dealings was fairly large. In 1823/24, when a bad harvest disabled the peasants from supplying the cotton contracted for, there was a balance of 100,000 Rupees outstanding to the Company in the small Dehej Purgunnah of the Broach district.³

Since the Company finalized the amount it bought only a little before the harvest, it could not rely solely on the advance system. It also looked to the indigenous traders, either merchant firms or individual brokers called wakharias, who sometimes shipped on their own but mostly supplied either the Company or the mercantile houses in Bombay, Surat and Ujjain.⁴ Until the 1850s, these wakharias managed the cotton trade with the help of another set of village based traders, who had much less capital but were also called wakharias. Describing their functioning in detail, the Broach Gazetteer pointed out, that the wakharia waited till his stocks from the previous season were sold. Towards the end of the

¹Correspondence on Cotton, loc.cit.

²AAR, 1823, RD, 1823, Vol.25/77, p.203.

³Ibid.

⁴DG, Broach, p.427.

rains, around September, "he paid a visit to his banker in the nearest town, consulted him as to the change of a rise in prices and borrowed from him a sum of money. Taking his cash with him, the smaller dealer on his return would start on a tour through the parts of the district, where he was known." By November or December, he would find out "who among the villagers were in want of an advance" and settle the mortgage. It was at this time too, that the peasants needed an advance, "when picking time was 2 or 3 months off and the first part of their rent fell due." At that time (1840 to 1850), at least half of the cotton crop of the district was said to have been partly or wholly mortgaged. Very often, the advance represented the price of the crop, sometimes a half or a quarter of its value.¹

One observer, who had worked for 5 years on the cotton farms of the East India Company in Surat and Coimbatore gave a precise estimate of how much the wakharia made on his cotton purchase. James Petrie in his evidence to the 1847/48 Cotton Committee said: "The middlemen advance the money to the ryots and secure their crops from the very time of their sowing; they advance money on the produce at a time when the cotton is very cheap and stipulate that they are to get it at a very considerable reduction even on the present price in lieu of the advance they have made. For one-third of the value of the expected crop, the ryot pledges himself to give the advancer the cotton at 8 annas per load of 250 pounds (a bullock-head), below the bazaar or market price at the time of the delivery." He gets 9% on the value of the whole

¹Chapter on Trade, Ibid.

produce for advancing one-third the value of the crop for four months. Therefore, "he actually makes 81% per annum for the risk he runs. This 81% he gets under the bazaar price and then enters the market on an equal footing with the purchaser of the day at bazaar rates."¹ As long as the wakharia was the sole purchaser in the villages he visited, he alone knew the Bombay or the London price and often operated by lending money to the village Baniya who had his own hold over the cultivator. Consequently he could dictate the terms.²

The wakharia felt impelled to squeeze the cultivator harder, because his own profit margins were being reduced before 1850. At this time, Indian cotton was principally exported to the China and the English markets. The actual demand for the short stapled and dirtier Indian cotton was dependent on the harvest and the prices of American cotton. After 1820, increasingly better harvests in America lowered the price of its cotton and correspondingly that of the Indian cotton, without a similar improvement in productivity or transport and marketing conditions. The average price of Surat cotton in Manchester between 1822 and 1847 was 5.8 pence per pound, this being 40 percent lower than the prices between 1808 and 1821.³

The first major change was in the demand pattern for short

¹Cotton Committee, op.cit., 1847/48, p.183.

²Evidence of John Forbes Royle, Ibid., p.26.

³Ibid., p.72.

stapled cotton. In the British industry this had always been used when the American one was in short supply or was too expensive. The textile industries which grew up when the British industry was using up most of the world's supply of long stapled cotton oriented their technologies to the exploitation of the short stapled ones. First, on the European continent and then in Japan, a market sprang up for Indian cottons. There were more customers bidding seriously for the produce in Bombay or Liverpool. As Dantwalla points out, "France took China's place and maintained it till 1880-81, when she yielded it to Italy. Between 1885 and 1891 Europe was the biggest consumer of Indian cotton, Germany, Austria, Belgium and Italy leading the list. In 1897, Japan shot up to the top of the list, a position which she retained for the next half century.¹ Along with these exports the growth of the cotton mill industry in Bombay and Ahmedabad maintained a continuous pressure on the market for seed cottons.

The amount of cotton exports increased dramatically. This was the case not only during the American Civil War. If we take the 1855/56 figure of cotton export from Bombay (217 million pounds) as 100, then even after the decline in cotton cultivation due to the end of the American War Boom, this index was still at 245.3. In 1875/76, it was at 184.9, but by 1882/83, it had risen again to 252, a rise of almost 150% in 30 years.² The prices of cotton at the

¹Dantwalla, op.cit., 1947, p.20.

²Vicziany, A.M., Bombay Merchants and Structural Changes in the Export Community; Chaudhuri, K.N. and Dewey, C.J., eds. Economy and Society, Essays in Indian Economic and Social History, 1979.

district headquarters in Broach and Ahmedabad were at least one and a half times above the 1850 prices for the rest of the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century they rose even more till 1920. (Cf. Appendix I to this chapter) If we took the price of the five years 1866/67 to 1870/71 as 100 and constructed an index of five yearly moving averages as for the Dholka taluka in Appendix I, then only in 2 of the 12 periods up till 1920 did this Index fall below 100. Apart from an average decline of about 14% in the 1870s, the fluctuations of the local cotton prices occurred above 100 ranging from 9% when the Index declined from 119 to 100 between 1883/84 and 1888/89 to 39% when it rose from 123 to 162 between 1906/7 to 1910/11. (Appendix I) A similar picture emerges in Broach. These price fluctuations were small enough to make the cotton markets more secure than those for other commodities. In this instance, determination by world market prices came as a boon. A good season in terms of yield occurred along with a rise in price as early as 1833/34.¹ In short, it may be said that in India while bad seasons pushed up cotton prices good ones failed to bring them down. In so far as this did not apply to other crops, it made cotton a more attractive earner of income.

What differentiated the cotton markets from others like those for jute and sugar was the way in which the price rises filtered down to the village level sales. Two factors were responsible for the greater integration between the wholesale markets in Bombay and the major district level markets and the village selling done without any organized markets.

¹AAR, 1833/34, RD Vol.7/690, 1834, p.93. In this year a shortage in the American crop caused cotton prices to rise. In later years good harvests did not lower even the grain prices. In 1876/77, the Administration Report for Broach noted that "both the cotton and grain crops were above the average and prices have been high."; also RD, 1877, Vol.13, p.7.

Firstly, the building of new all weather roads, the improvement of existing seasonal cart tracks, the coming of the Railway, the rise in the number of carts and the burgeoning number of telegraph stations were each an aspect of a process and deserve separate mention. If we take the Broach district as an example, between 1850 and 1875, it got 144 miles of all weather roads. As these were branched out along 13 different routes, connecting smaller towns like Amod, Dehej, and Hansot to their Taluka headquarters and to specifically market towns like Palej, they improved the access to market places which peasants had in the monsoon months. Previously, cotton had been carried to the coast on bullocks or carts, both exposing it to dust, rain and feeding by the animals. It had been sent in half pressed bales which occupied more space and had to be cleaned and repacked in Bombay. It was estimated, that the use of the steam press meant compact packing and a saving of 30% on cart hire alone.¹ The steam packing was said to half the railway freight.² In addition, the Railways soon introduced the system of block rates, whereby the same rates were charged for moving cotton from one point in a Block to any other in a different block. This Block rate of 2 pence per ton was said to be a saving of 0.44 pence per pound as compared to shipping costs from Gujarat to Bombay. At that time, this was thought to be equal to the freight charged between Bombay and Liverpool.³ In addition, cotton would not face the damage from

¹ ARCD, 1864, RD, 1865, Vol.9, p.27.

² Ibid.

³ Evidence of Mr. J. Chapman, Representative of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, Cotton Committee 1847/48, op.cit., p.379.

enforced storage which it earlier did, if it could not reach the coast before the monsoons shut down all shipping.

The experience of the Broach district would seem to bear out this cost benefit analysis. Opened in 1861, the Railway stretched through Broach for only 28 miles. However, already between 1873 and 1880, it carried 80% of the cotton exports from Broach.¹ The proportion of bales fully pressed in upcountry centers rose every year. In 1878/79, 66% of the bales arrived in Bombay fully pressed.² The reason was easy to understand. Between 1872 and 1883, in Broach alone, the number of cotton ginning presses increased from 1270 to 1383.³ The 25 years preceding 1877 saw the complete displacement of the Charka previously used for cleaning cotton. All cotton was now machine ginned by the Platt McCarthy gins. As one of the Cotton Department Reports noted because of its better quality "Since 1871, the value of machine ginned Broach has risen by 11.97% as compared with saw ginned Dharwar."⁴

¹Respective Cotton Department Reports, ARCD, (MGA)

²The figures were

	Total Bales exported from Bombay Presidency	% Fully Pressed in Upcountry centers
1873/74	1,226,533	47%
1874/75	1,328,869	47%
1875/76	1,010,284	50%
1876/77	952,827	55%
1878/79	640,123	66%
<u>Respective ARCD.</u>		

³Ibid.

⁴DG, Surat and Broach, p.434.

The growing number of telegraph stations, and the increasing circulation of newspapers enabled a faster spread of news about change in prices. By 1889, almost every town with a cotton market, not just in the districts of Broach, Surat, Ahmedabad and Kheda, but also in the neighbouring Princely states of Jamnagar and Baroda was close to a Railway station and had a telegraph office. (Cf. Map). As the Amod Settlement Report of 1875/76 pointed out "In these days of telegraphs, the ryots are not in the dark as to the best market for their produce. They think nothing of going to Broach and Tankaria markets, if prices are a little more favourable there than at Palej."¹ Even for a place as far inland as Berar, the Cotton Department Report for 1868/69 observed, "The ryot brings his cotton to the market and on the telegraphic notices from Europe, the price which he receives almost entirely depend."²

All the improvements in transport and communications would have failed to enhance the price received by the cultivators, if the method of purchasing cotton had remained the same. As it happened, a number of factors increased the competition in the cotton markets. The root cause paradoxically, lay in a reduction of profit margins on long distance trade. The opening of the Suez canal and

¹SR, Amod Taluka, 1875/76, SRBG, PN 1127, p.15 (MGA).

²ARCD, 1868/69; In the 35 established cotton markets in Khandesh, "the daily rates are fixed by the merchants and dalals based upon telegrams giving the previous days' closing rates in Bombay." Mr. Jenkins, W., officiating secretary, Indian Central Cotton Committee, Evidence before Royal Commission of Agriculture in Bombay, op.cit., 1928, pp. 462/463. (O.P.R.)

the growth of steam shipping not only reduced the freight charges, they enforced a standardization which militated against shipping itself being able to yield any surplus profit above the small commission formally demanded. The Telegraph not only cut down the chances for making a windfall from price differentials between Indian and European markets. It shortened the time in which the extent of demand for Indian cottons in the foreign markets could be made known in India. It thus put a premium on speed. Those who could get in their cotton first would sell the most. And only those who could sell more than others would increase their profits.¹ The chance to do this also occurred around this period. The increase in the world demand for short stapled cotton and the abolition of the East India Company both created the need for new leaders in cotton trade. As Marika Vicziany has demonstrated, only the larger European firms and a few Parsi ones could effect the economies of scale required to become specialists in cotton trade. By 1875, a mere handful of 14 shippers each exporting more than 10,000 bales, controlled 62% of the trade. Amongst them Gaddum and Company, the largest firm exported 100,000 bales or almost 20% of the entire exports of raw cotton from Bombay to Liverpool.²

¹Some of these points were first discussed by Marika Vicziany, op.cit., 1979, pp. 180-184.

²Ibid., Improvements in financial organization also effected a saving in costs for the merchants. The branch of the Bank of Bombay in Broach existed principally to store bullion collected as government revenue. However, in contrast to past practice whereby this bullion was shipped to Bombay, it was now used to purchase cotton bills taken out by Bombay merchants for purchase of cotton. Since this was not only an effective means of transmitting the revenue to Bombay, it also saved the cost of shipping the Bullion, the rates of discount charged on cotton bills considerably declined from 1% to 0.38%, DG, Broach, p.445.

One of the principal means for cutting costs became the establishment of offices in upcountry centres, setting up ginning and pressing factories often in collaboration with local capital, and the employment of local agents for the purchase of seed cotton. As the Broach Gazetteer pointed out the European capitalists who had a large interest in the branch of the Bank of Bombay established in Broach in 1864, took over the financing of seven-eighths of the cotton trade in that district within 10 years. They could receive cash Bills from Bombay within eight days, and always had more liquid capital to operate with than the indigenous wakharias. The latter often became their employees. In Dharwar, it was noticed that the 'increased competition among the European houses' led to an increase in the number of brokers or middlemen. This was a crucial development for it ended the convention by which one wakharia used to operate in a given number of villages. Already by 1868, the markets of Hingunghat, Deolee, Arvee, Amravati, Akotee and Shevgaon, all in the Central Provinces had European firms for the purchase of cotton. According to the Cotton Commissioner for the Central Provinces, cotton was now "a buyer's market" in which "trade chiefly depends on the inducement held out to the Ryot for his cotton."¹

¹ Report of Mr. H. Rivett Carnac, Cotton Commissioner for the Central Provinces, (1868/69), Accounts and Papers, East India, PP 1871, Vol.14, p.484.

Merchants could travel long distances and converge on the cotton growing villages from several points. The Settlement Report of the Dholka Taluka in Ahmedabad in 1925 noted this fact for an area with a relatively poor communications system. "Cotton is sold from the southern and western villages to Cambay and Dholera. It is also sought out by traders from Bavla, Sanand and Dholera" more than 30 to 40 miles away. All these factors increased the competition to buy cotton, SR, Dholka, 1925, p.27.

The biggest inducement for the cultivator was the disappearance of the special price he paid to ^{the} wakharia who advanced him the money before the cotton crop was harvested. A new system was started by Ritchie Stewart and Co., the biggest of the cotton exporters before 1861 and the second biggest after that. They gave out advances without demanding any interest and paid more for better quality cotton. In 1850/51, in Khandesh, they advanced 91458 Rupees to 8399 cultivators in eleven talukas. The next year 30457 Rupees were advanced to another 1509 cotton growers.¹ In Broach too, it was recorded, "The advance is now said to be earnest money to bind the cultivator to his bargain rather than the mortgage of his crop to tide over the hard months on to the harvest."² In this system, if the cultivator did not sell to the agent who had advanced him the money or the latter did not buy the cotton, the amount of the advance was simply returned. The risk of the broker was much greater than that of the peasant. One broker contracted with many cultivators and if he tried to offer a lower price at the time of the sale he would just increase the number of defaulters he might have to chase. In fact, as the evidence before the Indian Cotton Committee in 1918 made clear, if the smaller cultivator thought that the terms of the advance were onerous "he would borrow money and pay off his debts out of the return he might get for his

¹ Ritchie Stewart and Company to H. E. Goldsmid, Bombay, 27 March 1850, PP, 1857, Vol.XXXI, Part II, p.972.

² DG, Broach, p.429.

cotton."¹

The second element of saving effected in favour of the grower was the smaller proportion of the total price he had to give away as costs for preparing, packaging and transporting the material to the final markets abroad. Although the number of items he had to pay for increased with the inclusion of ginning and pressing, their aggregate weight declined. According to one calculation in 1847, of the 89.63 Rupees, which was the cost of laying down a bale of 784 pounds in Liverpool, the cultivator got 72.3% if he did not pay any interest to the dealer. Of the 24.8 Rupees or so deducted, the Dealer's profit in Broach was put at 5 Rupees, and the share of the Broach broker and the Bombay agent together at Rupees 2.25 or altogether 8% of the overall and 29% of the forwarding charges. In 1875, when the price of a candy of Broach cotton in Liverpool was relatively low at 200 Rupees for 784 pounds, only 13.8% of this was being paid out as forwarding charges leaving the cultivator a gross

¹ Evidence of Mr. L. S. Potnis, Mamlatdar of Bhusawal, East Khandesh, Report of the Indian Cotton Committee, Evidence Volumes, Vol. IV, Part I, pp.29, 1919.: It was not unusual for some of the petty merchants to try and deceive the cultivator by giving them lower prices. The fact that they were dealing with middlemen not resident in the village enabled the cultivators to adopt their own methods of cheating the petty dealers. The cultivators "intentionally damp the kapas before weighing, mix earth or sometimes actually put stones in the Docras. Many Dalals are ruined by advancing money to cultivators with the object of getting a commission. A cunning cultivator brings a large amount of advance money from a dalal on a false promise of selling a large amount of Kapas through him. But at selling time, he sends the Kapas through his brother or someone else to another dealer and gets the full value for it. The Dalal, who originally advanced the money has either to wait for another year or to go to the Civil Courts." Evidence of the Deputy Director Agriculture, Southern Division, Bombay Presidency, Indian Cotton Committee, Ibid., p.122.

profit of Rupees 172. This last figure included the value of cotton seed, which was now returned by the ginner to the owner of the cotton. What is noticeable is, that the dealer's profit is no longer a separate charge, since most of the dealers were being employed by the firm or the gins. The ginning and the pressing charges together account for 45% of the forwarding charges, and handling plus the wholesaler's commission and the municipal levy account for another 45%.¹ The profit of the European firm was got, either by owning shares in the gins and the presses, or from undertaking the handling operation and getting the minimal wholesaler's commission in Bombay. The fact that the domination of the European firms in the market did little to cut down on adulteration by mixing different qualities of cotton may, after all be explained by the squeeze put on profit margins in a highly competitive market. If one could not any longer exploit the peasant, one could hope to get the better of the manufacturers who had to buy the cotton to keep their mills running.²

In some cases the Gins started to buy cotton directly from the cultivators bypassing all petty dealers.³ As the Second Settlement Report of the Jambusar taluka in the Broach district noted, the 7 ginning and pressing mills bought up the entire cotton crop and increased the price being paid to the cultivator.⁴ In 1918 again, the Agricultural officer of Amalsud in the Surat District told the Cotton Committee, "that the system there was to sell to the brokers of various ginneries." As the farmers "do not have to depend on one

¹DG, Broach, pp - 432/433.

²The Annual Reports of the Cotton Department often pointed out how it was the upcountry merchants, the ginneries etc. who were responsible for adulterating the cotton. ARCD, 1872/73, p.27.

³SR, Broach Taluka, 1872.

⁴SR, Jambusar Taluka, 1875/76.

or two buyers, they get the highest prices at the time of selling."¹

The growing fashion, however, was for the peasants to carry their cotton to the market town and sell directly to the brokers of the Gins or the Bombay firms. This enabled them to gain on the remaining differential between the city and the village price. Already in 1876, the Broach Gazetteer had pointed out how "Some of the Borahs have become independent enough to bring their own cotton into the town and deal directly with the ginner. A few even get it pressed and sent to Bombay."² In 1925, it was estimated that 20% of the cotton sold in Broach and Jambusar towns was brought there by the cultivators.³ In 1918, it had been reported that 30% of the cultivators in the Dhulia district of Khandesh went to the district headquarters to sell their cotton directly to the European firms.⁴ It must be remembered that these percentages really point to much larger numbers of cultivators selling in the towns since they would apply only to those within easy travelling distance of the town itself.

¹ Indian Cotton Committee, Vol. IV, Part I, op.cit., p.195.

² DG, Broach, Chapter on Trade; One of the factors which enabled the peasants to sell to ginneries was the wide distribution of the factories. Of the 31 steam ginning and pressing units in 1874 in Broach, 19 were in the city itself, 4 in Palej, 3 in Ankleswar, 3 in Jambusar, 1 in Chamargam and 1 in Ilav. DG Broach, pp.624; The advantage of this scattered location may also be seen in Ahmedabad, where by 1878, there existed 369 cotton Gins. Of these 130 were in Viramgam, 117 in Ahmedabad, 40 in Dholera, 40 in Dhandhuka, 22 in Sanand and 20 in Pipili. DG Ahmedabad, p.102.

³ Choksey, op.cit., p.25.

⁴ Report from Superintendent Government Farm, Dhulia, Indian Cotton Committee, op.cit., p.21; In his survey of the Olpad taluka in the Surat district, Shukla points out that these firms or the Gin usually paid 1 Rupee per Bhar as commission to the dealer, an incentive for him to try and induce the peasants to sell more cotton to him. The dealer was not paid anything by the cultivator. When the cotton was delivered at the Gin, then too, "No deductions by way of brokerage are usually made." Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.206.

The popularity of village sales had a proper rationale behind it.¹ Even here sales made through sahukars or moneylenders had declined. According to one investigation into 15 villages of Broach and Ahmedabad, of the 1508 cultivators interviewed only 11 to 15% sold through the moneylender.² According to the Royal Commission on Agriculture, cultivators stood to lose from 10% to 20% on the market price, if they had to make a Jalap sale through the moneylender. However, only 23% of the cotton crop in North Gujarat and 14% in Middle Gujarat was estimated in 1929 to be in the hands of Sahukars.³ For those who did not sell through sahukars, village sales were attractive either because they had a small quantity to sell or did not have the required number of carts to carry the product to the market or in the great majority of the cases, there being little difference between city and village prices, the cultivators were in a better bargaining position at home where they could easily store the cotton to await a better deal.⁴ The survey conducted

¹ Despite the preference of cotton cultivators nearer to the market centers to sell their produce in the urban market, the greater number still sold in the villages. In Gujarat, 51 percent of those interviewed by the Cotton Committee representatives sold in the village. General Report on Finance and Marketing of Cotton, op.cit., 1928, p.21.

² Ibid., p.15.

³ Royal Commission on Agriculture, op.cit., Part II, Vol.II, 1929, pp.63.

⁴ Village sales also saved the cultivator the cost of transporting the cotton and the market charges. In Gujarat most of the cotton even in the villages was sold directly to the purchaser. In many cases, "the sowcar (moneylender) acts as the local agent or dalal of the big purchasers" and had to offer the prices quoted by them. Invariably, the cultivators had "ascertained the prevailing rates before selling." General Report on Cotton, op.cit., 1928, pp. 21/23/24/25; According to enquiries conducted by Mr. M. C. Burt, the cultivators stated that they preferred village sales in spite of the slightly better rates to be had in the urban markets, "because of the disputes that occur there about the rates after weighment has started and because of arbitrary deductions from the weights." Burt, M.C.; Secretary, Indian Cotton Committee, Evidence before Royal Commission on Agriculture, op.cit., Vol.II, Pt.II, pp.5.

by J. B. Shukla of the Olpad taluka of Surat between 1929 and 1932 revealed these facts in appreciable detail. He summed up his findings about the marketing process in the following words. "Cultivators who are not members of sale societies sell the seed cotton to the owners of one of the ginning factories. Where to sell and when to sell depends on his convenience and price offered at one of these centers. If a cultivator of the northern villages thinks that a better price can be secured at Rander and Surat, he would go with his cartload a distance of 15 to 18 miles." In the village itself, "if the cultivator thinks that the price offered by the agent is a favourable one, a bargain is struck; else he waits in anticipation of a better price."¹

Perhaps further confirmatory evidence about these changes in marketing is to be had from a graphical comparison of Bombay and Gujarat prices. The Dutta Committee Report put together the retail and the wholesale prices separately and for a stretch which falls in the middle of the period being studied in this dissertation. Graph 1 shows how close the Gujarat prices were to the Bombay ones between 1890 and 1912.

Only in Surat and Broach, however, was cotton the most important crop being sold. In Kheda, tobacco was the crop comparable to cotton, only 9% of it being retained for district and domestic consumption. Between 1903 and 1921 the acreage devoted to tobacco went up from 15,577 acres to 43960 acres; in 1939, Kheda cultivated

¹Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.206.

88105 acres of tobacco.¹ Groundnut tells a similar story. In 1913/14, only 60 acres in Ahmedabad and 42 acres in Kheda were given over to groundnuts; by 1931, the figures for the respective districts were 19492 acres and 25746 acres.²

Information about the marketing of these crops is much more scanty than that for cotton. There are however several facts which indicate that the trend in these markets was similar to that in the cotton markets.

One of the noticeable features was that none of the crops being sold were included in the business conducted at the periodic markets or hats which remained. The weekly or periodic fair, which had earlier formed an important part of the pedling trade through which most rural commerce was handled seemed to have been an early casualty of the communications revolution. The Settlement Reports in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century time and again emphasized the absence of weekly fairs in the districts. Those which existed were religious in nature organized about once every year.³ The significant exception was the Surat district. Here, the hatwaras or weekly fairs were still held "in different villages of

¹Season and Crop Reports, op.cit.

²Ibid.

³The Settlement Report for the Matar taluka of Kheda in 1916 noted that except for the religious one at Waotha, "there are no fairs held in the taluka." (p.5) So also did the ones for Dholka. The surveys of various areas referred to also did not mention any fairs being held periodically for daily buying and selling.

the eastern and southern sub-divisions, where the aboriginal tribes form the bulk of the population."¹ These were almost entirely meant for selling items of daily necessity to the peasants. Among the items of sale mentioned, only the fair in the Pardi taluka dealt in grain. Elsewhere it was vegetables, salt, spices, bamboo, tobacco and coarse cloth which formed the bulk of the items being sold. The weekly fairs seemed to have declined, because it was now possible to carry goods to almost every village. Already in the 1870s, the District Gazetteer recorded that in Broach, "Almost every village has a shop-keeper, generally a Hindu, by caste a Wanio or a Ghanchi (oil-presser). In a few villages he is a Musulman of the Bohra class of cultivators." These shops sold "grain, clarified butter, oils, molasses, dates, and dry spices." For sugar, combs, hair-oil, glass bracelets, spangles and cloth, the cultivators had to go to the chief town of the sub-division.²

In so far as there was a growing separation between the sale of items of consumption to the peasantry, and the purchase of raw materials from them, it reflected an increasing specialization in rural trade. On the one hand this was necessitated by the growing volume of trade. Between 1855 and 1872, the value of both imports and exports in all these four districts went up faster than the average price level. Even at the port of Dholera in Ahmedabad where trade had earlier been declining, between 1854 and 1871, the value

¹DG, Surat, p.181.

²DG, Broach, p.437.

of imports rose from £178,378 to £224,531, a rise of 26% and that of exports from £366,823 to £1,297,591, an increase of 254%.¹ The increasing use of the railway for internal commerce meant that orders could be placed at any time of the year, and the wholesale agents in the district towns had to have enough capital and storage space to maintain sufficient stocks. This was more true of crops which were not being exported, and where any attempt at expansion had perforce to be more exploratory than would be the case for cotton with its more organized and concentrated markets. That this was happening may best be seen from the increasing volume of railway traffic. Between 1868 and 1877, the outward traffic from the eleven stations of the Kheda district increased from 12307 tons to 62494 tons while the inward traffic grew from 18,831 tons to 45420 tons. The increase among items being exported was provided by tobacco, clarified butter, grains and seed. Among the imports grains, sugar and piecegoods were the leaders.² The railway line had been completed only in 1863. The effect of the metre gauge railway between Ahmedabad and Dholka started in 1903 was summed up by the Settlement Officer when he wrote "the general effect appears to be that Dholka's produce of all kinds can realize better prices." The proof of this lay in the fact that "A large surplus crop, especially in good years, no longer necessarily means a drop in prices."³

¹DG, Ahmedabad, pp. 98/99; Wheat exports also began to increase in the 1880s as Indian wheat began to find a stable market in Southern Europe where it was widely used for the manufacture of macaroni. Watt, G., A Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, Vol. VI, 1889, p.133.

²DG, Kheda, p.73.

³SR, Dholka, op.cit., 1925, p.14.

The Dholka taluka is perhaps a good example to take, because even by 1925 it lacked a metalled road joining it with Ahmedabad, which was about 25 miles away. Yet of the 88 villages at least 19 traded directly with Ahmedabad, as we shall see below, mostly in grain. The situation was much better where local authorities had built roads connecting the railway stations with important marketing centres. This had happened in many places. In the Kheda district, of the 100 miles of roads at least 72 had been metalled by 1878. One road joined the railway at Nadiad to the northern part of the taluka. Another joined Borsad, an important town in the south to the station at Wasad.¹ In Broach, a local fund road was built to join Hansot with the railway at Ankleswar. This not only benefited the trade in the Broach district, it drew traffic from Nadod in the princely state of Rajpipla, 33 miles away.² Unmetalled roads in the Soopa and Jalalpur taluka of Surat played a similar role.³ These examples could easily be multiplied.

The two principal methods of selling raw cotton remained true for the other crops. Either the crop was disposed through a middleman voluntarily or involuntarily in the village itself or the peasant carted his produce to the town and sold it directly to the wholesaler. Usually, when a peasant had to sell involuntarily, this referred to his entire produce. As the 1871 Settlement Report on the Pardi taluka of Surat remarked, "The kaliparaj ryots rarely

¹DG, Kheda, p.73.

²SR, Hansot Mahal, SRBG, No. DXXXIX, New Series, p.35.

³SR, Jalalpur Taluka, SRBG, No. CCCV, New Series, p.5.

take their produce to the market themselves, as the debt to the Bunnia commonly absorbs all but what is absolutely necessary for their own consumption."¹ In this case, it hardly mattered whether the villages were near the market town. For example in the Matar taluka of Kheda district in 1916, "The villages which deal with Matar and Kheda are near those towns, and their market town is for them rather a matter of necessity than choice, as they are heavily indebted to the money-lenders of those places who are also merchants."² The Broach Gazetteer approximately estimated the number of peasants who might be in such complete control of the moneylenders. "Twenty percent of the poorest class of cultivators and field labourers - Kolis, Talavis, Bhils and Dhers - are said to require advances of grains for food and seed. In return for loans of grain, the general rule is, that at harvest time one-fourth more than the quantity received is paid."³ If we are to talk of trends, selling through the money-lenders was a declining one. A striking proof of this came from a survey of Matar taluka in 1930 conducted by an avowed Gandhian and a nationalist, J. C. Kumarappa. Even he noticed, that "On the whole, the farmers contract individually at the best prices they can get. The prices are fixed competitively often through brokers. Rarely do moneylenders take the produce themselves, but even when they do, they take it at the market rates. The middlemen usually get a brokerage of Rupees 2 per cart." In fact, in one village, Vavdi, "the sowcar was willing to pay an anna or two more than the market price owing to his anxiety to recover his dues."⁴ In a competitive market such

¹SR, Pardi, pp.38, 1904.

²SR, Matar Taluka, 1916, pp.4.

³DG, Broach, op.cit., pp.451.

⁴Kumarappa, op.cit., 1931, pp.54/55.

fears and risks were an integral part of moneylending, an aspect which ~~will~~ be discussed in another chapter. The point to remember is that Kumarappa was in fact referring to one of the backward of the Kheda talukas, which specialized in exporting foodgrains and this would indicate the minimum conditions which prevailed even during the Great Depression period.

A closer look at the marketing systems prevailing for specific commodities would further reveal the declining hold of the moneylender. Tobacco is an important case in point, because it was in terms of the cash income it yielded, even more valuable than cotton. In the 1870s an acre of tobacco could easily yield a net profit of Rupees 60 for the Khandeshi tobacco and Rupees 126 for the local Kheda variety called talabadi.¹ Its preparation from the raw state to the graded and cured tobacco leaves was mostly done by the peasants themselves, so that the costs for ginning paid out for cotton, were absent in the case of tobacco.² Here, the marketing network revolved around the sub-dalal. There might be one or more sub-dalals in the market and in most cases they themselves were tobacco growers. A little while before the harvest, "the sub-dalals invited quotations from the cultivators." Although the sub-dalal negotiated the price to be paid to the town wholesaler, who would only contract to buy from him as the subdalal generally would have the resources or the contacts for transporting the tobacco, the cultivators quoted the initial price according to their knowledge of the market. It must be noted, that unlike the deductions for

¹DG, Kheda, p.50.

²Ibid.

transport costs made from the cotton price, the costs involved in weighing, packing and transporting the tobacco were born by the city merchant.¹ Clearly, tobacco markets were more profitable for the peasants than even the cotton market. The middleman was increasingly functioning as a commissioned agent who could provide some services in transporting and regular supply of commodities rather than as an economic or commercial overlord. This was the case definitely by the 1920s, when the first systematic surveys were made of the rural markets.

Participation by the producers in the marketing of their produce was characteristic of the Gujarat region in the case of other products. Already in 1879, Kheda or more specifically the Charotar region exported almost 80,000 pounds (Rupees 8,00,000) worth of butter. "The better class of ghi makers trade direct with Vania, Bhatia, and Lohana dealers; the low caste makers trade through Musulman brokers."² Even in the marketing of Gul or brown sugar, the proportion of the price given up to the village broker and the wholesale merchant was not very large. According to Mukhtyar's estimate, a Broach merchant could make a net profit of 52% on every maund of gul for which he had paid Rupees 3.94 in the Atgam village of Surat. The point to note is that this margin did not arise because of payments to middlemen. The two who were employed got little. The Bulsar dealer and the village dalal were paid Rupees 3 each for selling 150 maunds of Gul for which the cultivator got Rupees 591. Another 62 Rupees, also paid by the Broach merchant were needed for

¹Desai, op.cit., 1948, p.249.

²DG, Kheda, p.50.

the transport and handling charges. The latter made his profit by adding Rupees 1.54 to the price he had paid for every maund of Gul.¹ In this case the peasant and the intermediaries both did not know the Broach retail price, or the former could not hold on to his produce. This was not a likely possibility since sugarcane required a heavy capital outlay and was usually cultivated by the better off peasants. The marketing of mangoes, another major export of the Surat district fell into a twofold pattern. Either some dalals from Bombay came to the district early in the summer and bargained with the farmer for a price at a time when the number of blossoms on the trees could be counted, but the harvest was not yet ripe. The merchants also, therefore, had to accept a major risk and a loss if the harvest was damaged for some reason. Here also some of the more energetic fruit growers took their crops to Bombay and sold it themselves. In the year being studied, the latter got 26% more, but that margin could easily be reduced by price fluctuations or a small harvest.² Nonetheless, in the case of these two commodities, Gul and mangoes, the peasants could still gain from direct selling.

The grain markets perhaps may be expected to show a much greater similarity to the closed markets said to exist in other sectors of the colonial economy. In this respect too, the Gujarat region shows a distinctive pattern.

In so far as co-relation of prices can reflect the integration of markets, the evidence in the case of Gujarat provides a striking testimony. From the prices and wages series we have

¹Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, pp. 190/191.

²Ibid.

drawn graphs of the annual averages of the fortnightly returns of retail prices for the period 1861 to 1920. The results for Bajra, Wheat, Rice and Jowar prices in Bombay, and the district headquarters at Surat, Broach, Kheda (Kaira) and Ahmedabad are shown in Graphs II to V. A further co-relation between the prices in Ahmedabad town and the district sub-divisions of Sanand, Dholka and Daskroi prices of Wheat and Bajra derived from the Settlement Reports is contained in Graphs VI and VII. These show clearly that the process of price integration did not stop at the district town or headquarters but was carried into the wofussil and the village. Except in the case of Rice, the difference in prices between the five centers was never more than 1 Rupee per maund. When compared with the price Index of raw cotton, it may also be seen that while the fluctuations in grain prices were persistent, the range of these variations was never very large in normal years.

Indeed, we are fortunate in possessing some monthly data for the prices of major food items in the Broach district. This is presented in Appendix III to this chapter. In the case of the prices for eleven years presented separately, the stability over the year can be clearly seen. Taking the average for the 3 months with the highest and lowest prices, the difference between the maximum and the minimum price would be Rupees 0.6 for wheat; Rs. 0.3 per maund for Jowar; and Rupees 1.4 per maund for Rice. Approximately, the same results are got for the two years presented separately and also got from a different source. Even for items like cloves and gram, the difference between the prices for the 3 highest and lowest months was Rupees 0.6 and 0.7 respectively. What could be the reason behind a phenomenon which goes against the idea that the

domination exercised by monoposonists over the peasantry was based on the variations between the pre-harvest and harvest prices of grain, since these invariably increased the quantity to be paid back for loans taken in the pre-harvest months. The answer most probably lies in the fact, that all the Gujarat districts mentioned in this study had a large export and import trade in grains, and this trade was fairly evenly spread out over the year.

One of the Administration Reports of the Revenue Department estimated the export of grains from Broach. Between 1841 and 1847, Broach district exported 15730 tons of all sorts of grains. The same figure between 1874 and 1879 had gone up to 56502 tons. This it may be noted was partly due to the Famine in the Deccan, which had also raised the price level in Gujarat. However, the average even for the normal years of 1874 to 1876 was 266% more than for the earlier period.¹ Figures for the other districts clearly show that both the export and import of grains was going up, the latter often at a faster rate than the former. These will be analyzed in the chapter on Consumption. If we take the value of the trade for the first six months of the year, it would compare favourably with the second half of the year, showing that goods were not suddenly thrown on the market.² It is also true that a disproportionate amount of grain was not being put up for sale as happened in the 1830s.

Most of our information about the method of marketing grain comes from the first 30 years of the twentieth century. Since

¹These figures include exports by rail and sea from all the major stations and ports in the Broach district. They have been got from AAR, 1846/47, RD, 1849, Vol.16, pp.37; AAR, 1878/79, RD, 1879, Vol.18, p.23.

²DG, Ahmedabad, p.104.

this pattern was the result of a slow evolution, it may form a benchmark for evaluating the trend of developments in the grain markets. Shukla's survey of the villages in the Olpad taluka of Surat in 1930/31 showed only a small part of the harvest being sold directly to the 'non-cultivating' classes in the village, and that also "if the price prevalent in the towns of Rander and Surat is offered."¹ In fact his observation was that, "Unlike in the cotton markets in which the staple is sold at the door of the cultivator, these crops (grains) are always taken to market towns as there are no merchants or their agents going from village to village and creating a demand for these crops."² Grain was sold in Surat in gallis of 30 maunds. For one galli of Jowar the peasant received Rupees 30 in the year of Shukla's survey. Out of this he paid one Rupee to the Dalal as Brokerage, and another 0.63 Rupees to 1.5 Rupees for road toll charges depending on the distance of the village from the town. At most he lost 16% on the wholesale price prevalent in Surat; the average deduction came to 12%.³

Mukhtyar's estimates for costs paid out in the selling of Paddy showed that on a gross price of Rupees 32 for a hara of 21 maunds, a cultivator had to pay Rupees 0.8 or just 2.5% of the value received, if he himself carted the produce to the city market. If the Chihpa merchant of Bulsar came to the Atgam village, he would deduct an additional amount to cover his transport charges, and 'some remuneration' for the extra trouble of travelling to the village. Even then the price being paid in the village varied from

¹Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.207/208.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Rupees 28 to 30, while at Bulsar paddy was fetching from Rupees 32 to 34 per hara, a difference ranging from 13% to 20%.¹ In this case, the cultivator paid nothing for the toll charges etc. which would reduce the effective profit of the merchant to less than 10%. However, as Mukhtyar points out, if we take the retail price of rice in Bulsar, it would show the merchant amassing a profit of about 100% over his cost price for paddy. The crucial factor which enabled him to do that was his own husking of paddy. The peasant did not have the facilities to stay on in the city to get this part of the processing done at his own cost. He sold only small amounts of paddy, the profit on which was not large enough to justify undertaking an additional task. The merchant was able to increase his profit margin, not because of his monopoly power, but due to his situation and scale of operations.

The interesting aspect of grain marketing was the increasing number of peasants going to the market town to sell their crop. In the Dholka taluka, despite poor roads, it was noted in 1925 that "most of the rice is sold by carting it direct to Ahmedabad", from 25 to 40 miles away depending on which part of Dholka one started from. Similarly, although Dholka was well situated to be the "principal local market for wheat" and was so in the past, "many villages, however, cart their wheat direct to Ahmedabad where they get a better price."² Depending on the cropping pattern of the neighbouring talukas considerable local demand for grains could be created by other villages. Thus,

¹Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, p.184.

²SR, Dholka, op.cit., 1925, p.27.

merchants might not come from the main market town, as Shukla argued for the Olpad taluka. They came from the other rural areas. In Dholka itself, "There is considerable wheat trade to the east, from the Bhal tract and the central villages of the taluka to traders or cultivators who bring carts and cart away wheat to the Kaira district, or to the adjacent villages in Cambay and Baroda territory." Mahudha, the most distant of the places to which this wheat was exported, "would be from 50 to 60 miles."¹

The radius within which Ahmedabad would have been the major market for selling one's produce was a large one. In the Daskroi taluka, although the villages of "Bareja, Visalpur and Kassandra possess considerable Bazaars, these are only useful for the retail sale of articles of domestic use only. All important trade is centered in Ahmedabad, which though situated outside the limits of the taluka is organically a part of it. The bulk of the surplus produce of the taluka is therefore brought there for sale."² Ahmedabad was said to be a central market even for the Mehmedabad taluka of Kheda more than 65 miles away. The Settlement Report here also revealed the variety of selling methods which had developed by the early twentieth century. Ahmedabad and Nadiad, both outside the taluka were the principal markets, "where wholesale dealers may be found." Apart from these "most villages have their local Bannias with whom the small cultivators generally deal." Lastly, "another method of disposing of the produce is to sell it at the door. Rice and tobacco are often sold in this way where they are grown on a

¹Ibid.

²SR, South Daskroi, 1921, p.7.

sufficiently large scale to make it worth a trader's while to buy them direct from the growers."¹

By giving us a picture of rural marketing in Gujarat, this chapter provides a substantial qualification to the generalizations often made about colonial agriculture on an all-India scale. It also emphasizes the point made by David Washbrook that there is a need to look at the phases through which the colonial economy evolved.² Lastly, it looks at a peasantry, a significant number of whom had acquired the independence to decide where and how to sell their produce. In this respect, the Gujarat peasantry was well placed to benefit from the increase in the prices of the crops it sold.

¹SR, Mehmabad, 1916, p.4.

²Washbrook, D.A., Law, State and Agrarian Society in Colonial India, Power, Profit and Politics, 1981, C.U.P.

APPENDIX I

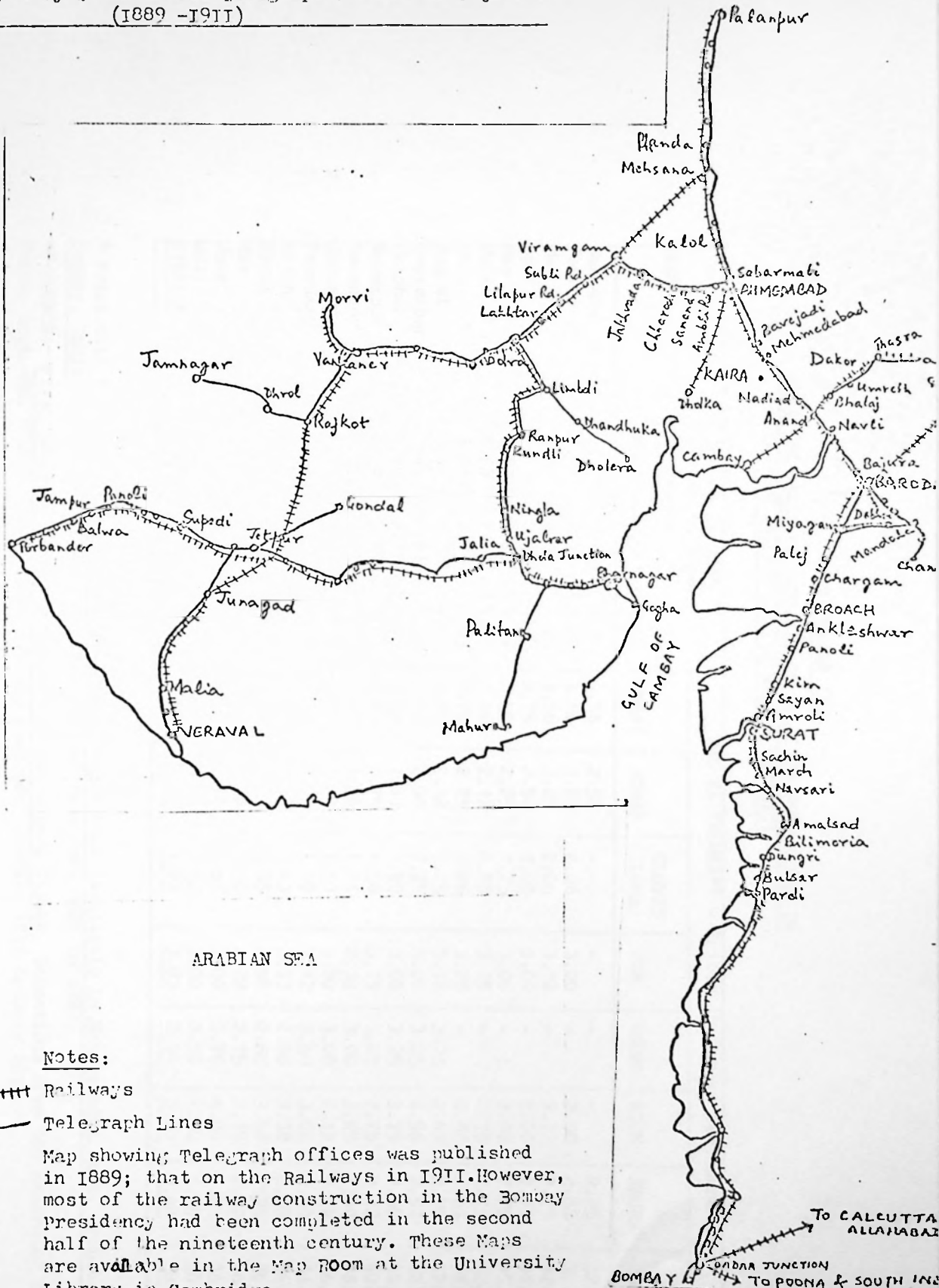
INDEX OF FIVE YEAR MOVING AVERAGES OF SEED COTTON* PRICES

BROACH TALUKA, Broach District				DHOLKA TALUKA, Ahmedabad District			
YEARS	PRICE INDEX	YEARS	PRICE INDEX	YEARS	PRICE INDEX	YEARS	PRICE INDEX
Base Year 1850-51	3.33 paise per pound = 100	1882-83 to 1886-87	288	Base Period 1866-67 to 1870-7	Rs.5-38 per maund of 82.286 lbs. = 100	1902-03 to 1906-07	127
1850-51 to 1854-55	108	1886-87 to 1890-91	272	1870-71 to 1874-75	89	1906-07 to 1910-11	178
1854-55 to 1858-59	145	1890-91 to 1894-95	265	1870-71 to 1878-79	93	1910-11 to 1914-15	187
1858-59 to 1862-63	259	1894-95 to 1898-99	238	1878-79 to 1882-83	93	1914-15 to 1918-19	225
1862-63 to 1866-67	412	1898-99 to 1902-03	246	1882-83 to 1886-87	105		
1866-67 to 1870-71	266	1902-03 to 1906-07	280	1886-87 to 1890-91	117		
1870-71 to 1874-75	333	1905-06 to 1909-10	339	1890-91 to 1894-95	122		
1874-75 to 1878-79	323			1895-95 to 1898-99	113		
1878-79 to 1882-83	283			1898-99 to 1902-03	121		

* 2.5 pounds of seed cotton = 1 pound of ginned cotton

Source: Settlement Reports of the 1890s (SRBG) (OPR)

Railway Stations and Telegraph Offices in Gujarat.
(1889 -1911)



ARABIAN SEA

Notes:

- +++++ Railways
- Telegraph Lines

Map showing; Telegraph offices was published in 1889; that on the Railways in 1911. However, most of the railway construction in the Bombay Presidency had been completed in the second half of the nineteenth century. These Maps are available in the Map ROOM at the University Library in Cambridge.

TO CALCUTTA
ALLAHABAD
BOMBAY
TO POONA & SOUTH IND

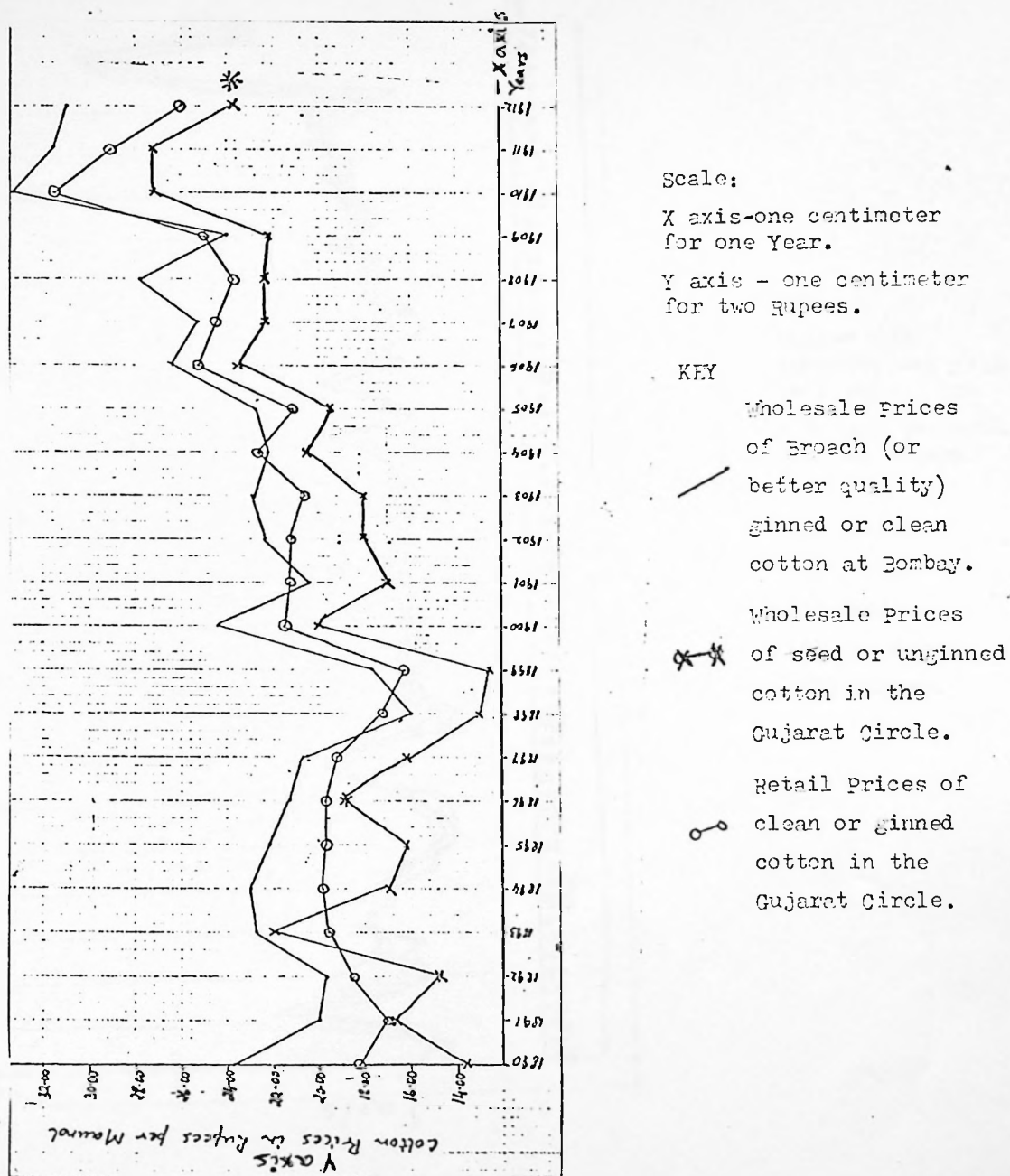
APPENDIX III
RELATIVE SEASONAL AVERAGES OF SELECTED FOOD ITEMS IN
TWO TALUKAS OF THE BROACH DISTRICT

MONTH	BROACH TALUKA* Prices in Rupees per Maund			WAG RA TALUKA** - Prices in Rupees per Maund							
	WHEAT	JOWAR	RICE	WHEAT	JOWAR	CLOVES (Long)	TUR	GRAM	RICE	BAJRA	GHI
January	3.47	2.65	3.71	3.56	2.50	-	-	-	-	2.25	32.00
February	3.50	2.71	3.82	3.56	2.50	2.06	3.00	-	3.00	2.88	32.00
March	3.20	2.67	3.91	3.56	2.25	2.06	3.12	-	3.12	2.75	32.00
April	3.10	2.48	4.02	3.75	2.50	2.06	3.00	-	3.00	2.75	36.00
May	3.23	2.63	4.04	3.50	2.25	1.75	3.00	-	3.00	2.75	45.00
June	3.38	2.65	4.07	3.56	2.12	1.75	3.25	-	2.75	2.75	52.00
July	3.36	2.74	4.03	3.75	2.25	2.06	3.25	-	2.88	2.63	48.00
August	3.52	2.72	4.0	3.75	2.12	1.75	3.12	3.25	2.63	2.75	42.00
September	3.49	2.91	4.05	3.50	2.00	1.75	3.00	3.25	2.56	2.50	42.00
October	3.91	2.95	4.55	3.50	1.81	1.75	3.00	3.25	2.75	2.50	40.00
November	3.74	2.83	4.21	3.63	1.75	1.50	3.75	3.25	2.75	2.12	40.00
December	3.75	2.84	4.03	3.50	1.88	1.75	2.38	3.00	2.25	2.00	38.00
January				3.50	2.25	1.50	3.00	3.00	2.12	2.19	36.00
February				3.00	2.00	1.50	3.12	2.50	3.00	2.50	36.00
March				2.88	2.00	1.63	3.63	2.88	3.38	2.88	34.00
April				2.50	2.00	1.38	2.88	2.88	3.50	2.25	36.00
May				2.50	2.00	1.50	2.88	2.75	2.75	2.12	36.00
June				2.50	2.12	1.63	3.00	2.75	4.00	2.25	36.00
July				2.88	2.25	1.63	3.00	2.50	4.50	2.38	36.00
AVERAGE	3.47	2.73	4.04	3.25	2.27	1.73	3.03	2.94	3.00	2.48	38.37

* Price data from Annual Reports of the Revenue Department (Available in Maharashtra Govt. Archives, Bombay, India) for 11 years, from 1874 to 1880 and then from 1885 to 1888.

** SOURCE: First Revision Survey Settlement of the Wagara Taluka, Selections from the Record of the Bombay Govt. No. CCCCLIX, New Series. Period covered: January 1872 to July 1873.

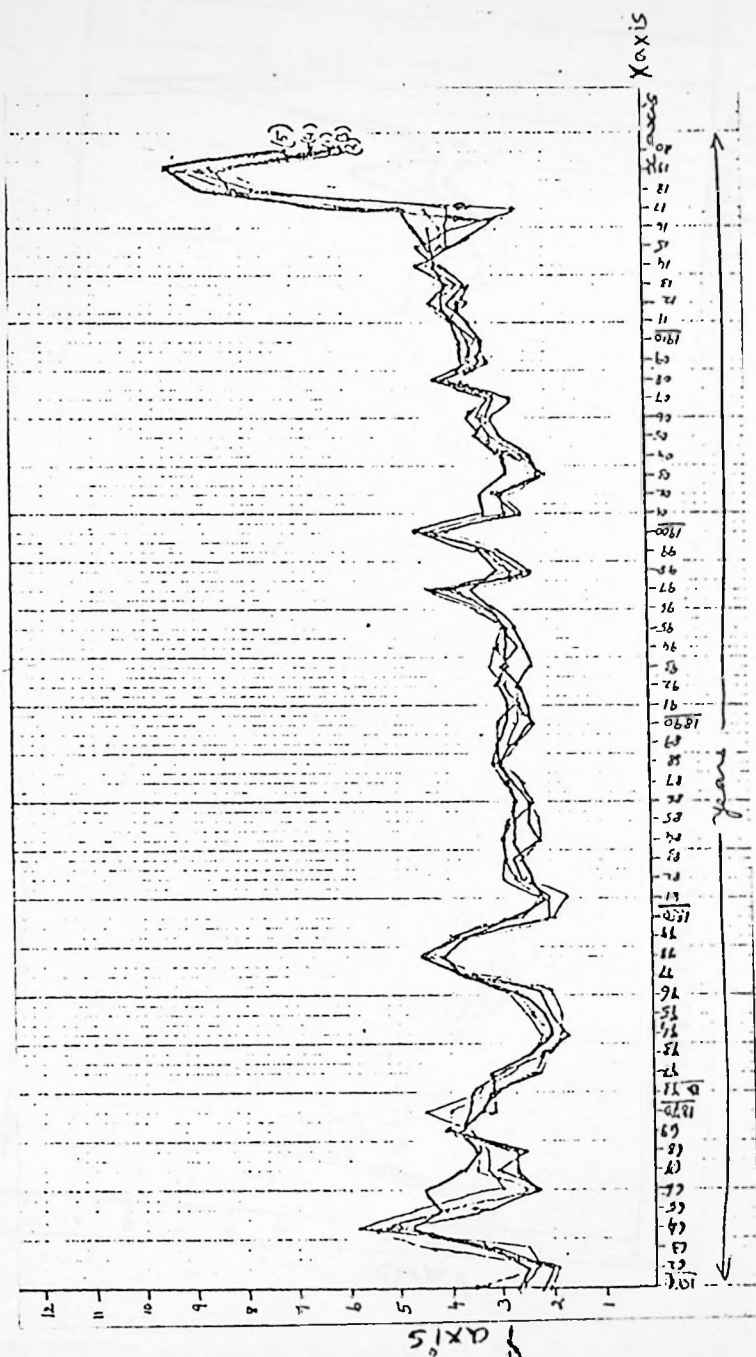
Average Annual Wholesale Prices of Clean Cotton at Bombay (city) and in Gujarat.



Note: As the Datta Committee Report gave the wholesale prices of Gujarat Cotton only for unginned cotton, in order to compare them with the Bombay price of ginned cotton, the conversion ratio used is 1 Lb. of ginned cotton equals 2.5 Lbs. of unginned cotton. 2.5 is the average amount of lint got from Broach seed cotton, the actual amount varying from 2 to 3 Lbs. of seed cotton for one Lb. of clean cotton.

Source: Datta, K.L., Report on the Enquiry into Prices, op. cit., 1914, Vol. II, pp 100; 196; 448.

Average Annual Retail Prices of Bajra in Rupees and decimals of a Rupee per Maund of 82.286 Lbs.



KEY:

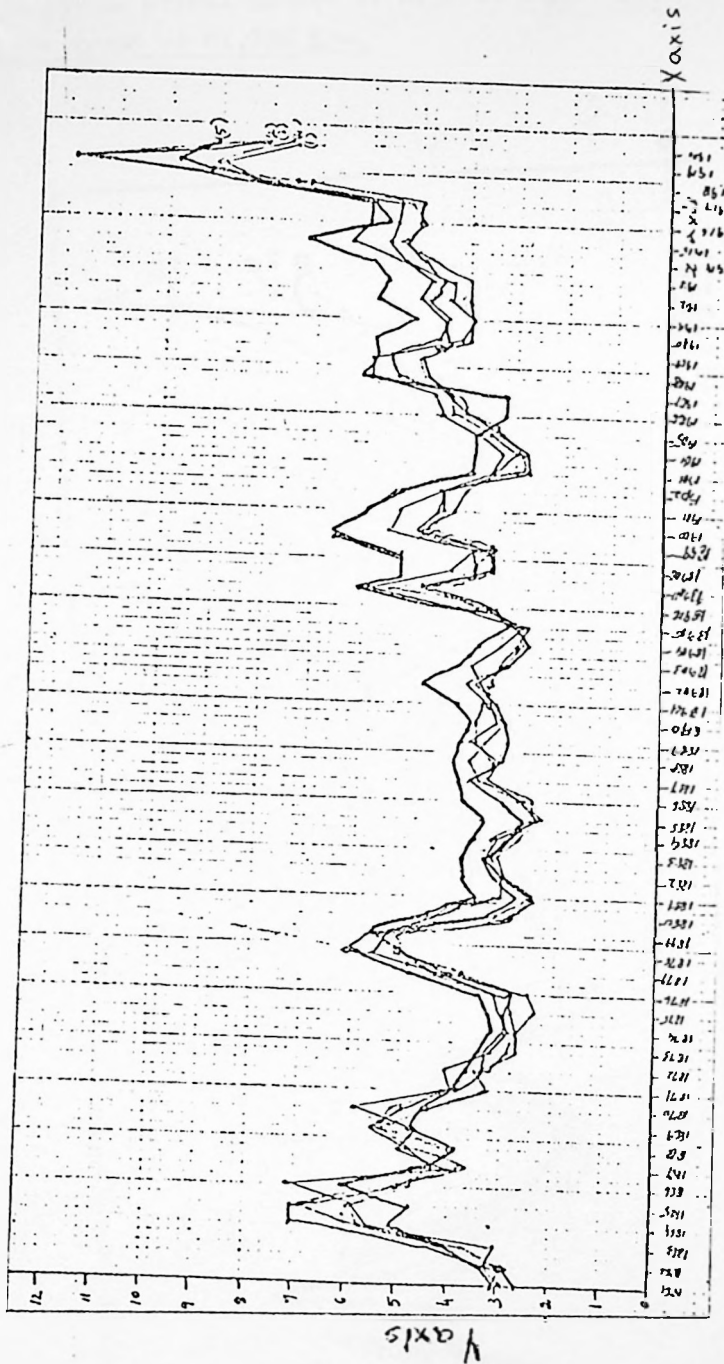
Scales 2/10 inch for one year on X axis.

Y axis - one inch for two Rupees.

- (1) Surat.
- (2) Broach.
- (3) Kheda.
- (4) Ahmedabad.
- (5) Bombay.

Source: Prices and Wages in India.

Average Annual Retail Prices of Wheat in Rupees and decimals of a Rupee per Maund of 82.286 lbs.



KEY:

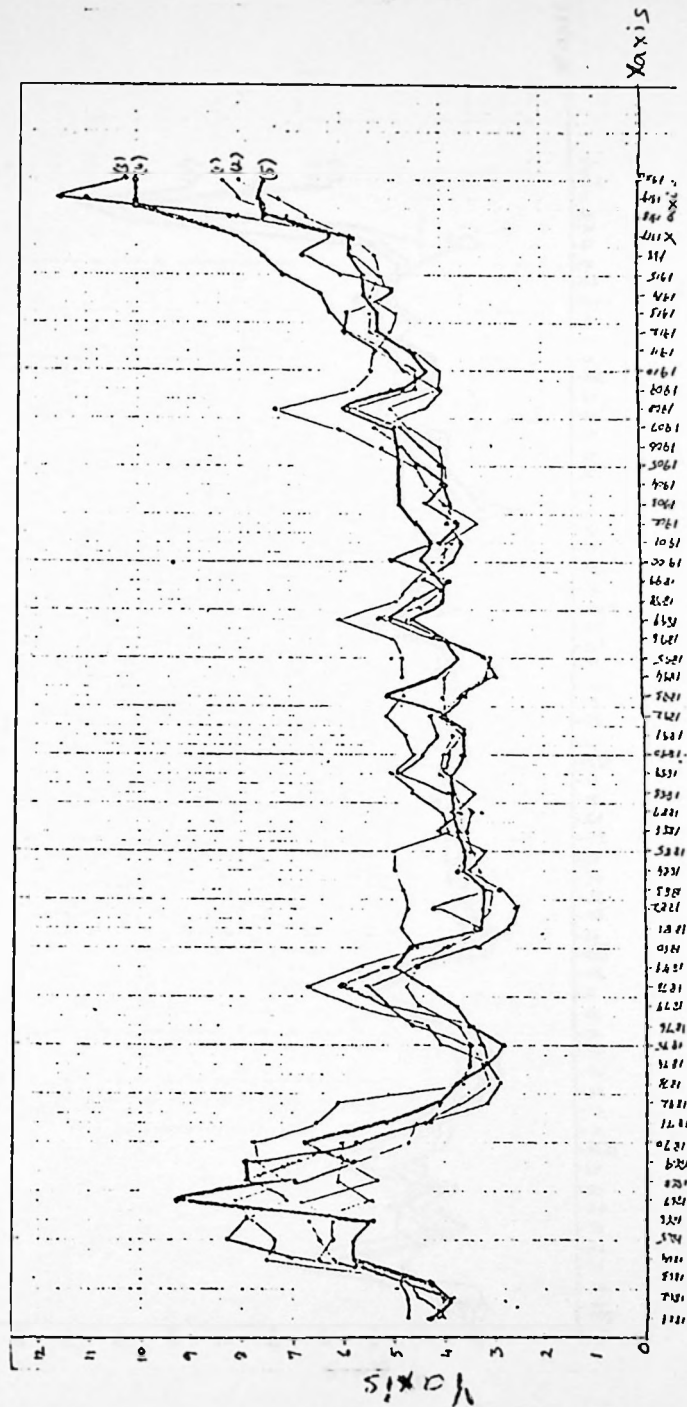
Scale- Y axis-
2/10 inch for
one Year.
Y axis- 1/2 inch
for two Rupees.

- (1) Surat.
- (2) Broach.
- (3) Kheda.
- (4) Ahmedabad.
- (5) Bombay.

Source: Prices and Wages in India.

GRAPH IV

Average Annual Retail prices of Rice in Rupees per Maund and decimals of a Rupee per Maund of 82.286 Lbs.



KEY:

SCALE- X axis - two divisions for one year.

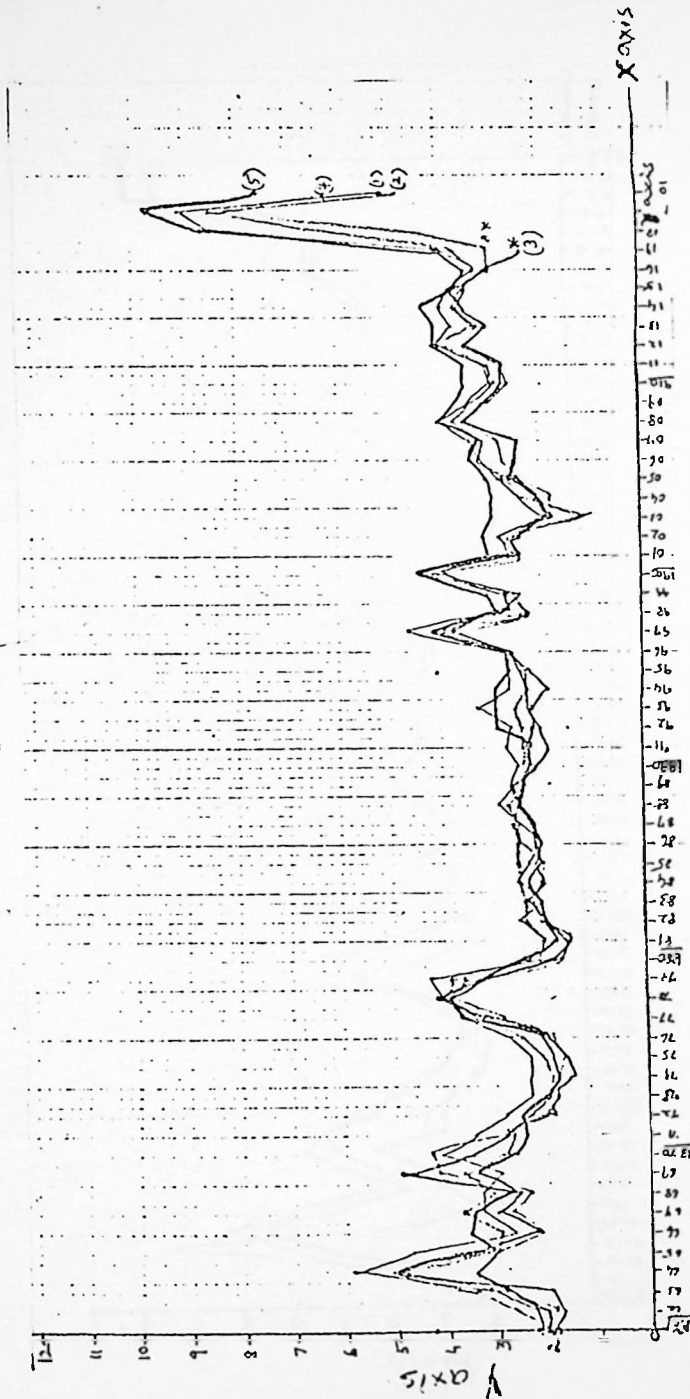
Y axis - one inch for two Rupees.

- (1) Surat.
- (2) Broach.
- (3) Kheda.
- (4) Ahmedabad.
- (5) Bombay.

Source: Prices and Wages in India.

GRAPH V

Average Annual retail prices of Jowar in Rupees and decimals of a Rupee per maund of 82.286 lbs.



KEY:

X axis- 2/10 inch for one Year.

Y axis- 1/2 inch for one Rupee.

(1) Surat.

(2) Broach

(3) Kheda

(4) Ahmedabad.

(5) Bombay.

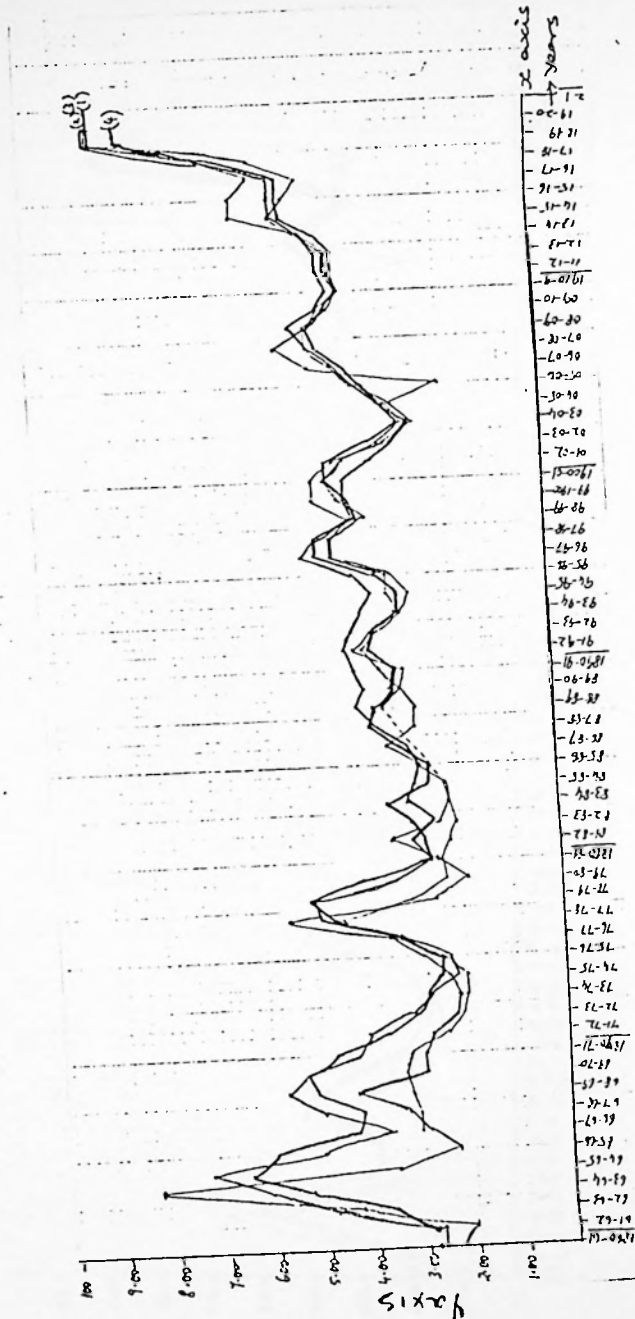
Note:

* No data available after 1917.

** No data given for 1918.

GRAPH VI

Retail Prices of Wheat in Rupees per Maund of 40 Seers or 80 Tolas.



KEY:

X axis- 2/10 inch for one Year
 Y axis- 1/2 inch for one Rupee.

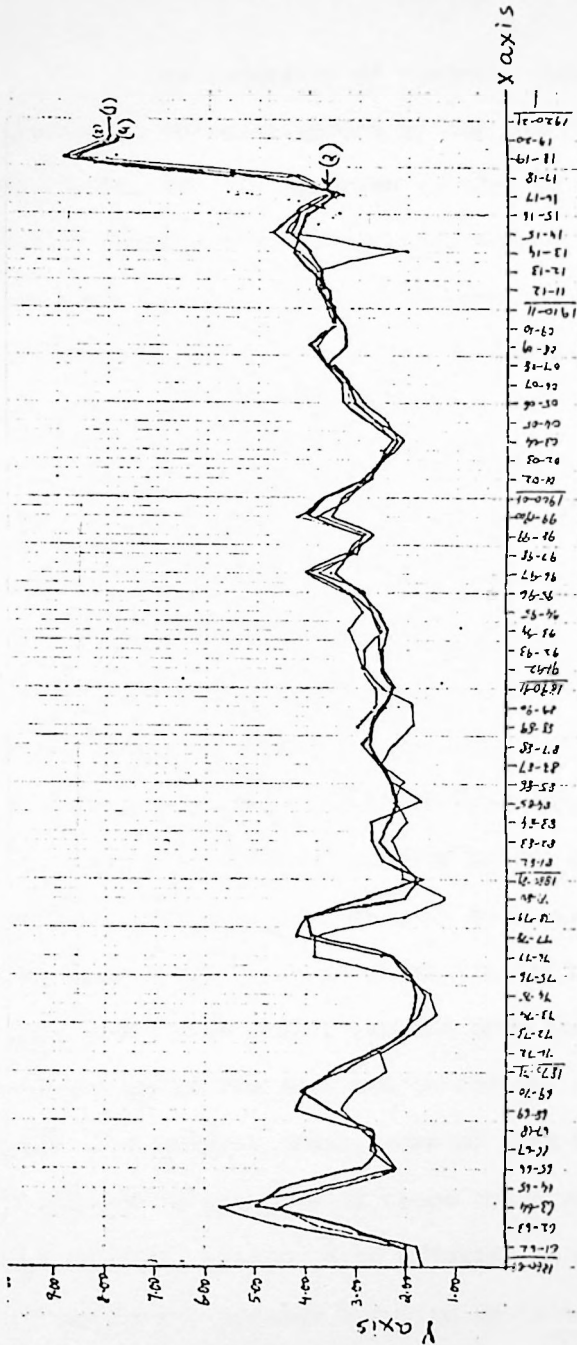
- (1) Sandal Taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (2) Dholka Taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (3) Daskroi Taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (4) Ahmedabad City.

Source: Prices and Wages in India; Second Revision Settlement Reports of the respective talukas.

GRAPH VII

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Retail Prices of Rajri in Rupees Per Maund of 40 Seers or 80 Tolas.



KEY:

X axis- 2/10 inches for one Year.

Y axis- 1/2 inch for one Rupee.

- (I) Sanand taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (II) Dholka Taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (III) Daskroi taluka, Ahmedabad.
- (IV) Ahmedabad City.

Source: Prices and Wages in India; Second Revision Settlement Reports of the respective talukas.

CHAPTER IVCropping Pattern and Income Distribution in Gujarat

The reduction of revenue rates in the 1850s and the long lease granted to the cultivators by the Thirty Year Settlements proved beneficial for the agrarian economy in Gujarat. The turn in British policy coincided with a growing buoyancy in the demand for raw materials and food grains in markets at home and abroad. In Gujarat, as we have already mentioned, the upturn in demand led to not only an increase in the prices of primary commodities, but also to an improvement in the prices received by many of the rural producers. The incentive to expand the production of crops for sale encouraged an expansion of cultivated area faster than population growth and shifts in the crop regime in favour of marketable crops. In so far as these shifts occurred on a substantial scale, they had a significant impact on the incomes of the mass of the cultivators. The units of cultivation being mainly small or medium in size, any substantial expansion in the acreage devoted to any one crop reflected changes in the prevailing mix of crops on a large cross section of peasant holdings. This was especially true in the case of those crops which did not occupy the entire field, but were sown mixed with grain, legumes or oilseeds to prevent excessive exhaustion of the soil and spread the risk of failure from lack of rain over several crops, some of them more drought resistant than others. Variation in the area of those crops which were sown once in three years, for example, cotton, also affected an area greater than that indicated merely by the acreage occupied by them. If the area cultivated with seed cotton increased permanently by 100 acres, this land had either to be sown with Jowar or left fallow after every cotton harvest.

Every additional acre of cotton thus required the cultivation of another acre of land. Cultivation of crops like cotton not only added to the labour normally required for growing most dry grain crops. In an economy of small land holdings, any substantial additions to the cotton area demanded the involvement of a large section of the peasantry.¹

Mixed cropping and cotton cultivation were already a part of the farming system in Gujarat during the early nineteenth century. An insight into the cropping pattern at the start of the East India Company's government is to be had from the different village surveys of that period.

In his survey of Broach, Monier Williams observed that the two types of soil to be found in the district were each sown with a distinct mix of crops. The marwa soil which was lighter and more productive than the kali specialized in the production of foodgrains and pulses.² Of the

¹The need for a proper system of rotation is considered a basic characteristic of dry farming. Hans Ruthenberg defines dry farming as prevailing "in semi-arid climates, where grain and leguminous crops are alternated with a fallow of one or two years". Ruthenberg, H., Farming Systems in the Tropics, 1971, p.4. By this criteria Gujarat, a major cotton growing region, was a typical dry farming zone. Here cotton was "not sown oftener than once in three years" nor "by itself. Rice or kodra is sown in the same field. In black soils, to grow cotton more than once in three years would be attended with certain prospective loss. A second year's crop of cotton taken from the same field does not yield more than one-half the first." DG, Surat and Broach, p.392.

²"The Marwa soil comprises a considerable portion of central Gujarat commencing with the Southern boundaries of the Jambusar and Baroda purgunnahs extending to the northern extremity of the province, but bounded to the west and south by a line running about northwest from Cambay." Williams, op.cit., p.570; This Report is also to be found in RD, 1821, Vol.8A.

twenty crops mentioned by Williams as being the produce of the marwa lands, "bajeree is produced in by far the largest proportion and is of the most importance, forming the principal article of the food of the bulk of the inhabitants of the marwa villages." At the same time "very little either of cotton or jowar is produced in the marwa." Hence, the Rabi or the late harvest was not so important in the marwa region.¹ Indeed, at this time not even vegetables or fruits seemed to occupy any noticeable portion of the well watered marwa. The bulk of the harvest was divided between the daun or the grain crop and the kuthor or the pulse crop. The daun consisted of "bajeree, kodra, dangur (or dry rice) baota and bunttee", most of them being varieties of millets. The kuthor was made up of "wal, gooar, moong, chora, urud, all varieties of pulses, and sometimes of other leguminous plants."² Apart from small quantities of Indigo, no other marketable crop was produced on the marwa lands in Broach, although "the marwa to the northward produced tobacco for exportation."³ The absence of production for the market on its better soils, reflected a recession in demand then affecting even the Broach district situated close to urban centres like Surat and Broach city.

The one crop to escape being the victim of the depression in demand during the early nineteenth century was cotton. Williams in his

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³The marwa was more productive than the kali not only because it was better supplied with water. According to Williams "The marwa is universally manured, more or less: in a few situations, it is done annually. In consequence of the fertility of the marwa, the weeding too is more expensive: it is performed by hand; and in seasons of much rain the operation is repeated three times." Ibid.

survey of 1818 remarked that "kapas has of late years become a primary object of cultivation in consequence of the advance in its price from 45 rupees to about 70 rupees per bhar."¹ The trend of increasing cotton cultivation was to continue in Broach even when the price of seed cotton started falling after 1824.² In 1833 cotton occupied 33 percent of the sown area in Broach.³ The peasantry responded to the onset of a Price Depression by expanding the area of the crop it knew would sell on the market. This characteristic response was to be seen again after the end of the price boom caused by the American Civil War in the 1860s and during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In this context, the economic rationality of the Gujarat peasantry was not a newly acquired trait, nor did it in any way clash with its social organization or preferences rooted in the conservative caste system.⁴ On the contrary even in the sphere of farming, the well tested wisdom of peasant practices evolved through a protracted struggle and interaction with the surrounding environment, tempered the impact of the market. Hence, the expansion of cotton cultivation was made subject to almost a law, that "In the succession of crops, jowar commonly succeeds cotton: a season of wasul or fallow, should follow these two; or else chunna (gram), til (an oilseed), toour (a pulse) or wheat. Should the cotton sowing fail,

¹ 1 bhar was equal to 960 seers. Ibid.

² Cf Appendix II to Chapter II.

³ AAR, 1832, RD, 1833, Vol.16/40.

⁴ The manner in which responsiveness to the market and the willingness to produce either in order to maintain existing levels of cash income or increase them continued to exist alongside social practices and consumption preferences based on the caste system will be discussed in Chapter VII

its place is supplied with laung (cloves)."¹ The peasants knew very well, that safeguarding the productivity of the soil maximized yields over the long run, while mono-crop cultures improved yields and income only in the short run. Even Jowar or great millet which occupied the largest part of the kalī soil and was then the staple food in Gujarat was "never sown two successive seasons in the same ground." Often, it was sown mixed with pulses like toour and moong.² This was much more the case with bajri (Indian millet). As Captain Cruikshank noted in his survey Report about the Kheda district, "although this dry crop is classed under the general term of bajere, it in reality consists of a variety of pulses also, which are sown together with the bajere, but are much later in arriving at maturity. These pulses produce abundantly, even when the bajere fails and therefore form a valuable resource against the contingencies of the seasons. They afford, also, forage for cattle and supplement the grass and the grazing grounds."³

¹Ibid, p.572. As Appendix II of this Chapter shows cotton never occupied more than 31 percent or so of the Gross Cropped Area in the four Gujarat districts of Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda. This always left room for a proper rotation with Jowar or other crops, if not for a bare-fallow system of restoring the soil. Even in Broach, which among the 4 districts was the largest cotton grower, cotton area rarely exceeded 40% of the GCA.

²Ibid.

³Cruikshank, op.cit., 1853, pp. 67/68. Ruthenberg points out how legumes are beneficial for subsequent crops. Ruthenberg, op.cit., 1971, p.107. In the Indian context, the inclusion of pulses, oil-seeds and other crops sown solely for use as fodder had a special importance. Tropical soils lacked adequate nitrogen and these crops partially replaced the nitrogen they used up. They could also be used as green manure and be ploughed back into the soil. Mollison, J., Text Book on Indian Agriculture, 1901, p.43.

The peasants in Gujarat had developed the technique of fallowing into a veritable art. In some talukas of the Broach district, the fields being fallowed were ploughed and harrowed four times each during the monsoon. Known as vashil fields, they were often sown with castor or jowari in rows 12 feet apart, in order partly to recover the expense of paying revenue on fallowed land.¹ Such fields produced "excellent crops of cotton without any manure." Fallowing was useful even if the fields were not ploughed. In "clay or deep black soils" fallowing helped to bring to the surface a part of the underlying mineral wealth and this suited plant growth.² As Appendix I to this chapter shows clearly, fallowing remained an integral part of the farming system in Gujarat. In 1859/60, the area kept as fallow or for use as grassland in Broach and Surat was 25 percent of the Gross Cropped Area.³ This proportion was to decline only by the 1920s, when the growth of population and the much greater use of mixed cropping made bare fallowing less needed. Even then, in the 3 districts of Kheda, Surat and Ahmedabad, between 1929 and 1938 an area equal to 10 percent of the Gross Cropped Area (GCA) was kept as fallow.⁴ The area of fallow land increased partly when the Revenue

¹ Ibid, p.41.

² Ibid.

³ DG, Surat and Broach, pp. 64/391.

⁴ Appendix I, Part B, of this chapter. From Appendix I (A) we can summarize the area of fallow land and express it as a proportion of the GCA.

Fallow Land as % of GCA in 4 districts of Gujarat			
1872/73-1876/77	16%	1907/08-1911/12	39%
1877/78-1881/82	29%	1912/13-1916/17	24%
1882/83-1886/87	25%	1917/18-1921/22	23%
1887/88-1891/92	23%	1922/23-1927/28	23%
1892/93-1896/97	29%	1928/29-1932/33	12%
1897/98-1901/02	37%	cf. Appendix I to this Chapter	
1902/03-1906/07	36%		

Survey reclassified some land as arable and registered undeclared lands. However, by 1869/70, the Gujarat Revenue Survey had completed its work in the Ahmedabad, Kheda and the larger part of the Surat district.¹ This work was to be finished in Broach by the mid 1870s. Thereafter any short term increase in the extent of fallow land was caused by the onset of bad seasons, when large parts of area already occupied could not be cultivated. It is a paradox that the extent of fallow land reached a peak in years of famine.²

Over time Gujarat peasants had also formed their assessment about which part of the year was best suited for the cultivation of different crops. There were two main harvesting seasons, the early (Kharif) and the late (Rabi). These could be easily broken down into a more precise cropping schedule devised and used by the peasantry.³

¹General Administration Report of the Bombay Presidency, (GARBP), 1869/70, p.347.

²The official view of land kept fallow was, that it was the result of the peasant's inability to cultivate the occupied area because of a bad season. This meant that fallow land often escaped paying any revenue or at the very least increased the amount of remissions granted by the authorities.

³RD, 1881, Vol.50, p.45.

Cropping Schedule in Gujarat

	<u>Sown In</u>	<u>Reaped In</u> (amount of seed needed per beegha in lbs.)	
<u>I Dry Crop Soils</u>			
a) Bajri	July	November	7
b) Jowar	July	January	7
c) Kodra	July	December	15
d) Kapas (cotton in pod)	June	February	7
e) Oorud	July	May	12
f) Chola	July	May	4
g) Til	September	March	1
h) Tooer	July	December	8
i) Gram	November	March	40
j) Wheat	October	March	40
k) Tobacco	August	March	NA
<u>II Superior Soils</u>			
a) Rice	June	November	60
b) Sugarcane	November	December year following	1000 canes
c) Onions	November	May	3
d) Chillies	August	January	4
e) Shukuria or Sweet Potatoes	October	April	20 plants

The timing of the monsoon could advance or delay the cropping timetable but at most by a few weeks. The peasants would not grow a crop once the normal sowing period had lapsed and this was a measure of their understanding of the specific requirements for the proper culture of different crops. A well worked out scheme of crop rotation, mixed cropping, fallowing and a judicious spread of different crops over the entire year were the four pillars of peasant agronomy in Gujarat at the start of the nineteenth century. They were to remain so afterwards, the use of each technique being extended according to circumstances. In this fundamental respect, neither the expansion of production for the market, nor British policy were to add anything new to the prevailing crop patterns. In Gujarat, commercialization and colonial rule did not rupture the intrinsic balance between nature and agriculture achieved over the centuries by the efforts of the peasantry.

The Gujarat peasantry was able to expand its production for the market within the framework of its own agronomy because of several reasons. For a long time in the nineteenth century millets and other coarse grains occupied a large part of the cultivated area in Gujarat. Monier Williams described how Bajerees and pulses monopolized the better soils in the Broach district. A similar example was reported by Cruikshank from the Dholka taluka, considered to be the most fertile area in the Ahmedabad district. A statistical comparison of the share of different crops in the aggregate cultivated area shows how millets were losing ground in Dholka:¹

Cropping Pattern in Dholka taluka

Year	Gross Cropped Area in Acres	Percent of GCA occupied by different crops								
		Jowari	Bajri	Rice	Wheat	Other Grains	Pulses	Oil-Seeds	Cotton	Vegetables and fruits
1826/27	97735	7%	48%	12%	20%	4.7%	2%	NA	0.6%	0.8%
1877/78	162714	18%	5%	0.6%	56%	3.5%	3.2%	2%	9%	1.2%
1886/87	240575	9.4%	7.3%	6.5%	40%	2.3%	5.4%	5%	9%	0.5%
1903/04	211413	15%	7.4%	2.3%	40%	1.3%	3.4%	8%	19%	0.3%
1922/23	216478	17%	4.2%	1.6%	40%	1.8%	3.5%	2%	26%	0.2%

This table shows us how by the 1870s wheat and cotton together dominated the cropping pattern. Both these crops were important items of export from Ahmedabad. In fact it was the rotational requirements of cotton and wheat, which seem to determine the area allocated to other crops. Bajra was not a good crop to rotate with cotton or wheat. Hence, the steep decline in Bajra area and a gradual rise in jowar area

¹The Table has been put together from data mentioned in Cruikshank's Report, (pp. 29/52), the 1878 Ahmedabad District Gazetteer (p.242) and the first three Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency.

following that of cotton. Similarly, in the Broach district, from 30 percent of the cultivated area in 1833, the share of Jowar declined to 18 percent in 1872/73, while that of wheat rose from 8 percent to 14 percent.¹ From being the dominant crop, Jowar became an essentially subordinate one. In the 1880s and the 1920s it occupied approximately half the area devoted to wheat and cotton in the Ahmedabad and Broach districts.² The average of 48% of cultivated area being sown with wheat and cotton in these two districts was much higher than the 33 percent for all the four districts.³ Even within the region as a whole different areas specialized in particular crops.

1

Area Occupied by Wheat, Cotton and Jowar in
Broach and Ahmedabad Districts

Year	Gross Cropped Area in Acres (GCA)	Wheat and Cotton as % of GCA	Jowar as % of GCA	Year	Gross Cropped Area in Acres	Wheat and Cotton as % of GCA	Jowar as % of GCA
1884/85	1248803	48%	20%	1922/23	1810647	47%	19%
1885/86	1870681	48%	21%	1923/24	1961614	46%	23%
1886/87	1974432	45%	21%	1924/25	1979291	49%	20%
1887/88	1955090	48%	20%	1925/26	2020204	50%	19%
1888/89	1874993	45%	26%	1926/27	2042562	57%	20%
1889/90	1915974	41%	25%	1927/28	2040591	46%	19%
1890/91	1936981	46%	21%	1928/29	1997128	48%	19%
1891/92	1975271	44%	22%	1929/30	1964892	47%	22%
1892/93	1970848	43%	23%	1930/31	2019323	41%	25%
1893/94	1960162	43%	22%	1931/32	2114164	43%	23%
1894/95	1917924	44%	21%				

²Jowar always followed cotton and it could succeed wheat. George Watt pointed out that in Gujarat, the better varieties of wheat (chasia) did not favour mixed cropping and no crop succeeded or preceded them. They were "occasionally used as a substitute for cotton when that crop failed". The inferior type of wheat (wajia) was sown on light sandy soil following rice, jowari or bajra. Watt, op.cit., 1889, Vol. VI, Part V, p.136.

³Appendix II, Chapter IV.

The growing market orientation of the cropping pattern in Surat was to be seen in the area occupied by rice, cotton and oilseeds.¹ By the 1920s cotton had increased its share despite a virtual doubling of the total cropped area. It must be emphasized that after 1910 or so, the proportion of most crops in the four districts declined a little because of the sudden increase in the area cultivated with fodder crops.²

1

Area Occupied by Rice, Cotton, Oilseeds,
Jowar and Pulses in the Surat District

Year	Gross Cropped Area (GCA) in Acres	Rice	Cotton	Oilseed	Jowar	Gram & Pulse
1884/85	483890	22.5%	19%	8%	22%	19%
1885/86	484033	22%	19.2%	8%	22%	17%
1886/87	477467	21.6%	21%	10%	21.6%	20%
1887/88	466548	22%	21%	8%	20%	20%
1888/89	464133	21%	19%	6.3%	29%	9%
1889/90	481117	20%	19.4%	8%	26%	12%
1890/91	487881	21%	22%	10%	20%	18%
1891/92	491110	22%	19%	7%	24%	14%
1892/93	493383	22%	16%	7%	25%	20%
1893/94	486851	22%	23%	7.3%	23%	16%
1894/95	485561	23%	20%	7.3%	23%	20%
1922/23	790763	13%	18%	1.7%	11%	6%
1923/24	761152	13%	22%	1.2%	11%	5.2%
1924/25	786254	12%	25%	1.5%	8.2%	4.8%
1925/26	734496	11%	27%	1%	10%	11%
1926/27	784082	13%	20%	1.7%	11%	11.5%
1927/28	798927	13%	21%	1.7%	10%	11%
1928/29	798354	12.3%	24%	1.6%	8.4%	8%
1929/30	769866	13%	23%	1.4%	11%	10%
1930/31	783502	13%	21%	2.2%	11%	11%
1931/32	808949	13%	21%	2%	10%	13%

²Appendix I, Chapter IV. The extent to which the growth of purely commercial crops displaced the foodgrains may be seen by expressing the area sown with rice, wheat, jowar, bajra, gram and pulses, ragi and other grains as a proportion of the gross cropped area (gca) in all the four districts.

(Footnote cont./...)

In Surat, the increase in fodder area lowered the percentage share of rice. The fact that area devoted to rice did not increase showed a definite lack of investment in irrigation wells, the greater profitability of cotton and the increased import of rice from other areas where it was grown more cheaply.¹

Movement of prices was clearly not the deciding factor in the case of the area devoted to pulses. The average price of Toour, a leading Pulse in Surat, was Rupees 3.1 per maund between 1885 and

Footnote cont.

Period	% of gca sown with foodgrain crops
1872/73 - 1876/77	69%
1877/78 - 1881/82	70%
1883/84 - 1886/87	70%
1887/88 - 1891/92	68%
1892/93 - 1896/97	71%
1897/98 - 1901/02	74%
1902/03 - 1906/07	65%
1907/08 - 1911/12	65%
1912/13 - 1916/17	58%
1917/18 - 1921/22	53%
1922/23 - 1927/28	52%
1928/29 - 1932/33	53%

Appendix II, Chapter IV.

¹It is interesting to note that the average price of Rice in Surat in the 1880s was Rupees 4.65 per maund. By the 1920s, this had increased to Rupees 9 per maund. Even this increase did not encourage an investment in wells to expand the rice area. The reason for this will be examined in Chapter VI.
Appendix II, Part B and C, Chapter II.

1895. By the 1920s, the price of pulse had increased by 176 percent to Rupees 8.54 per maund.¹ Yet, in the 1880s pulses had occupied an average of 17 percent of the total cropped area in Surat, whereas in the 1920s they covered only 7 percent. The reason for the decline of pulses lay in their diminishing importance in mixed cropping in Surat. By the 1920s, fodder crops and grains like Ragi occupied a larger area and were also used for mixed cropping. In an indirect way, the fodder crops were more valuable economically than pulses.² The availability of fodder minimized cattle mortality in years of drought. Yet, the significance of the area devoted to fodder crops could never be deduced from their prices as they were not grown for sale. While the overall cropping pattern was governed by the needs of the agrarian economy, changes in the area of every crop were not determined by the movement of prices.

1

Price of Rice and Pulse (Toour) in Surat District

Year	Rice 100=Rupees 4.7 per maund in 1861	Pulse 100=Rupees 2.2 per maund in 1824	Year	Rice 100=Rupees 4.7 per maund in 1861	Pulse 100=Rupees 2.2 per maund in 1824
1885	104	157	1922	409	231
1886	84	140	1923	350	213
1887	85	182	1924	350	231
1888	98	191	1925	434	231
1889	106	152	1926	383	231
1890	99	124	1927	493	239
1891	101	123	1928	469	231
1892	108	132	1929	415	210
1893	101	114	1930	388	210
1894	104	92	1931	280	168
1895	96	123	1932	303	123

Appendix II, Part B and C, Chapter II.

² Millets and Pulses could not compete with grass as food for cattle. As one author has pointed out, bajra or Bulrush millet produced a coarse straw which could not easily be fed to the cattle. Purseglove, J.W., Monocotyledons, 1972, p.207.

In addition to the decline in the area devoted to millets, another indicator of the peasantry's growing participation in the market was the share of grain being marketed. This was not only the case with wheat which had a high coefficient for the marketed share of output.¹ It was also true of other grains. A good example of an increase in the proportion of grain being marketed was to be found in the Kheda district. There, as may be seen from the Table below², wheat

¹Demand for Indian wheat increased after 1882. Whenever the harvest in Russia or Egypt was inadequate, the bakers in England turned to Indian wheat. A more secure market was emerging in southern Europe, where the macaroni manufacturers wanted Indian wheat. As George Watt pointed out, wheats grown in Bombay were harder and contained more gluten than those of North India. Hence, they were ideal for making macaroni. This fact was well reflected in Bombay's share of wheat exports from India.

Total Exports from India	1881/82 cwt 19863520	1882/83 cwt 14144407	1883/84 cwt 20956495	1884/85 cwt 15831754	1885/86 cwt 21060519	1886/87 cwt 22263320	1887/88 cwt 13538169	1888/89 cwt 17610081
% produced in Bombay Presidency	57%	49%	43%	57%	51%	57%	62%	61%

(cwt means hundredweight) Watt, *op.cit.*, 1889, Vol.VI, Part IV, pp. 188/189.

2

Cropping Pattern in the Kheda District

Year	Gross Cropped Area in Acres	Rice	Jowari & Bajra	Wheat	Kodra, Ragi (coarse grain) & pulses	Cotton	Tobacco
1884/85	738462	18%	39%	5%	32%	1.4%	3%
1885/86	695173	17%	40%	2.6%	34%	1.4%	3%
1886/87	704000	18%	32%	3.9%	38%	1.4%	3%
1887/88	700683	20%	36%	3.8%	34%	1.4%	2.4%
1888/89	683509	15%	43%	3.9%	31%	1.4%	1.9%
1889/90	707710	16%	38%	2.5%	32%	1.4%	2.7%
1890/91	705202	15%	40%	1.8%	36%	1.6%	3%
1891/92	701671	14%	45%	1.8%	32%	1.5%	3%
1892/93	708558	16%	42%	2.5%	36%	1.6%	2.6%
1893/94	703749	19%	36%	2.7%	41%	1.4%	3%
1894/95	691396	23%	34%	3.3%	41%	1.3%	3.4%
1922/23	743942	8.3%	25%	1.5%	29%	8.5%	3.6%
1923/24	737033	3.1%	27%	0.9%	24%	14.8%	4.4%
1924/25	822626	7%	25%	0.8%	23%	16.4%	5.7%
1925/26	806155	11%	18%	0.8%	24%	16.8%	5.8%
1926/27	808130	13%	24%	2%	29%	11.2%	4.2%
1927/28	816466	13%	21%	2.6%	29%	9.8%	5.4%
1928/29	808069	10%	18%	2%	29%	12%	7.6%
1929/30	794626	11%	18%	1.2%	27%	10.2%	9.9%
1930/31	805360	13%	21%	1.9%	28%	7.9%	5.9%
1931/32	827366	11%	24%	2.3%	27%	8.9%	6.7%

did not occupy more than 3 percent of cropped area in the 1880s and 1 percent in the 1920s. Kheda was more than likely to be an importer of wheat. Yet from the 1860s, Kheda was unlike other Gujarat districts, a net exporter of grains:¹

Kheda Grain Trade by Rail (in tons)

Year	Exports	Imports
1868	1425	2767
1870	7434	4028
1872	5535	2447
1874	6150	2406
1877	18023	10424

Exports of grain by road to the Baroda State were said to have increased substantially after 1855.² Baroda like Broach and Ahmedabad was beginning to specialize in cotton production and this increased its import of foodgrains. According to one estimate, the average share of grain sold in Broach during the first three decades of the twentieth century was 40% of the rice crop, 55% of wheat and 45% of the grain crop.³

The cropping pattern in Kheda shows, that by the 1920s cotton and tobacco were gaining in area. As compared to just 1.5% of the

¹DG, Kheda, p.73. The question of Grain trade will be taken up in Chapter VI.

²DG, Kheda, p.71.

³Narain, D., The Impact of price movements on areas under selected crops in India, 1965, p.170. According to Blyn, the share of output marketed by the early 1030s was 41% for rice; 51% for wheat; 29% for barley; 20% for maize; 20% for jowar and bajra; 45% for gram; 87% for sugarcane; 93% for tobacco; 95% for groundnut and 88% for cotton. His estimates unlike those of Narain are all-India averages. Blyn, G., Agricultural Trends in India, 1891-1947: Output, Availability and Productivity, p.80.

cropped area occupied by cotton in the 1880s, during the 1920s an average of 12% of the annually cropped land in Kheda was sown with cotton. The respective figures for tobacco were 2.8% and 5.9%. In Surat, the yearly average for cotton between 1884/85 and 1894/95 was 95563 acres. Between 1922/23 and 1931/32, the annual average area of cotton in Surat was 172198 acres which constituted a rise of 80 percent over the earlier period. In addition, groundnut acreage in these four districts increased from 6563 acres in 1922/23 to 60556 acres in 1930/31.¹ The area under groundnuts enjoyed a phenomenal rate of growth.² Almost nine-tenths of the groundnut acreage in the four districts was concentrated in Ahmedabad and Kheda. Groundnuts were in demand both by the vegetable oil industry at home and abroad. Groundnut had the added advantage of being a good fodder crop. Its leaves and branches were greedily eaten by cattle, greatly increasing the milk of cows.³

1

Groundnut Area in Ahmedabad and Kheda

Year	Total Area in the 4 districts Acres	Area in Ahmedabad & Kheda Acres	Year	Total Area in the 4 districts Acres	Area in Ahmedabad & Kheda Acres
1922/23	6563	5884	1928/29	32066	30302
1923/24	10345	9868	1929/30	46523	41811
1924/25	10372	10055	1930/31	60556	52897
1925/26	32014	31331	1931/32	33908	29326
1926/27	24860	23633	1932/33	51344	47802
1927/28	20776	19376	1933/34	59242	54775
Crop and Season Reports			1934/35	43713	41115

²Indeed in Panch Mahals which had more uncultivated land, from a mere 725 acres in 1913/14 area sown with groundnuts advanced to 53191 acres by 1926/27, and did not fall below 50000 acres until 1931/32. It increased further to 81510 acres in 1936/37; 90457 acres in 1937/38; 102575 acres in 1938/39; 101195 acres in 1939/40 and so on.

²Watt, op.cit., 1889, Vol.I, p.287.

The 1920s were no years of boom. After reaching a peak in the period between 1918/19 and 1921/22, prices of almost all items had started to decline.¹ Clearly, in a period of falling prices, the Gujarat peasantry was attempting to maintain its income from farming by increasing the area under cultivation, with special attention being paid to the crops which brought in more cash and like groundnuts had other uses. The expansion of area under fodder crops underlined the ability of peasants in Gujarat to respond to the threat of sudden scarcity of cattle food because of drought, as had happened between 1900-1902 and 1911-1913. From a small area equal to 0.6% of the gross cropped land in 1912, the proportion devoted to fodder crops, mainly grass increased to 8% between 1912/13 and 1916/17; 11.5% between 1912/13 and 1927/28; 12.4% between 1928/29 and 1932/33; and about 16.5% between 1933/34 and 1937/38.² The onset of a Price Depression instead of reducing the cropped area actually added to it. It is worth emphasizing, that in these four Gujarat districts the average annual gross cropped area was 2771642 acres between 1917/18 and 1921/22; 3401212 acres between 1922/23 and 1927/28; and 3612348 acres between 1928/29 and 1932/33.³ The further growth of the gross cropped area

¹Appendix II, Part C, Chapter II.

²Appendix II, Chapter IV. One Survey Report in the 1930s observed that "Every village in Surat district has extensive areas under grass. Besides the spacious headlands left round each field, separate survey numbers are allotted for grass alone. Roughly 20% of the total area regarded as cropped is under grass. The grass is not sown but is a natural growth. In June and July the bullocks and milch cattle are allowed to graze in these areas after which the grass is allowed to grow till December when it is cut and dried in the fields and afterwards tied into bundles and stored. Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, Report on the Cost of Production of Crops in the Principal Sugarcane and Cotton Tracts in India, 1938, Vol.II, p.14.

³Appendix II, Chapter IV.

after the Great Depression is shown in Part B of Appendix II at the end of this chapter. If we compare the area under cultivation in the Ahmedabad, Surat and Kheda districts during 1929/30 to 1933/34 and 1934/35 to 1937/38, it will be seen that it increased from an annual average of 3189792 acres to 3201391 acres or by about 0.6%.¹

It was not only in years of low prices that the peasantry in Gujarat expanded its cultivation of marketable crops. Every increase of cotton prices was accompanied and followed by an increase of cotton area. Compared to the average of the period between 1879/80 and 1884/85, the annual cotton area was at least 67% more during the next ten years. Similarly, the four Gujarat districts saw sharp rises in cotton area whenever the price of cotton increased between 1910 and 1920.²

The cumulative increases in cropped area in response both to periods of high and low prices admittedly accompanied by sharp contractions in years of extreme drought led to an overall growth of cultivation in Gujarat, which was nonetheless faster than the rate of population growth.

The start of a fairly rapid growth of cultivated area in Gujarat can be traced back to the beginning of the thirty year revenue

¹Ibid.

²Appendix I, Part I, Chapter IV. The period of the price boom caused by the American Civil War in the 1860s had also seen an increase of cultivated area.

Narain, op.cit., 1965.

settlements. A reduction of revenue rates encouraged the peasants to take more land. In Kheda, the per capita cultivated area increased from 0.44 acres in 1859/60 to 0.46 acres in 1876/77 despite an addition of 38 percent to the district population between 1846 and 1872.¹ In Surat, where the population increased by 23% between 1851 and 1872, the per capita cultivated area went up from 0.88 acre in 1859/60 to 1.1 acres in 1872/73 or by about 25 percent in 13 years.² In Broach, already the most populated and heavily cropped district in Gujarat, the per capita cultivated area declined from 1.44 acres in 1859/60 to 1.32 acres in 1872/73, while population increased by 20% between 1851 and 1872.³ Yet, even in Broach the reduction of revenue rates had created a rush to take on more land for cultivation. In 1849/50, the year in which the reduced rates were first made use of, 13157 acres were added to the cultivated area. The sub-collector of Ankleshwar and Hansot talukas noted that, "So great is the demand for land in some villages, that I have had several petitions for permission to break up the common village grazing grounds and the uncultivated strips of land called sheras which form the boundaries of the villages."⁴ There was an increase in occupied land in all the talukas.⁵

¹DG, Kheda, pp. 25/46.

²DG, Surat and Broach, pp. 48/64.

³Ibid, pp. 369/391.

⁴AAR, 1849/50, RD, 1852, Vol.14, p.209.

⁵Calculated from the first Revision Settlement Reports of the 5 talukas of the Broach district.

Occupied Land in Broach Between
1845/46 and 1858/59

Taluka	Area Occupied in Acres		
	1845/46	1858/59	% increase
Broach	80147	86646	8%
Ankleshwar	34327	41410	21%
Jambusar	74664	81727	9.5%
Wagra	92454	106935	16%
Amod	52493	72740	39%

After 1872 both the statistics of population and cultivated area began to be available on a systematic basis from the decennial Census and the General Reports on Administration.¹ It is possible therefore to calculate accurately the per capita cultivated area in Gujarat in the years when the census enumerated the aggregate population.²

¹Index of growth of Population in Gujarat (1846 to 1931)

District	1846	1872	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Ahmedabad	590757=100	140	145	156	135	140	151	169
Broach	290984=100	120	112	117.4	100.3	105	106	115
Surat	492684=100	123	125	132	129	133	137	141
Kheda	566513=100	138	142	154	126	122	126	131
Total	1940938=100	130	131	140	123	125	130	139

N.B. The 1846 data is given in the Chapter on Population in the District Gazetteers. The other figures are from the Census of the Bombay Presidency, 1931, Part II, pp. 8/9.

²Foodgrains includes Rice, Jowar, Bajra, Wheat, Ragi, pulses and other grains. Gross Cropped includes land cultivated with fodder crops but excludes fallow land. District Population includes the rural and the urban population. It must be noted, that 1910/11 and 1911/12 were years of drought. Figures in brackets indicate the area for 1909/10 using the 1911 population figure. 1920/21 also was a year of poor rainfall. Hence, the 1921/22 area is indicated.

Year	Per Capita Area Cultivated in Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda Districts	
	Gross Cropped (acres)	Foodgrains (acres)
1872	0.99	0.72
1881	1.1	0.78
1891	1.14	0.79
1901	0.94 1909/10	0.58 1909/10
1911	1.1 (1.13)	0.68 (0.78)
1921	1.22 1921/22 (1.3)	0.57 1921/22 (0.74)
1931	1.27	0.69

It is quite clear from the above table that gross cropped area in Gujarat kept ahead of population. Even per capita area devoted to foodgrains declined only marginally.

A major distinguishing feature of the cropping pattern in Gujarat was the preference showed by peasants for crops whose cultivation demanded less labour.¹ A striking example in this context was the decline of rice and sugarcane cultivation.² Sugarcane required as

¹The expectation that population growth leads to the extension of labour intensive crops has been shown to be true for Indonesia by Geertz and also argued for by Boserup. However, it is equally true that once cultivated area can and does start to expand faster than population, peasants, as in Gujarat, turn to crops which can be more easily grown. Geertz, C., Agricultural Involution, The Process of Ecological Change, 1963; Boserup, E., The Conditions of Agricultural Growth, 1967.

²Appendix II, Chapter IV. This table underestimates the decline of these crops when it affected particular areas which had specialized in their production. During the 1880s an average of 20% of the gross cropped area in Surat and Kheda was sown with rice, but in the 1920s only 11%. Between 1884 and 1890 the area annually sown on average with sugarcane in Surat was 6526 acres; between 1923 and 1929 this had declined to just 1461 acres, a reduction of about 78%. As we shall show in Chapter VI, the import of sugar and rice into Gujarat increased manifold during the same period.

many as 12 ploughings, careful irrigation manuring and weeding. Rice had always been transplanted in Gujarat, was often irrigated and this almost doubled the labour required for its cultivation, when compared with crops that could be sown and harvested in the same field without any irrigation. In addition, the straw from rice was not nutritious as fodder for cattle.¹

The crops whose area expanded in Gujarat required less labour in comparison to that needed in cultivating rice and sugarcane.² This was true not only of groundnuts which grew best on dry and sandy soil and were ideally suited to the marginal lands that alone were available for the expansion of cultivation. Groundnuts did not need any watering and could be sown and harvested within a fairly flexible range of time.³ Cotton also did not require any "special ploughing of the field" before it was sown. After the first or second rainfall the

¹Watt, op.cit., 1889, Vol. V, pp. 591-596.

²Breman observes a similar phenomenon in the Surat district as regards the replacement of sugarcane by the cultivation of mango trees. According to him, with an increase in their prosperity the Patteedar farmers aspired to Desai or kshatriya status which had a seignorial connotation and obliged them to lead a leisurely life. Mango cultivation enabled the Patteedars to act and live like lords, as it absolved them even from many managerial duties. Breman, J., Patronage and Exploitation, 1974, pp. 113/121/125.

³Watt, op.cit., 1889, Vol. I, p. 283. It must be noted that the expansion of area sown with coarse grains like Kodra and Ragi occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and being hardier they could still flourish on the more marginal lands. At the same time in a region like Gujarat, except for salt infested coastal area or river banks prone to being washed away and hillsides full of pebbles and with poor drainage, land tended to be of a more uniform quality than in a plateau region like the Deccan. Hence, marginal land was not as unproductive as in other regions.

heavy hoe (vakhār) was passed over the field once to loosen and clean it. It required fewer weedings than rice. The greatest amount of labour demanded in cultivating cotton was at harvest time when picking had to be done on 3 to 6 occasions depending on the quality of the crop. Since the picking had to be completed within a short period, it invariably required the use of some outside or hired labour by most of the farmers.¹ In general, the higher price it commanded when compared to rice only added further to the attractions of cotton farming.² The inferior varieties which occupied the larger part of the area under wheat in Gujarat at most had to have a fallow before being sown. This, however, only needed more land, not labour. As one Settlement Report pointed out in the Broach district "wheat required less labour than any other crop. If the ground is scratched and the seed put in, it requires little looking after till the harvest and then it is simply pulled out by the roots without much labour."³ The extension of fodder crops did not require any extra cultivation. Only the culture of tobacco required 8 to 12 ploughings, manuring of the nursery in which the seedlings were grown, transplantation, many weedings and finally the careful picking of the tobacco leaves

¹ Ibid, Vol. IV, p.67. Cotton farming needed slightly less labour effort than even the cultivation of Jowar and Bajra. In addition to all other tasks like harrowing twice and a number of weedings, the cultivation of millets required an extra ploughing in September, tying up of the harvested crop into bundles and then winnowing them and finally stacking the straw after again tying it into bundles. Shukla, op.cit., 1937, pp. 195-199.

² It was not, however, more profitable than sugarcane in comparison to which its advantage only lay in being a labour saving crop and one which required a much smaller outlay of capital, no expense being needed for manuring or irrigation. Rice when cultivated with hired labour yielded RS 13 as net profit; without it a peasant could earn RS 41. Mukhtyar, op.cit., p.91.

³ First Revision Settlement Report (FRSR) of the Ankleshwar taluka, Broach district, 1874, (SRBG) PN 9381 (MGA), p.14.

and their curing.¹ However, it did not need any irrigation and despite an increase in tobacco area mainly in Kheda, even there it did not ever occupy more than 9% of the cropped area. In Gujarat, the bulk of the crops, which were grown on an increasing scale for being sold required less labour than others which could be grown on the same soils but which the peasants rejected. As will be explained in a later chapter the reason behind the expansion of crops requiring less labour for their cultivation did not always originate in the leisure preference of the peasantry. A scarcity of labour and the high cost of hired labour were equally responsible for encouraging the Gujarat peasantry to grow crops whose culture was not labour intensive.

The foregoing analysis of the cropping pattern will help us to make a brief estimate of the incomes of different sections of the Gujarat peasantry.² Before presenting our own estimates, it is worthwhile to emphasize that most of the existing historical surveys of costs of production and net income from farming in Gujarat need to be read with a few qualifications. The most important of these qualifications is the absence of any attempt to fit the results of a survey in any given year to a price series covering a longer stretch of time. This objection is more than a legitimate one in the case of the known surveys of Gujarat farming, since most of these were undertaken between 1929 and 1932.³ An example of the extent to which

¹Cruikshank, op.cit., 1853, p.93.

²This is all that is possible within the limits of a Dissertation which has to deal with other aspects of the agrarian economy.

³Thus Kumarappa's survey was carried out during 1930/31, Shukla's survey between 1929 and 1932 and Mukhtyar's enquiry into a village in South Gujarat in 1929. It is true that even in their published form these surveys did not try and examine the specificity of the period of their study as regards price, output and consumption patterns. This limits the time and place to which their results can be correctly applied.

the choice of price affected any estimate of income may be had from Shukla's survey.¹ According to his estimate the price of seed cotton was RS. 4.5 per maund, that of Jowar RS. 1 per maund and of wheat RS. 1.5 per maund.² A glance at Appendix II, Part C (at the end of Chapter II of this Dissertation) shows that in none of the years during which the harvest prices were available after 1903/4 did the average Surat price become as low as the ones used by Shukla. In fact, the average price of seed cotton in the Surat district between 1903/4 and 1931/32 was RS. 10.8 per maund or 140 percent higher than Shukla's average price. During the same period, the average price of Jowar was RS. 4.64 per maund and of wheat RS. 5.81 per maund.³ The real average prices in Surat for thirty years before 1931/2 were therefore 364 percent higher than Shukla's price for jowar and 223 percent for wheat!⁴

It is possible to revise estimates made by Shukla and Mukhtyar. Their data for crop yields was arrived at by averaging

¹Kumarappa does not give any estimates of costs of production. Kumarappa, op.cit., 1931, p.69.

²Shukla, op.cit., 1937, pp. 195-198. We can express these prices in terms of the base year values used in the Price Index, Appendix II, Chapter II. Using the Surat prices, Shukla's prices will be Cotton - 56; Jowar - 50; Wheat - 0.83. 1lb of seed cotton is assumed to yield 0.33 lbs. of clean cotton.

³Part C, Appendix II, Chapter II.

⁴On the basis of these prices Shukla declared that a 20 acre cultivated holding in Gujarat was the minimum required for an "economic" holding or one which could support an average peasant family of 5 persons. In his sample 10000 out of 12428 holdings were below 20 acres. They were classified as uneconomic. Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.85. Mukhtyar's survey is open to similar objections. Mukhtyar, op.cit. 1931, p.113.

the outturn in years of good and bad harvests. The wage rates used by them took into account the rise in money wages in Gujarat.¹ Their estimates of costs made mistakes, if at all, only on the side of safety, since they assumed that the cultivator bought manure even for growing cotton and paid in cash for seed. The following Table shows the net profits of cultivation for several crops using the data provided by Shukla and harvest time district prices from the Crop and Season Reports.

Year	Net Profits for farmer Hiring in all labour used In Rupees per Acre			Net profits for farmer Working mainly with family Labour. In Rupees per Acre		
	Cotton	Wheat	Jowar	Cotton	Wheat	Jowar
At time of survey	1.6	0.6	2.1	8.9	5.5	10.6
1903/4	2.3	1.2	3.2	12.7	10.8	16.3
1904/5	2.5	1.34	3.9	13.9	12.2	19.6
1905/6	2.5	1.6	4.3	14	14.3	21.8
1906/7	2.5	1.6	4.3	14	14.3	21.8
1907/8	2.6	2.0	5.1	14.6	18.0	25.7
1908/9	2.4	2.1	5.1	13.5	18.9	25.6
1909/10	3.0	1.8	4.3	16.5	16.6	21.8
1910/11	NA	1.7	3.9	NA	15.2	20.1
1911/12	NA	1.4	5.0	NA	12.8	25.2
1912/13	NA	1.7	5.5	NA	15.9	27.6
1913/14	NA	1.1	4.9	NA	10.3	25.2
1914/15	2.3	1.2	5	12.5	11.4	25.4
1915/16	2.2	1.9	4.8	12.4	17.8	24.2
1916/17	2.8	1.8	4.72	15.8	17.2	23.3
1917/18	3.2	2.1	5.6	17.7	19.2	27.5
1918/19	4.9	3.5	12.0	27	32.5	61
1919/20	4.5	3.0	9.3	25	27.7	46.6
1920/21	3.8	2.1	7.9	21	19.3	40
1921/22	3.5	2.8	9.5	20	26.0	47.7
1922/23	5.4	1.4	4.9	30	12.4	25.2
1923/24	6.0	2.1	6.7	33	17.3	33.8
1924/25	4.9	1.9	7.5	27	17.7	37.6
1925/26	4.0	3.2	7.2	22	29.5	36.1
1926/27	2.9	2.7	7.2	16	25	36.1
1927/28	3.9	2.9	6.9	22	26.6	35
1928/29	3.9	2.5	6.3	22	22.4	32.2
1929/30	3.3	2.2	7.1	18	20.2	35.9
1930/31	2.1	1.6	4.6	11.5	14.7	22.2
1931/32	2.5	1.5	4.07	12.9	13.8	20.6
1932/33	2.2	1.9	4.7	12.3	NA	23.6
1933/34	2.4	NA	4.5	13.7	NA	22.8
1934/35	2.6	NA	5.0	14.5	NA	25.2
1935/36	2.1	NA	4.8	11.7	NA	24.0
1936/37	2.3	NA	6.5	12.6	NA	32.7

NB

1. The complete schedule of costs of production and gross income are given in Appendix IV at the end of this chapter.
2. In the case of Jowar only 20% of the output was sold. For wheat, the share marketed was 51% and for cotton 88% of output.
3. Profits given in Beeghas have been converted into units per acre acre = 1.3 beeghas.
4. Net profit means gross income minus all expenses of cultivation including depreciation for bullocks and other capital stock and land revenue dues.

The above series showing net profits from 3 major crops provides a good approximate indicator of cash earnings of Gujarat farmers. Except for the few years when a sudden rise in prices was accompanied by an extensive failure of crops, a rise in prices increased the incomes of the peasantry.¹ In order to obtain a safe estimate we can also use the average earnings of a farmer only employing hired labour and one using mainly family labour. According to these assumptions, a farmer cultivating seven acres of land, equal parts of which were sown with cotton and jowar in a bad year like 1917/18 when the Surat crop was estimated to be 67% of normal, earned a net profit of about Rupees 44 after retaining 80% of the Jowar crop for domestic consumption and 12% of cotton for seed. If wheat was sown instead of

¹It is valid in this context not to alter the figure of rural wage used by Shukla. Not only did it refer to a period when wages had already risen, but it is also true that in a rural economy with very imperfect labour mobility and poorly organized labour both standardization of wages across districts and its movement over time would be determined by many complex factors. Hence observed data is more reliable. This point will be discussed in Chapter VII.

cotton, the profit would be Rupees 21 after 49% of the wheat crop in addition to Jowar was retained for domestic consumption. In an average year like 1922/23 when the crop was classified as being about 83% of normal or standard yield, the net earnings of the seven acre class came to Rupees 45 from 3.5 acres of cotton, Rupees 9 from 3.5 acres of Jowar or Rupees 14 from an equal area of wheat, whichever was sown.¹

The estimates based on data from Shukla's survey still understate the income of an owner cultivator since they assume that he hired at least half of the labour he used. A more accurate calculation was made in an intensive survey by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in India between 1933 and 1936. Some of its results have been summarized in Appendix V at the end of this chapter. These show, for instance, that a 17 acre holding cultivated with Cotton, Jowar and Paddy (Rice) yielded Rupees 186 in a 'bad' year and Rupees 352 in a 'normal' year in the Bardoli taluka of the Surat district. The data in the Report also revealed that out of 48 cultivated holdings of 10 acres or more spread over several villages and kept under continuous observation for 3 successive years 27 showed a net 'loss' in one year when frost had destroyed the cotton crop. Even these holdings made more than sufficient profits in the other two years to cover this loss.² This Survey provided a good insight into

¹On these assumptions a 20 acre plot would in 1922/23 have yielded a net profit of Rupees 172, if 3 acres were cultivated with grass and the rest divided equally between cotton and jowar. As we shall show in Chapter VI, this was not an 'uneconomic' income for a rural family of 5 persons.

²Net 'loss' and Profits are defined in Appendix V Chapter IV. A summary of the results for all the 48 holdings is given in the Report on Cost of Production, op.cit., 1938, Vol. II, pp 44 to 55.

the continuing viability of peasant agriculture in Gujarat during the economic depression of the 1930s.

Reliable estimates of income for the nineteenth century are hard to come by. The absence of a series of district level wholesale prices poses a serious obstacle to putting together such an estimate.¹ A partial estimate was, however, provided by the crop cutting experiments, which have been mentioned in Appendix III of Chapter II. Since these brought together data collected by district officials on the basis of personal observations they provide a rough guide, although subject to the qualification that the fields or crops tested were not necessarily typical ones. Some of these are shown below.²

¹ At the end of Chapter III we have put together a graph of Bombay and district retail prices. From these graphs and from a check on the wholesale price data given in the Prices and Wages Volumes a margin of 15% - 20% may roughly be assumed to exist between retail and wholesale prices. The difference would obviously vary according to the commodity being sold and the facilities for its marketing.

² Estimates of Costs and Profits based on selected crop cutting experiments in Gujarat:

District	Taluka	Village	Year of Observation	Crop	Value Per Acre In Rupees	Cost of Production	Profits in Rupees
Kheda	Mehmadabad	Khatraj	March 1881	Tobacco	124	64	60
Kheda	Anand	Anand	February 1881	Tobacco	102	64	38
Kheda	Anand	Anand	March 1880	Kalio	175	87	88
Kheda	Matar	Sokra	October 1879	Tobacco	38	13	25
Ahmedabad	Dholka	Santhal	March 1883	Unirri-gated wheat	18.5	7	11.5
Ahmedabad	Sanand	Siawala	Do	Do	19	6.75	12.2
Kheda	Kapadvanj	Anara	October 1879	Do	26	10	16
Kheda	Mehmadabad	Surj	March 1880	Irri-gated wheat	52	23	29
Do	Do	Chhapra	November 1880	Rice	30	9	21
Do	Nadiad	Nadiad	Do	Bavto	30	9	21
Do	Do	Do	Do	Kodra	15	9	6
Kheda	Matar	Sokhda	Do	Gram	17.5	19	8.5

NB. The entire crop was assumed to have been sold. The data is contained in RD, 1883, Vol.64 pp. 15/16, and RD, 1884, Vol.76, p.3. (MGA).

These show clearly the much greater profits to be had from crops like tobacco and grain crops when irrigated.

An important factor affecting incomes in rural Gujarat as elsewhere was the distribution of owned and cultivated holdings. Data on this aspect were published in the General Administration Reports of the Bombay Presidency and have been summarized in Appendix III of this Chapter. Based on this Appendix, the following Tables have been put together.¹

TABLE A: LANDOWNERSHIP in GUJARAT, 1916 - 17 to 1936 - 37.

Size class of holdings	Area for the size class Acres	% of total area	Area for the size class Acres	% of total area	Gain (+) or loss (-) of area over preceding period	Area for the size class Acres	% of total area	Gain (+) or loss (-) of area over preceding period	Area for the size class Acres	% of total area	Gain (+) or loss (-) of area over initial period i.e. 1916/17
	1916/17		1921/22			1926/27			1936/37		
0-5 acres	407336	17%	502006	17%	+94670	515844	18%	+13838	527318	16%	+119982
5-15 acres	763319	31%	750007	26%	-13312	737785	26%	-12222	1008228	31%	+244909
15-25 acres	409384	18%	375803	13%	-33581	409275	14%	+33472	529636	16%	+120252
25-100 acres	377873	16%	803754	28%	+425881	800484	28%	-3270	777205	23%	+399332
100-500 acres	235320	9%	283845	9%	+48525	282422	9%	-1423	344167	10%	+108847
500+ acres	238286	9%	194301	7%	-43985	153187	5%	-41114	147003	4%	-91283
Total area	2431518	100%	2909806	100%	+478288	2898997	100%	-10809	3333557	100%	+90239

Table A highlights several interesting features of land ownership in Gujarat. Firstly, a large part of the land was owned by the small and medium classes. Those holding between 5 and 25 acres respectively

¹It was only after the Record of Rights was made the basis of the revenue settlement in 1913, that information on actual area held by different classes of landowners or rent receivers started to be published in the Administration Reports. This was done on a quinquennial basis. Hence, 1916/17 was the first year in which this data was published.

held 49, 39, 40 and 47 percent of total area in the four years of the survey. Those holding between 25 - 100 acres held another 16, 28, 28 and 23 percent leaving less than 18% for the top two classes of land owners. In absolute terms no land was transferred in the period surveyed (1916-1936) from those who held less than 5 acres, whereas those holding more than 500 acres lost some land in every quinquennial interval between one survey and the next. Indeed, those owning more than 500 acres lost 91283 acres or 38 percent of their lands in just 20 years. Losses of land sustained by the 5 - 25 acre class were concentrated in the 5 years between 1916/17 and 1921/22 showing how the famine of 1918/19 had struck at these classes. They, however, soon surpassed the total they had started with and added to their lands. Simultaneous expansion in land held by almost all categories was made possible by increases in the aggregate occupied area. Gains by one category did not necessarily imply losses on the part of another. This may easily be seen from the last column in Table A which estimates the gains and losses of all categories of landowners between 1916 and 1936. As Table B shows the situation was further complicated by the existence of rent receivers, whose main source of income was derived from renting out land to others.

TABLE B Number of Agriculturalist and Non-Agriculturalist Landowners
(1916/17 - 1936/37)

	1916/17			1921/22			1926/27			1936/37				
	Number of Owners	Avg. Area held by each owner Acres	Total area of the size class	Number of owners	Avg. Area held by each owner	Total area of the size class	Number of Owners	Avg. Area held by each owner Acres	Total area of the size class	Number of owners	Avg. Area held by each owner	Total area of the size class		
Agricultural landowners														
0-5 acres	195917	1.65	322373	212857	1.89	402764	212353	1.94	411625	242182	1.48	357206		
5-15 acres	70206	9.05	635516	69515	8.7	605673	70135	8.5	593228	87354	9.0	785863		
15-25 acres	17874	18.7	334372	16636	18.3	303751	17306	18.7	323670	19649	20.7	407249		
25-100 acres	10312	23.6	243626	13037	42.3	551668	13414	42	562742	12951	38.3	496053		
100-500 acres	90	172	101633	974	150	146161	908	161	146301	806	253	203957		
500+ acres	54	1573	84963	37	836	30937	36	711	25630	19	1865	35444		
Total	294453		1722483	313056		2040954	314152		2063196	362961		2285772		
<u>Non-Agriculturalist Landowners or Rent Receivers</u>														
0-5 acres	38648	2.2	84963	39670	2.5	99332	43648	2.38	104219	68753	2.47	170112		
5-15 acres	14388	8.88	127803	15640	9.2	144334	16768	8.62	144557	26059	8.53	222365		
15-25 acres	3747	20.02	75012	3940	18.3	72052	4686	18.2	85605	6244	19.6	122387		
25-100 acres	3296	40.7	134247	3990	63.2	252086	4102	57.9	237742	6302	44.6	281152		
100-500 acres	1249	107	133687	704	196	137684	694	196	136121	1033	13.6	140210		
500+ acres	303	506	153323	97	1684	163364	33	1536	127557	102	1094	111559		
Total	61631		709035	60491		868852	69981		835801	108493		1047785		
<u>Area held by rent receivers as % of total occupied area</u>														
			25%			30%			29%			31.4%		

N.B. These figures are aggregates for the 4 districts of Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Kheda.

The first significant conclusion to be drawn from Table B is that those who were classified as rent receivers or landlords were to be found in every size group of landowners. In the four years of the survey, of the total number of landlords 86%, 91%, 86% and 87% held 15 acres or less. Most of them probably owned less land than the cultivated holdings of their tenants! Ownership of land was more concentrated among the non-agriculturalist landowners than

it was among the agriculturalist ones. Amongst the non-agriculturalists 30% (1916/17), 28% (1921/22), 30% (1926/27) and 37% (1936/37) of the total area belonged to those owning less than 15 acres each. Amongst the Agriculturalists, the respective figures were 56% (1916/17), 50% (1921/22), 49% (1926/27) and 50% (1936/37). Although the non-agriculturalists gained in area owned, this was not always at the expense of existing landowners. Between 1916/17 and 1936/37 the non-agriculturalists added 338750 acres to their estates. During the same period, the total losses of land amongst all classes of agriculturalists were 178370 acres, 52% of which were accounted for by the losses of those who held more than 500 acres each. Clearly, 160380 acres of land or 47% of their net additions were got by the non-agriculturalists directly from the government.¹ These data do not show that land was passing from small landowners to moneylenders. Rather, it depicts the decline of the large feudal estates in Gujarat now being preyed upon by big and small moneylenders.²

Table B also reveals that those with less than 5 acres of land added to their per capita holdings between 1916/17 and 1926/27 and this despite a substantial increase in their numbers. The rate of this increase was greater between 1916/17 and 1926/27 than between 1926/27 and 1936/37.³ This showed that the 1918/19 famine had forced some

¹This calculation is based on the extreme assumption that every acre of land lost by an agriculturalist was taken by the rent receivers.

²After the enactment of Act VI in 1862 and a similar act for Broach in 1871, the condition of the estates of the Taluqdars in Ahmedabad and the Thakurs in Broach was carefully monitored by the Government. Despite official management the number of estates threatened with liquidation increased over time. As one Administration Report put it "No sooner is an estate freed from debt that the extravagance of the Chief immediately plunges it again into difficulty." General Report on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency, 1874/75, p.53.

³It was 1.8% per annum in the first period and 1.4% per annum in the second.

migration out of the middle categories of landowners into the lowest one, but that the Great Depression did not have this impact. Between 1926/27 and 1936/37 the 5-15 acre size class increased its average holding from 8.5 to 9 acres and the 15-25 acre group from 18.7 to 20.7 acres. Therefore this "middle" group held firm while per capita land in the smallest category declined from 1.94 to 1.48 acres. The cause of this decline was not a loss of land to others but a great increase in the numbers of landowners in the 0-5 acre group. From 212363 in 1926/27 the number of the 0-5 acre landowners increased to 242182 or by 14%. Changes caused by members of various families getting their share of the family land were responsible for fluctuations in the average size of holdings in the different size groups. The process of subdivision of land due to the law of partible inheritance affected all groups of landowners. Some could ward off its affect by adding to their properties while others could not.

Owned holdings were always smaller than cultivated holdings since 709035 acres in 1916/17, 868852 acres in 1921/22, 835801 acres in 1926/27 and 1047785 acres in 1936/37 were being rented by the cultivators from the rent receivers. A large part of this land was being rented in by the 0-5 acre group. A survey of 599 cultivated holdings by J. B. Shukla showed that 63% of these were above 5 acres, and 48% were between 30 and 10 acres.¹ Since we know that the average holding of those with less than 5 acres was just 1.48 acres

¹Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.95.

in 1936/37, Shukla's sample suggests a substantial leasing in of land by this group in order to add to its cultivated holdings. The same conclusion can be reached through another method. Shukla estimated the extent to which each revenue class had added to its owned holdings.¹

Revenue Class	Number of Villages	Average Owned Holding Acres	Average Cultivated Holding Acres	% increase of Cultivated over Owned holdings
I	3	13.1	18.1	+38%
II	2	7.0	10.2	+46%
III	3	10.7	18.3	+71%
IV	3	5.4	14.9	+194%
V	3	5.7	8.8	+54%

Leasing in of land substantially reduced differentiation as regards land use. When we consider the level of rents in Gujarat, it would clarify further the impact the land-lease market had on income distribution in rural Gujarat. An account of income from sources other than farming will be given in the next chapter. That too would affect the level of cash earnings of peasants.

¹Ibid.

APPENDIX I PART I

INDEX OF AREA DEVOTED TO MAJOR CROPS IN 4 GUJARAT DISTRICTS, 1872 TO 1934

(Broach, Surat, Kheda and Ahmedabad)

Year	Rice 100= Acres	Cotton 100= Acres	Jowar 100= Acres	Bajra 100= Acres	Wheat 100= Acres	Spices 100= Acres	Sugar- Cane 100= Acres	Vege- tables and Fruits 100= Acres	Gram & Pulses 100= Acres	Tobac- co 100= Acres	Oil- Seeds 100= Acres	Other Grain 100= Acres	Ragi 100= Acres	Cur- rent Fallow 100= Acres	Fodder Crops 100= Acres	Gross Crop- ped Area 100= Acres	Arable Area Unocc- upied 100= Acres	Ground Nuts 100= Acres
1872/73	100	100	100	100	100	NA	100	100	100	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	100	NA	NA
1873/74	93	110	96	78	98	NA	112	79	84	126	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	105	NA	NA
1874/75	91	117	99	70	100	NA	100	104	99	121	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	110	NA	NA
1875/76	84	125	106	94	125	NA	100	97	131	128	98	NA	NA	NA	NA	106	NA	NA
1876/77	86	119	116	92	119	NA	123	54	107	98	90	100	NA	NA	NA	104	NA	NA
1877/78	36	113	142	98	131	NA	100	56	130	142	116	90	NA	NA	NA	105	NA	NA
1878/79	96	119	117	95	115	NA	56	36	159	144	138	104	NA	100	NA	108	NA	NA
1879/80	94	125	107	96	110	NA	73	51	155	120	104	120	NA	78	NA	108	NA	NA
1880/81	94	133	105	88	131	NA	79	46	164	110	107	109	NA	80	NA	110	NA	NA
1881/82	104	131	103	71	143	NA	102	65	175	124	129	84	NA	89	NA	110	NA	NA
1882/83	132	189	189	84	139	100	141	65	187	116	126	81	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1883/84	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1884/85	142	127	146	139	147	NA	100	114	200	221	98	142	NA	59	NA	129	100	NA
1885/86	143	198	153	146	162	258	115	193	225	189	151	123	NA	120	NA	159	94	NA
1886/87	147	200	154	124	165	279	130	239	288	205	169	164	NA	106	NA	164	90	NA
1887/88	149	232	144	129	134	240	139	327	262	174	149	154	NA	110	NA	163	89	NA
1888/89	102	198	177	153	116	240	103	305	178	197	124	167	NA	120	NA	159	86	NA
1889/90	130	199	173	149	112	90	113	320	186	201	150	165	NA	114	NA	156	103	NA
1890/91	123	236	146	157	106	276	74	290	238	238	173	155	100	111	NA	163	84	NA
1891/92	124	209	173	145	131	242	96	328	237	227	159	137	93	107	NA	165	83	NA
1892/93	141	193	172	158	190	211	96	251	199	187	144	149	98	108	NA	165	77	NA
1893/94	152	207	159	121	135	244	107	227	291	216	157	159	112	111	NA	164	76	NA
1894/95	172	177	155	103	175	280	96	215	314	253	155	148	112	118	NA	161	75	NA
1895/96	150	191	159	97	106	264	96	164	247	306	128	149	124	111	NA	150	82	NA
1896/97	145	183	151	99	110	247	107	175	227	285	143	146	106	116	NA	144	89	NA
1897/98	122	162	163	112	129	267	72	141	266	282	133	156	98	111	NA	148	91	NA
1898/99	136	175	148	108	132	352	75	159	278	214	143	165	98	107	NA	150	90	NA

Year	Rice	Cotton	Jowar	Bajra	Wheat	Spices	Sugar- Cane	Vege- tables and Fruits	Gram & Tobac- Pulses co	Oil- Seeds	Other Grain	Ragi	Cur- rent Fallow	Fodder Crops	Gross Crop- ped Areas	Arable Area Unocc- upied	Ground Nuts
1899/00	121	166	163	112	129	264	72	141	266	194	241	156	98	NA	148	91	NA
1900/01	78	110	48	151	77	293	38	132	165	202	155	100	66	NA	120	107	NA
1901/02	71	170	147	136	67	328	46	69	167	226	207	105	91	NA	131	NA	NA
1902/03	60	136	155	161	130	230	42	72	231	245	214	108	38	NA	141	NA	NA
1903/04	93	193	140	165	114	335	44	124	228	242	200	134	65	NA	145	106	NA
1904/05	32	233	161	124	93	216	55	162	142	150	143	137	72	NA	135	108	NA
1905/06	83	246	147	135	68	239	44	160	174	184	151	116	60	NA	145	99	NA
1906/07	89	231	138	142	93	273	38	78	225	261	169	132	70	NA	150	92	NA
1097/08	86	228	137	98	98	263	45	51	199	184	209	86	77	NA	140	94	NA
1908/09	104	191	134	96	100	281	42	73	242	180	155	129	90	13	138	98	NA
1909/10	103	200	132	115	122	350	39	48	245	239	146	133	105	15	146	95	NA
1910/11	81	240	128	106	70	309	37	69	240	245	143	130	95	14	142	99	NA
1911/12	35	177	132	102	24	139	40	70	135	127	84	80	23	51	104	105	NA
1912/13	99	197	144	140	76	300	27	704	149	249	134	80	73	100	141	105	NA
1913/14	110	232	115	136	86	236	33	730	163	272	148	54	95	84	144	89	21
1914/15	115	204	139	103	108	248	35	844	175	254	141	64	109	95	145	89	25
1915/16	49	170	191	120	57	309	42	682	146	166	126	52	67	853	198	101	37
1916/17	80	234	158	187	91	437	33	772	174	273	116	73	73	820	175	94	45
1917/18	108	275	133	81	137	300	50	754	199	312	110	89	81	822	182	83	133
1918/19	38	258	133	95	16	168	58	445	77	116	54	46	18	NA	137	79	51
1919/20	103	301	134	115	74	235	28	684	171	296	104	103	66	NA	69	70	61
1920/21	92	268	143	80	41	127	32	518	149	338	128	89	92	NA	164	71	NA
1921/22	107	177	161	112	133	171	36	813	173	391	112	104	88	NA	175	69	76
1922/23	87	247	135	97	113	267	39	692	179	260	116	107	97	798	172	69	100
1923/24	61	329	155	90	38	314	34	635	125	290	122	75	88	603	168	70	158
1924/25	80	46	136	99	68	138	23	520	160	412	149	96	92	383	186	65	158
1925/26	95	381	130	146	30	191	19	418	142	402	170	85	93	892	193	NA	NA
1926/27	114	255	158	107	125	207	74	120	246	309	116	147	92	862	189	122	379
1927/28	119	195	138	83	129	267	31	109	175	416	204	105	90	880	171	60	317
1928/29	94	315	131	84	111	307	33	114	221	535	164	132	135	869	189	56	489
1929/30	94	325	146	83	49	415	26	119	189	679	162	113	111	64	183	56	709
1930/31	111	251	169	99	104	337	22	131	195	400	414	117	111	56	189	56	806
1931/32	103	259	182	111	201	275	23	128	265	487	311	159	90	177	186	57	517
1932/33	114	309	166	86	96	256	29	137	216	507	256	130	80	906	194	60	784
1933/34	113	270	154	99	146	189	27	140	219	506	209	131	88	925	196	58	902

APPENDIX I PART II

Crop Areas for Surat, Ahmedabad and Kheda Districts
(1929/30 to 1937/38)

Year	Rice 100= 203833 Acres 1929/ 30	Cotton 100= 779003 Acres 1929/ 30	Jowar 100= 429311 Acres 1929/ 30	Bajra 100= 259230 Acres 1929/ 30	Wheat 100= 91697 Acres 1929/ 30	Spices 100= 13773 Acres 1929/ 30	Sugar- Cane 100= 2528 Acres 1929/ 30	Vege- tables and Fruits 100= 212013 Acres 1929/ 30	Gram & Pulses 100= 83736 Acres 1929/ 30	Tobac- co 100= 83736 Acres 1929/ 30	Oil- Seeds 100= 106452 Acres 1929/ 30	Other Grain 100= 104424 Acres 1929/ 30	Ragi 100= 83241 Acres 1929/ 30	Cur- rent Fallow 100= 476865 Acres 1929/ 30	Fodder Crops 100= 516169 Acres 1929/ 30	Gross Crop- ped Area 100= 2899811 Acres 1929/ 30	Arable Area Unocc- pied 100= 150899 Acres 1929/ 30	Ground Nuts 100= 46108 Acres 1929/ 30
1929/30	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1930/31	120	73	123	118	201	80	87	112	98	58	265	98	100	88	81	102	104	113
1931/32	112	104	121	134	378	64	89	112	122	71	196	142	82	69	103	107	124	72
1932/33	126	96	105	103	179	60	115	119	110	75	160	110	82	69	105	106	107	110
1933/34	124	107	113	120	298	44	107	124	111	85	114	111	69	61	108	108	115	128
1934/35	135	99	106	107	204	92	97	136	107	109	108	107	66	63	105	108	105	94
1935/36	100	94	119	118	241	90	134	144	111	91	127	111	77	63	105	108	110	127
1936/37	66	110	126	111	180	37	160	142	85	85	180	85	27	61	112	109	168	224
1937/38	139	83	115	96	319	35	122	136	118	102	193	118	65	53	101	110	111	291

NOTES TO APPENDIX I

1. The data presented in Appendix I is to be found in the General Report on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency (OPR), 1872 to 1902, and Crop and Season Reports of the Bombay Presidency (OPR), 1903-1939. Different base years are used starting from the year data for any crop was mentioned in these publications.
2. The column on Current Fallows includes primarily land left unsown due to lack of rain or poor distribution of rainfall. Revenue on such land was either remitted or the reduction in the volume of the overall crop included in the overall anna classification, which formed the basis for suspending the collection of revenue. Sometimes increases under this head were also due to the reclassification of land. These points are discussed in the text of Chapter IV. Current fallows are not included in Gross Cropped area. Fodder Crops are included in Gross Cropped Area.
3. The column on groundnuts is shown in order to underline the growing importance of this crop in Gujarat during the twentieth century. It is also included under Oilseeds. Hence, groundnuts are not counted separately from Oilseeds when calculating the Gross Cropped Area.
4. NA means crop data not available separately or that crop was not yet being grown. If it was being grown the crop was included in the Gross Cropped Area even when not shown separately.

APPENDIX II

Five Yearly Averages of Area Annually Devoted to Different Crops in Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda Districts (1872-1934) seen as a proportion of Gross Cropped Area

Period	Rice	Jowar	Bajra	wheat	Gram & Pulses	Sugar Cane	Cotton	Tobacco	Oil-seeds	Ground Nuts	Spices	Ragi	Other Grains	Vegetables and Fruits	Miscellaneous Crops	Fodder Crops	Gross Cropped Area in Acres
1872/73 to	10%	19%	14%	14%	7%	0.4%	19%	0.7%	3.4%	NA	NA	NA	5%	0.6%	7.9%	NA	2015391
1876/77 to	9%	21%	14%	14%	7%	0.4%	18%	0.8%	4%	NA	NA	NA	5%	0.4%	6.4%	NA	2082571
1881/82 to	11%	19%	12%	12%	10%	0.4%	21%	0.8%	3.3%	NA	NA	NA	6%	0.8%	4.3%	NA	2898324*
1886/87 to	9%	20%	15%	9%	9.5%	0.4%	23%	0.9%	3.5%	NA	0.3%	NA	6%	1.5%	1.9%	NA	3090266
1887/88 to	12%	20%	12%	11%	11%	0.3%	21%	1%	3.4%	NA	0.3%	3%	5%	1%	-	NA	3013489
1891/92 to	9%	19%	14.1%	13%	11%	0.4%	20%	0.8%	4%	NA	0.4%	2%	5.6%	0.7%	-	NA	2667994
1892/93 to	6%	20%	15%	8.5%	9.7%	0.2%	25%	0.9%	4.5%	NA	0.3%	1.7%	4.1%	0.6%	3.5%	NA	2744772
1896/97 to	7.4%	19%	13%	8%	11%	0.2%	27%	1%	4%	NA	0.4%	2%	4.8%	0.4%	1.2%	0.6%	2572023
1897/98 to	6.5%	19%	12%	8%	7%	0.1%	24%	0.9%	3%	NA	0.3%	2%	2.2%	3.3%	3.7%	8%	3243820
1901/02 to	7.6%	18%	10%	6%	6.5%	0.1%	30%	1.3%	2.6%	NA	0.2%	1.8%	3.0%	3.0%	-	11.5%	2771642
1902/03 to	6%	19%	10%	5%	7%	0.1%	31%	1.3%	2.8%	NA	0.2%	2%	3.3%	2%	-	11.3%	3401212
1906/07 to	7.5%	16%	8%	7.3%	8%	0.1%	27%	2%	5%	NA	0.1%	2.2%	3.9%	0.5%	-	12.4%	3612348
1907/08 to																	
1911/12 to																	
1912/13 to																	
1916/17 to																	
1917/18 to																	
1921/22 to																	
1922/23 to																	
1927/28 to																	
1928/29 to																	
1932/33 to																	

APPENDIX II, PART B Five yearly average for Ahmedabad, Surat and Kheda Districts only (1929-1938)

1919/30 to	7.4%	15%	9.4%	7%	7.2%	0.1%	23%	2%	5.6%	0.3%	2.3%	3.7%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	16%	3189792
1933/34 to	5.5%	12%	9%	9%	7%	0.2%	24%	3%	5.8%	0.3%	1.8%	3.5%	0.6%	1.3%	1.3%	17%	3201391

* As gross cropped area was not given for 1882/83 and 1883/83 this figure is an average of the 3 years 1884/85; 1885/86; 1886/87.

APPENDIX III PART A

Distribution of Owned Holdings in Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Kheda Districts, 1885/86 to 1904/5

(Size of holdings is in standard acres and refers to government and alienated lands)

YEAR	Number of Holdings		% of Total Holdings		Number of Holdings		% of Total Holdings		Number of Holdings		% of Total Holdings		Total Number Holdings	Total Area
	0 - 5 Acres	5 - 25 Acres	5 - 25 Acres	% of Total Holdings	25 - 100 Acres	100-500 Acres	25 - 100 Acres	% of Total Holdings	500+ Acres	500+ Acres	% of Total Holdings			
1885/86	150053	125874	42%	50%	21883	646	7.3%	0.2%	109	0.5%	298565	2863044		
1886/87	151089	126671	42%	50%	21317	1101	7.1%	0.4%	95	0.5%	300273	2890649		
1887/88	151099	126567	42%	50%	21441	1167	7.1%	0.4%	93	0.5%	300367	2879885		
1888/89	150478	126281	42%	50%	21454	1187	7.2%	0.5%	85	0.3%	299485	2874052		
1889/90	150885	125278	42%	50%	21203	1384	7.1%	0.6%	88	0.3%	298838	2875287		
1890/91	151257	125792	42%	50%	21607	1413	7.2%	0.5%	88	0.3%	300157	2878084		
1891/92	152222	125112	42%	50.3%	21387	1140	7%	0.4%	84	0.3%	299945	2884936		
1892/93	152916	125125	42%	50.1%	21272	1488	7.1%	0.5%	98	0.3%	300899	2895407		
1893/94	152240	125390	41.4%	50%	24016	1264	8%	0.4%	89	0.2%	302999	2900616		
1894/95	153594	125057	42%	51%	20790	1225	6.4%	0.4%	85	0.2%	300751	2163022		
1895/96	152694	123282	41.4%	51%	20893	1231	7%	0.4%	78	0.2%	298178	2831087		
1897/98	151400	122461	41.4%	51%	20150	1584	6.8%	0.5%	76	0.3%	295671	2079185		
1898/99	152724	122766	41.5%	51%	20161	1155	6.8%	0.4%	77	0.3%	296433	2807550		
1899/1900	153094	122373	41%	51.6%	19898	1232	6.7%	0.4%	73	0.3%	296670	2788358		
1900/1901	153369	121997	41.2%	51.8%	19672	1204	6.4%	0.4%	68	0.2%	296310	2805362		
1901/1902	154037	120482	41%	52.3%	19011	1177	6.1%	0.4%	65	0.2%	294772	NA		
1902/1903	155539	120527	41%	52.5%	18822	1148	6%	0.3%	80	0.3%	296116	NA		
1903/1904	157779	121799	41%	52.3%	19088	1156	6%	0.4%	77	0.3%	299822	NA		
1904/1905	158403	122100	41%	52.4%	19616	1052	6%	0.3%	86	0.3%	301257	NA		

APPENDIX III PART B

Distribution of holdings owned by Agriculturalists and Non-Agriculturalists in Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Kheda Districts Between 1916/17 and 1926/27

(Size of holdings is given in standard acres. Area totals are for government and alienated lands)

Year	0-5 acres			5-15 acres			15-25 acres			25-100 acres			100-500 acres			500+ acres			Total of Each Column
1916/17																			
<u>Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	195917	70206	17874	10312	590	54	301599												
Area held (Acres)	322373	635516	334372	243626	101633	84963	1722483												
% of grand total of area	13%	26%	14%	10%	4%	4%	71%												
<u>Non-Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	38648	14388	3747	3296	1249	803	62131												
Area held	84963	127803	75012	134247	133687	153323	709035												
% of grand total of area	4%	5%	3%	5%	5%	7%	29%												
Grand Total of Area for 1916/17												2,431,518		(100%)					
1921/22																			
<u>Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	212857	69515	16636	13037	974	37	313056												
Area held (Acres)	402764	605673	303751	551668	146161	30937	2040954												
% of grand total of area	14%	21%	10%	19%	5%	1%	70%												
<u>Non-Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	39670	15640	3940	3990	704	97	64041												
Area held	99332	144334	72052	252086	137684	163364	868852												
% of grand total of area	3%	5%	2%	9%	5%	6%	30%												
Grand Total of Area for 1921/22												2,909,806		(100%)					
1926/27																			
<u>Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	212353	70135	17306	13414	908	36	314152												
Area held (Acres)	411625	593228	323670	562742	146301	25630	2063196												
% of grand total of area	14%	21%	11%	19%	5%	1%	71%												
<u>Non-Agriculturalists</u>																			
Number of owners	43648	16768	4686	4102	694	83	69981												
Area held	104219	144557	85605	237742	136121	127557	835801												
% of grand total of area	4%	5%	3%	8%	5%	4%	29%												
Grand Total of Area for 1926/27												2,898,997		(100%)					

APPENDIX III PART C

Distribution of holdings owned by self-cultivators (A), owners dependent mainly on hired labourers and farm servants (B), and pure rent receivers (C) in Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Kheda for 1931/32 and 1936/37 (size of holdings is in acres)

Year	0-5 acres				5-15 acres				15-25 acres				25-100 acres				100-500 acres				500+ acres				Total of Each Column
<u>1931/32</u>																									
<u>Class A</u>																									
Number of owners		205603	66300	16893	12158	590	7	301551																	
Area held (Acres)		382928	526288	288458	442846	80205	5725	1726450																	
% of grand total of area		13.6%	19%	10%	15%	2.8%	0.2%	61.6%																	
<u>Class B</u>																									
Number of owners		7580	3528	1229	1355	176	6	13874																	
Area held (Acres)		16991	30788	24416	63881	37331	4177	177584																	
% of grand total of area		0.6%	1%	0.9%	2%	1.3%	0.2%	6%																	
<u>Class C</u>																									
Number of owners		54476	22456	6807	6429	1318	116	91602																	
Area held (Acres)		134291	205752	116903	220465	210044	44663	932118																	
% of grand total of area		4.7%	7%	4%	7.7%	7.4%	1.6%	32.4%																	
<u>1936/37</u>																									
<u>Class A</u>																									
Number of owners		237952	84986	18979	12126	670	11	354724																	
Area held (Acres)		346436	763610	391877	457983	179193	31675	2170774																	
% of grand total of area		11.0%	22%	12%	14%	5.4%	1%	66.6%																	
<u>Class B</u>																									
Number of owners		4230	2368	670	825	136	8	8237																	
Area held (Acres)		10770	22253	15372	38070	24764	3769	114998																	
% of grand total of area		0.3%	0.7%	0.5%	1.2%	0.7%	0.1%	3.5%																	
<u>Class C</u>																									
Number of owners		68753	26059	6244	6302	1033	102	108493																	
Area held (Acres)		170112	222365	122387	281152	140210	111559	1047785																	
% of grand total of area		5%	6.7%	3.7%	8.5%	4.2%	3%	29.9%																	
Grand Total of all occupied area																								3333557	

NOTES

Appendix III Part A

Up till 1904/5, figures for the number of different sizes of holdings are given each year in the General Report on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency (OPR).

Appendix III Part B

After 1904/5, there is a gap till 1916/17. Subsequently the survey of holdings was made on a quinquennial basis. The 1916/17 General Report describes a non-agriculturalist as one who receives the greater part of his income from rent. This would therefore exclude those who cultivated their own lands and rented out a small part. This category is discussed in the text of Chapter IV.

Appendix III Part C

1. After 1926/27, the General Reports classified the peasantry into Classes A, B and C. Class A refers to "those who cultivate themselves with or without hired labour". Class B means "those who only supervise or direct cultivation by labourers or farm servants". Class C was defined as "those who receive rent only without directly or indirectly taking part in the cultivation".
2. Data for 1931/32 and 1936/37 presented in this section are not strictly comparable for Broach and Panch Mahals were treated as one unit in 1936/37. Nonetheless, the weight of the Panch Mahals would be a small proportion in the overall Index. The fact which must be noted is that in spite of the inclusion of the data for Panch Mahals, there is an absolute decline in the number of persons and area held by those classified as Class B (from 177584 persons in 1931/32 to 114998 in 1936/37). The greatest setback caused by the Great Depression was to farming based mainly on hired labour.

APPENDIX IV

Estimates of Cost of Production and Net Profits
from the Survey Report on Olpad taluka by J.B. Shukla

BALANCE-SHEET OF COTTON (1 Bigha)

Expenditure	With hired labour	With culti- vator's own labour
	Rs.as.ps.	Rs.as.ps.
I. Labour Cost. (animals and men)		
(a) Two harrowings in the hot weather	2 0 0	1 0 0
(b) Collecting and burning the stubbles of the previous juwar crop	0 4 0	0 4 0
(c) Manuring (mixing by two harrowings)	3 4 0	1 15 0
(d) Digging the head-lands and removing shrubs	0 1 3	0 0 0
(e) Ploughing after the first rains (more often harrowing)	1 8 0	0 12 0
(f) Sowing the seed	1 2 0	0 3 0
(g) Weeding (thrice)	2 13 0	2 13 0
(h) Thinning the plants	0 3 0	0 3 0
(i) Interculturing (four times at intervals)	3 0 0	1 8 0
(j) Picking cotton	1 14 0	1 14 0
II. Cost of Manure, 10 cartloads at Re. 0-8-0 per cartload once in 4 years; (evaluated for one year)	1 4 0	1 4 0
III. Cost of Seed, 6 seers per Bigha	0 6 0	0 6 0
IV. Land Revenue	3 8 0	3 8 0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Rs.	21 3 3	15 10 0
	<hr/>	<hr/>

INCOME:-

Value of Seed Cotton at 5 maunds on the average per Bigha charged at Rs. 1-8-0 per maund on the average (Price per Bhar varied from Rs. 105 to Rs. 115; we have therefore adopted Rs. 103 as the average price per Bhar of seed cotton)

Rs. 22 8 0

Net profit to the Capitalistic Cultivator

Rs. 1 4 9

Net profit to the Self-working Cultivator

Rs. 6 14 0

APPENDIX IV (cont.)

BALANCE-SHEET OF JUWAR (1 Bigha)

Expenditure	With hired	With culti-
	labour	vator's own labour
	Rs.as.ps.	Rs.as.ps.
I. Labour Cost (animals and men)		
(a) Digging and collecting cotton stalks of the previous crop	0 8 0	0 8 0
(b) 2 harrowings in the hot weather	2 0 0	1 0 0
(c) Ploughing once either with the plough or harrowing with Karab (harrow) after the rains	1 8 0	0 12 0
(d) Digging corners and head-lands	0 4 0	0 0 0
(e) Sowing and covering the seed	1 2 0	0 3 6
(f) Hand weeding (twice)	0 10 0	0 10 0
(g) Thinning plants	0 4 0	0 4 0
(h) Interculturing (twice)	1 8 0	0 12 0
(i) Ploughing between the rows of plants in September	1 8 0	0 12 0
(j) Watching (November-December about 1½ months)	1 8 0	0 0 0
(k) Harvesting, tying bundles and stacking in the field	1 2 0	1 2 0
(l) Cutting heads of grains and carting them to the threshing floor and stacking the bundles again	0 10 0	0 10 0
(m) Threshing and winnowing	0 12 0	0 8 0
(n) Harvesting and threshing Tur and Mag (mixture)	0 12 0	0 8 0
II. Cost of Seed.		
4 seers of Juwar	0 2 0	
2 seers of Tur	0 2 0	
½ seer of Mug	0 0 6	
	0 4 6	0 4 6
III. Land Revenue	3 8 0	3 8 0
Total Rs.	17 12 0	11 6 0

APPENDIX IV (cont.)

INCOME:-

	Rs.as.ps.
(i) Value of 10 maunds of Juwar per Bigha, charged at Rs.30 per Galli of 30 maunds	10 0 0
(ii) 2 maunds of Tur charged at Rs.2 per maund	4 0 0
(iii) $\frac{1}{4}$ maunds of Mag charged at Rs.3 per maund	0 12 0
(iv) 200 bundles of Juwar Kadbi at Rs. 1-8-0 per 100	3 0 0
(v) $2\frac{1}{2}$ maunds of Juwar Bhusa or chaff charged at Re. 0-4-0 per maund	0 10 0
(vi) 2 maunds of Tur and Mag Bhusa or chaff at Re. 0-8-0 per maund	1 0 0
Total Rs.	19 6 0
Net profit to the Capitalistic Cultivator	1 10 0
Net profit to the Self-working Cultivator	8 0 0

BALANCE-SHEET OF WHEAT (1 Bigha)

Expenditure	With hired labour	With cultivator's own labour
	Rs.as.ps.	Rs.as.ps
I. Labour Cost (animals and men)		
(a) One harrowing in the hot weather	0 12 0	0 6 0
(b) 6 harrowings on the average at intervals (weather permitting) during the monsoon	4 8 0	2 4 0
(c) Levelling and sowing	1 2 6	0 10 6
(d) Harvesting, (by uprooting the plants), tying and stacking	0 15 0	0 8 0
(e) Threshing (by means of Chakkar), winnowing etc.	2 9 0	1 4 6
II. Cost of Seed, 30 seers at Rs. 2 per maund	1 8 0	1 8 0
III. Land Revenue	2 8 0	2 8 0
Total Rs.	13 14 6	9 1 0

Olpad Taluka

1934/35 (Acres) Size of Proprietary Holding		19	24	31	29	25	16	23	24	49	17	20	18	20	22	21	20
Area sown with	Cotton	9.5	11.2	13.2	18.77	12	10.87	16.3	11.72	13	9.65	18.3	11.75	18.47	13.7	14.25	7.6
	Jowar	9.07	11.9	14.5	10.22	8.85	8.57	5.25	8.15	6.5	5.62	9.32	6.28	5.5	3.4	5.75	9.5
	Wheat	-	1.95	-	1.15	1	-	1.82	-	-	0.55	-	0.875	-	2.25	0.35	1.5
	Paddy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.75
	Ground nut	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	-	-	1.025	-	1.25	-	-
	Til	-	-	-	2.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brinjal	-	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Lady's finger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.75
	Grass	2.37	4.85	3.2	2.69	3.77	1.97	1.87	2.45	4.00	1.18	-	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.95	3.05
Cost of Production in Rupees		383	738	571	504	475	449	440	452	639	553	733	479	532	537	571	698
Gross Income		1008	1587	1541	1452	1159	1069	1029	1222	637	465	930	508	727	634	614	654
Net Cash Intake		625	849	970	948	684	620	589	770	-2	-88	197	29	195	97	43	-44

1935/36 (Acres) Size of Proprietary Holding		19	24	31	29	25	16	23	24	49	17	20	18	20	22	21	20
Area sown with	Cotton	9.07	15.1	14.6	12.87	13.62	9	9.22	9.5	14.47	10.75	12.07	9.7	13.6	13.3	7.25	10
	Jowar	11.9	9	10.97	15.57	12	9.3	8.85	9.08	9.00	4.51	10.45	4.32	10.37	6.9	10.4	8.60
	Wheat	-	0.92	2.3	2.7	-	1.97	1.62	2.65	-	0.55	-	-	-	-	0.35	0.75
	Paddy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.75
	Ground nut	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.25	-	-	2.25	-	-	1.75	-
	Til	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.52	-	-	-	-
	Wal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brinjal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Lady's finger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Grass	2.37	4.85	3.2	3.2	3.8	1.0	2.45	2.92	4.00	1.8	4.02	1.9	2.5	2.5	-	3.05
Cost of Production in Rupees		389	617	566	513	540	428	539	460	717	481	646	500	581	523	599	513
Gross Income		798	1317	1088	1102	1121	296	896	830	1237	753	952	883	1053	952	963	659
Net Cash Intake		409	519	522	589	581	724	357	370	520	272	306	383	472	429	364	146

1934/35 (Acres) Size of Proprietary Holding	13	30.5	18	20	22	23	30.5	24.5
Area sown with								
Cotton	8.37	11.05	11.01	9.23	8.52	8.65	16.4	11.82
Jowar	1.55	5.05	2.42	2.67	7.75	5.9	5.9	3.42
Wheat								
Paddy	3	6.2	4.25	5.32	4.45	5.5	4.25	4.95
Ground nut		2.5						
Til								
Wal	3	6.2	5.32	5.32	4.42	5.5	4.25	4.95
Brinjal								
Lady's finger								
Grass	2.35	8.4	2.35	4.5	2.15	3.375	4.15	4.97
Cost of Production in Rupees	513	891	602	652	549	571	772	562
Gross Income	327	1009	479	604	770	842	952	717
Net Cash Intake	186	118	123	48	221	271	180	155
1935/36 (Acres) Size of Proprietary Holding	13	30.5	18	20	22	23	30.5	24.5
Area sown with								
Cotton	4.8	9.97	6.95	7.01	7.75	5.9	13.5	7.1
Jowar	3.72	3.02	5.75	4.75	7.70	8.65	8.8	5.6
Wheat								
Paddy	4.4	6.02	5.01	5.32	4.35	5.5	4.25	4.9
Ground nut		2.5						
Til								
Wal	4.4	6.02	5.01	4.32	5.25	5.5	4.12	4.95
Brinjal								
Lady's finger								
Grass	2.35	8.45	2.02	5.32	2.07	3.37	4.25	4.97
Cost of Production in Rupees	411	715	535	531	558	540	734	545
Gross Income	763	1492	933	1188	1040	1044	1429	1029
Net Cash Intake	352	777	398	657	482	504	695	484

APPENDIX V: NOTES

1. The above data are taken from the Report on the Cost of Production of Crops in the Principal Sugarcane and Cotton Tracts in India, published by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in 1938 Supplementary Volume of Volume II which dealt with the Bombay Presidency, pps. 156 to 204 (OPR). Cost of production includes payment for hire of labour, payment of rent, land revenue, interest and depreciation on owned stock.

2. It must be noted that wherever the area cultivated exceeds the size of the proprietary holding it means that a part of the land has been rented for that year from other land owners.

3. As the Report points out on page 5 of volume II, in order to compare proprietors and tenants, the cost of production even on proprietary holdings paying only land revenue had been made to include a hypothetical rent, interest on capital and wages for family labour, as if these had been hired from the market at existing rates. It is true that in calculating the Family Business Income these farmers were then credited with the same amount. In order to find out the Net Cash Intake of the farmers, we have, however, deducted the rent imputed to owned land, interest imputed to owned capital and wages imputed to family labour from the Cost of Production. Since these are mentioned separately, our procedure could easily be made use of and indicates in money terms, the advantage cultivating owners had over tenants and those relying mainly on hired labour.

4. The seasonal condition factor for the Surat district was as follows

	Current Output as % of normal crop	
	1933/34	1934/35
Cotton	77	48
Jowar	81	86
		97
		94

(Vol. II, pp.11)

The cotton crop was injured by frost in 1934/35.

5. The adverse output of cotton in 1934/35 was offset by a higher price. According to the values mentioned in Vol. II, (pp.27) cotton sold in Surat at the following prices:

Year and Month (1935 season)	Average rate in Rupees per Bhar of 784 lbs.			
	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week
March	120	130	135	137
April	132	130	135	137
(1936 season)				
March	90	95	95	96
April	100	98	102	100

Thus 1934/35 although a bad year for cotton output was a good year for cotton prices. Yields of each crop were noted separately for each field on the basis of weight after the harvest. These yields are mentioned in the Supplementary Volume to the Bombay Report.

CHAPTER VFamines in Gujarat, 1899 to 1919

Any argument which seeks to show that Gujarat had a developing agrarian economy in the nineteenth century must explain the occurrence of and examine the consequences of the several famines said to have occurred there between 1899 and 1919. The official definition of a Famine in British India had two essential attributes. A famine was said to have occurred, when the estimate of the harvest and the actual opening of 'test' relief works showed that food supplies and local employment prospects had decreased to such an extent, that substantial numbers of people were forced to rely on the government relief works. Besides this dictum inscribed in the Famine Relief Code, an associated criteria was a sharp increase in the death rate. It was the general official thinking, that starvation resulting from lack of food, spoilation of the normal water supply due to a prolonged absence of rain and sudden movement of population, all related phenomenon, helped to spread epidemic diseases. Lastly an increase in cattle mortality was considered to be another characteristic of a famine period.

Before considering the different aspects of the famines in Gujarat in relation to their significance for the process of agrarian growth in that region, we may also emphasize their relevance in discussing a more general problem. In his recent book, Poverty and Famines, Dr. A. K. Sen has quoted several case studies to argue that Famines in the Third World during the modern period had very little to do with an actual decline of food supplies, if this is seen as a per capita availability of foodgrains within an entire region or a

country.¹ According to him, although droughts may create a relative scarcity of food, this does not affect all social groups equally. The scarcity turns into a mortality crisis primarily for those groups who are dependent on hiring out their labour. In the context of an agrarian economy, this refers mainly to the landless labourers. It is they who have the least purchasing power to withstand the sudden movement of relative prices of foodgrains and other items of necessary consumption. Since price increase is caused not necessarily by food shortage but hoarding and speculation, famines and the mortality associated with them, are the creation of a grossly unequal distribution of purchasing power. In this view, the cultivating peasantry suffers the least from destitution and death. Finally, with the example of the Bengal Famine of 1942 as his empirical proof, Professor Sen suggests that as the British government in India saw the problem as one of merely increasing the regional supply of food and not one of price control or adding to the purchasing power of groups like the landless labourers or self-employed like the artisans and fishermen the market for whose services had collapsed, its policy could not reduce famine mortality.² It will be our argument that the Gujarat famines offer some important qualifications to the hypothesis proposed by Sen.

One of the first questions that must be considered is, whether or not the years between 1900 and 1902, which saw an increase in mortality in Gujarat also saw a decline in food supply. This is of great importance in Gujarat, as that region had not seen a sudden increase in the prevailing death rate since the 1820s. Fortunately, by the 1890s in India there was already fairly reliable data to try

¹Sen, A.K., Poverty and Famines, Oxford, 1981, pp.236.

²Sen, op.cit., passim.

to make an estimate of food supplies.

The Agriculture Department of the British Government in India made annual estimates of the character of the harvest based on village level crop cutting experiments. The details of these estimates for our period have been put together in Appendix I of this chapter. The manner of their collection and their reliability have already been briefly discussed in Appendix III of Chapter 2. In order to understand these estimates, it must be remembered that they were enumerated on a sixteen anna scale, borrowed from the well known units of the Rupee which consists of 16 annas. In Gujarat, a 12 anna crop was considered normal and equated to the figure of 100. If in interpreting these estimates we include those relating to jowar, bajra, rice, wheat, kodra, tur and gram i.e. all the major foodgrains and pulses, this would account for all the sources of food in Gujarat.

In the districts of Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda, the decade before 1900 was one of relatively poor seasons. Between 1892/93 and 1898/99, this area saw a sharp decline in the yield of the food crops. It was 24% below normal for Jowar, 43% for Bajri, 17% for Rice and 17% also for the rest of the coarse grains and pulses. These crops together accounted for 75% of gross cropped area in Ahmedabad, 91% in Kheda, 53% in Broach and 74% in Surat, giving an overall figure of about 73% for the food crops. Yet, when compared to 1886/87 the aggregate area devoted to foodgrains and pulses had shown a slight decline. In Ahmedabad this decrease amounted to 38037 acres or 2.6% when compared to the 1886/87 figure, in Broach by 68422 acres or 12% and in Surat by 1313 acres or approximately 3%. (Cf. Appendix II) As the 1880s had been a period of fairly normal

yields, the slump of the early 1890s implied an overall loss of foodgrain and pulse output of about 35% in Ahmedabad, 15% in Broach and 17% in Surat. In Kheda since area devoted to rice and wheat increased while that of Bajra and Jowar diminished, on balance locally grown food supplies were reduced by 34%. These figures are derived by calculating the cumulative effect of the decline in yield and area for each separate food crop. The reason for the loss of area devoted to foodgrains lay primarily in the shortfall in rainfall and its fluctuating monthly distribution during this period. An additional cause was waterlogging and increased soil salinity in some parts of Ahmedabad and Kheda, as well as a plague of locusts in 1901. It was not caused by any sharp fall in prices, a fact which calls for a closer look at arguments which derive short term shifts in cropping pattern solely or mainly from the annual fluctuation in relative prices.¹ This question requires a separate discussion. The shortfall in food supply was accentuated by the fact of a net annual growth of population by 0.8% between 1893 and 1899.²

There was a further collapse of foodgrains production in the three years starting in 1900, caused once again by a contraction of sown area and diminution of yields. Compared with the preceding lean years between 1892/1893, during the subsequent period (1900 to 1902), rice output in these four Gujarat districts declined by 85%, that of Jowar by 48%, of Bajra by 61%, of wheat by 75% and the rest of the grains and pulses by 82%. This meant an overall reduction of

¹Narain, D., Impact of Price Movements on Areas under Selected Crops in India, 1900-1939, Cambridge, 1965.

²Census of India (BP), 1911, Vol.I, Table II, p.82.

68% in the locally grown food supplies.

Before considering the quantity of grains imported from other areas during the famine period, we must take note of the long term changes that had occurred in the habits of the Gujarat peasantry. In districts like Broach and Surat, where area devoted to cotton had increased after the 1850s, and in Ahmedabad and Kheda where rice, wheat and tobacco served as cash crops, the proportion of the crop marketed had increased considerably. The tradition of keeping grain stocks in pits had declined. It was more profitable to sell off surplus grain. This becomes particularly apparent when we examine how the cash needs of the peasantry had increased in line with new habits of consumption. The slump of the 1890s had further whittled down the capacity for storage. Personal inspection in October 1899 in some of the Ahmedabad villages revealed, that the grain stored in the kothis of even the more prosperous peasants would have lasted them only for a few months.¹ In the Jameatpura village of Daskroi taluka, the Mukhi or chief Patidar paying Rupees 135 as land revenue had only two maunds of bajri. In another village three houses of substantial patidars between them had only 5 maunds of bajri.

The Famine Commission of 1902 made its own estimate of the shortfall in food supply for these Gujarat districts after taking the net imports into account. According to its Report, between August 1899 and August 1900, the total available food supply in

¹Collector of Ahmedabad to Commissioner, Northern Division, RD, Vol.66, 1900, p.151/126.

Gujarat was, if compared only to the outturn in 1898-1899 less by 21% in Ahmedabad, 45% in Kheda, 34% in Broach and 42% in Surat. This is perhaps a more accurate estimate since it is based on a calculation of the 'carry over' stock in 1899.¹

It would be quite clear that A. K. Sen's argument about Famines occurring in spite of adequate food supplies is not applicable to Gujarat during 1899-1902. Just how different the circumstances were in this period from the situations described by Sen, may be seen in the simultaneous shortfalls of supply in other parts of India. These had seen a Famine in 1896-97 and were to see one again in 1900. As one author, Dr. B. M. Bhatia has pointed out, "The famine of 1896-97 was more widespread and severe than any the country had known before. Among the provinces affected were Bihar, Bengal, Bombay, Deccan, the Deccan districts of the Madras Presidency, the North Western Provinces and Oudh, the Central Provinces, the Punjab and Burma."² Although that famine did not affect Gujarat directly, it ravaged the food supply and cultivation of those provinces which could have supplied it with grain in 1900. The shortfall in 1896/97 was extensive. In the Central Provinces, the crop yield was estimated to be 45% of the normal, in the North Western Provinces and Oudh at 60%, in Bengal 67%, in Bombay 65%, in Punjab 75% and in Madras 80%.³ Against an estimated loss of 18 or 19 million tons, the imports from Burma had amounted only to .03 million tons. In addition, the

¹ Estimates of Outturn and Crops, No. 1164, RD, Vol.66, 1900; Appendix 17, Report on the Famine in the Bombay Presidency, 1902, Vol.II.

² Bhatia, B.M., Famines in India, 1896-1965, New Delhi, 1967, p.239.

³ Ibid.

failure of rains in Gujarat in 1899-1900 was accompanied by a severe drought in the Deccan districts of Bombay, Hyderabad, Rajputana, Berar, the Central Provinces and south eastern districts of Punjab, plus a large part of the Princely states.¹ In the face of such definitive evidence about food scarcity, it would be difficult to assert that the rise of prices of grains between 1896 and 1901 had little to do with the supply situation or that it were only or even primarily the landless labourers who suffered because of it. This becomes clearer when we examine the social composition of those who sought government relief and the pattern of mortality.

The number of people given some relief through the official channels was large. Between December 1900 and October 1901, the entire population of the four districts was said to be afflicted by the famine. At this time relief efforts had only started to gather momentum. The average units relieved every month amounted to 58% of the total population in Ahmedabad, 56% in Kheda, 17% in Broach and 7% in Surat, the least affected among the four districts. Between November 1901 and October 1902, when the numbers affected were estimated at substantially less than in the first half of the famine, the proportion of those on relief went up. In these 12 months, the number of people relieved every month was two and a half times the number affected in the Ahmedabad district. In other words, every person affected could get cash or uncooked food once in 12 days. In Kheda, this happened once in 24 days. In Broach and Surat, about 50% of the affected population drew help every day.²

¹Ibid., p.251.

²Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, pp 22/23.

A consideration of the aggregate figures of persons given relief by itself does not indicate fully the impact of the relief programme. As distress due to famine reached a peak some months after the onset of a drought, when the personal stocks of the peasant was at an end and imports of food and fodder not large enough, it would be more apt to consider the numbers on relief during the worst months of the Famine. If we take the two months with the highest numbers on relief, in Ahmedabad and Kheda, in the first phase lasting from December 1900 to October 1901, the number of units relieved were 121% and 174% of the affected population respectively. In the latter period from November 1901 to October 1902, the units relieved went up to 479% of the affected population in Ahmedabad. Every person affected could have been given relief once a week. At the height of the famine in Kheda this figure was 285% of the affected population and in Broach and Surat 131% and 94%. It must also be noted that almost 40% of those being relieved in Ahmedabad, 55% in Surat and 32% in Broach were getting gratuitous relief in the villages.¹ The rest were employed on Relief works or staying there as dependants.

The impact of the relief can be put in its proper perspective only when we remember that although everyone classified as having been affected by the famine was assumed to be in need of relief, this was not necessarily the case. Many would have coped on their own because the grant of largescale remissions on the payment of land revenue and the extension of new Takkavi or agricultural loans would have improved the staying power of many cultivators. This meant that a larger proportion of those needing

¹ Ibid.

to go to work on Relief Projects actually did so, than would appear to be the case, if their numbers were simply considered as a percentage of the overall affected population. At the same time, it must be remembered that some of those getting relief in Gujarat were immigrants from the surrounding Princely states. Already by September 1899, the Commissioner for the Northern Division was complaining about "the influx of starving people from the native states of Baroda, Palanpur, Radhanpur, Jodhpur, and Kathiawar." He noticed, "on one relief work 8000 persons from Jodhpur and 5000 from Marwar, with more arriving daily."¹ A count at 8 different poor houses and relief works in Broach and Ahmedabad revealed that of the 15883 persons being supported, 26% were from the native states.² This influx would also increase the mortality figures.

Before discussing the significance of the social composition of those coming to the Relief works, the differing degree of economic pressure necessary for various sections to seek relief must be noted. It is obvious that the landless labourers would be the first ones to come on relief. For those entirely dependent for their living on casual fieldwork, the shift to a job on the Relief Projects would merely imply a change of employment and location. Although the statistics on real wages will be discussed in a separate chapter, even without these, it is understandable why government wages would have caused the least discomfort to the landless labourers. In order to prevent relief works from becoming a means of merely earning more

¹No. 7207, 10 October 1899, RD, Vol.51, 1899, p.349.

²Chief Secretary, Bombay to Secretary, Department of Revenue and Agriculture, Famine, RD, Vol. 28, 1900, p.85.

money than was normally to be had in the rural labour market, the government had restricted the famine wage to "the lowest amount sufficient to maintain healthy persons in health," with special provisions for restoring the sick and the emaciated to normal health. In spite of this, the wage being offered had some attractive sides to it, especially for the full time casual labourer. Work was easily available for women. The price of fuel was included in the wage and a modest additional amount given for women during their pregnancy. Non-working dependants were given free relief either at the worksite or in their villages. Workers got a rest day wage. Finally the wage was computed on the basis of the previous week's local retail price of grain and other commodities. Hence, variations of price were taken into account.¹ As the collector of Sholapur pointed out, in some of the smaller villages, the famine wage served to raise the market wage for field labour. Often, "the whole labouring population" went to the relief works, because the local landlords gave work only to men.² Not all labourers, however, had to resort to the relief works. As one observer noted in Khandesh, "cases of landowners ceasing to employ regular labourers who work for them all the year round are very few." However, they had ceased to employ those who were hired for odd jobs. Kalis, or regular labourers were often seen as dependants of the patron's family. Finally, it must be remembered that some of those classified as labourers were part time cultivators. As one Report in Ahmedabad pointed out "Many of the poorer classes cultivate a beegha or two and also depend on day

¹Famine Relief Code, Bombay Presidency, 1927 edition, p.22.

²Morrison, W.T., Collector Sholapur, to Revenue Commissioner, Poona, 15 April 1897, RD, Vol.26, 1897, p.45.

labour for the greater part of the year."¹ This section would be in the most difficult situation. On the one hand the need for it to go to relief works would arise sooner than it might for other better off cultivators. On the other, the compulsion to look after its cattle for being able to resume its part-time cultivation after the famine would require it to stay on in the village as long as possible.

The conditions which would have forced the cultivating peasants to go to relief works were more extreme than those confronting the landless labourers. As one note from the collector of Khandesh estimated, "Even a second rate patidar (a member of a Gujarat peasant caste) often owned ornaments worth a thousand rupees and the value of those owned by the better sort is generally double or treble."² The first attempt of such peasants would be to buy grain by selling their ornaments. Extensive sales of silver ornaments were reported from Gujarat. In the Ahmedabad district, it was estimated that the price of silver had gone down by 40% and firms which "ordinarily took in silver worth a lakh of Rupees bought silver worth 12 lakhs."³ Quite apart from his capacity to do so there was a compelling reason for the Gujarati cultivator to stay in the village, even when smaller relief works had been opened nearby. On an average, there were more plough and milch cattle per acre of land in Gujarat than

¹ Report on Ahmedabad, RD, Vol. 139, 1901, p.55.

² Cummins, A., Collector Khandesh to Under Secretary, Government of India, RD, Vol. 26, 1897, p.45.

³ Special Famine Report, RD, Vol. 66, 1900, pp 299 to 302.

in any other part of the Bombay Presidency. Feeding and looking after their cattle was perhaps the chief stratagem for the cultivator to outlast the famine. At first with the aid of government loans, and then feeding off wild grass (samo) or twigs and roots, the cultivator was loth to give up hope for the rains to return. The Famine Commission specifically pointed out the great difficulty experienced in getting the Kalipraj in Surat, the poorer ones among the cultivators, to leave their cattle. They often subsisted on the dole given for their children and lived on in their villages.¹

Even after they had sold their ornaments or lost their cattle or made arrangements for it to be looked after, the Brahman or the Patidar farmer would have had to overcome many caste prejudices to go to the Relief works, where he would have to live alongside many 'untouchables'. Such inhibitions were quite real. They persuaded the government and private charitable organization to start giving 'dole' to women in 'Purdah' or cultivators who stayed behind to do their fieldwork.² Another difficulty for the main body of the Gujarat peasants in adjusting to being on Relief was the better diet they had got used to in more prosperous days. Many observers, among them the sanitary commissioner, noted that for cultivators who were used ordinarily to eating 2 pounds of grain every day, often made up of rice and wheat and drinking toddy or fresh palm liquor, it took some time adapting to meals of Burmah rice. In fact, they did not very often know how to cook the coarser Burmah rice, did not wash it enough nor

¹Famine Report, 1902, Vol. I, p.49.

²Ibid, p.64.

boil it for a sufficient period and made themselves prone to disease.¹ If the concept of the rate of destitution during famines used by Sen is to be seen as being based on the loss of personal possessions, and the extent of hardships faced by different social groups, then the cultivators suffered more, if not as much as the landless labourers.

Large numbers of cultivators went to work on the Relief Projects. Between February and September 1900, there were every day, 89,094 adult workers on the Relief works in Ahmedabad, 73,567 in Kheda, 58546 in Broach, and 9015 in Surat, the least affected among the 4 districts. About 67% of these workers in Ahmedabad were classified as cultivators, that is those whose main source of income was farming. The respective figure for Kheda was 64%, for Broach 35% and for Surat 30%. Yet, considered as a proportion of their total district population, it was the labourers who benefitted more from the relief works. In the 3 districts of Ahmedabad, Broach and Kheda considered together around 34% of those classified as field labourers actually got a job on the Relief Projects. Considering that many of the labourers employed annually continued with their jobs, and some field work was still available where irrigated lands were being cultivated, this was a high ratio. It was further increased, because a number of those castes classified as Depressed Classes namely Dheds, Bhangis, and Mochis also worked as field labourers. Almost 46% of the Depressed Classes went to the Relief works in the Broach District. Similarly some of the tribes also lived off casual labour and were part of the district labouring population. In Broach and Surat, they

¹Report of the Sanitary Commissioner, Bombay Presidency, on causes of mortality in Gujarat, RD, Vol. 27, 1900.

constituted 33% and 50% respectively of those who came to the relief works. This would push the number of field labourers on relief works to somewhere near 50% of their district population. By comparison, except in Broach where 56% of the cultivators came on to the Relief works, in the other 3 districts only 8% or so of the cultivating peasants did so.¹ This did not mean that the cultivators were faring better than the labourers. Indeed, as we shall see later, since the mortality rate was much lower on the relief works, the labourers probably escaped the worst consequences of the Famine to a much greater degree than other social groups.

The relief works were the product of the recommendations of the Famine Commission of 1880. The Famine Code of 1881 had charged the District Administration with the task of preparing Relief programmes separately for expected periods of scarcity and famine. They were to have "real economic value for the locality and were to be adapted to local needs." Scarcity work programmes were to be revised every year; the larger ones meant for famines were to be updated every five years. They should each be able to employ at least 15% of a district's population from the first day of a scarcity or a famine.² Relief projects were classified as those having a permanent, temporary and doubtful utility. In the first category, the main projects were the construction of new roads, railways, and irrigation tanks. Under works of temporary utility were included all metal collection works plus the improvement of old village tanks. Works of doubtful utility were few and classed as such, because they could not be completed before the end of the famines. Of the 34

¹Famine Report, 1902, Vol. II, Appendix 10, p.16/17.

²Famine Relief Code, op.cit., p.4-5.

million Rupees spent on Relief Projects in Bombay Presidency between 1899 and 1902, nearly 53% was spent on works of permanent utility and 45% on those of temporary utility. It was estimated that the same work in normal times would have cost only 46% of the money spent on it during the period of the famine.¹ This does reflect the labour utilization objectives of the relief expenditure.

As a result of the relief works, loans from government and private investments, the area irrigated in Gujarat went up in these four districts from 2.6% of cultivated area to 4% by 1907/8.² The actual area irrigated in any one year was, however, not a sufficient indicator either of irrigation capacity or the improvement in drinking water supply effected by the construction of wells. Compared to the 30499 irrigation wells in Gujarat in 1898/99, there were 42446 by 1912/13, an increase of about 40%.³ Gujarat being a dry farming area, these wells were not used every year. However, when the rains failed in 1912/13, the Report on the Famine noted that this led "to a considerable increase in the area under irrigation amounting to 12% in the Presidency proper over the previous year's area, the highest since 1897/98." Ahmedabad and Kheda were among the leading contributors to this increase. In that year too, "No less than 2700 pukka (concrete) and 2500 Kacha wells were constructed, of which 1200 and 1000 respectively were in Gujarat alone."⁴ Clearly, the Gujarat peasantry

¹Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, p.95.

²Agricultural Statistics of British India, 1895/96 and 1907/8.
Government of India Publication.

³Mann, H., The Economic Progress of the Rural Areas of the Bombay Presidency, 1911-1922, p.24.

⁴Report on the Famine in the Bombay Presidency, 1911/12, p.2.

which had not been subject to droughts for a very long period before 1900 was fast learning how to cope with them. Another way in which this peasantry was trying to secure itself against bad seasons was by making a better use of the irrigated area for double cropping. Between 1912-1915 and 1917-1922, double cropped area in Gujarat increased from 164,000 acres to 197,000 acres or by 20%.¹ Crop diversification was another emerging phenomenon and would be dealt with in the chapter on Cropping pattern. Both of these developments would help the Gujarat peasantry in coping much better with the later famines of 1912 and 1918.

The amount of money advanced in the Presidency under the provisions of the Land Improvement Act of 1883 and the Agriculturists' loan Act of 1884 went up from 907,000 Rupees in 1898/99 to 5,629,000 Rupees in each of the four years between 1900 and 1903, an annual increase of six times.² The total number of recipients is not mentioned. However, we can estimate what this money could buy. More than half the amount had been advanced for the purchase of seed. 2.87 million Rupees had been advanced for the purchase of plough cattle. At the subsidized governmental price of Rupees 40 each, this amount sanctioned for the 4 Gujarat districts would fetch 71,855 bullocks. At the market price of Rupees 75, it would buy 38,323 bullocks. That these are not merely hypothetical estimates may be seen from the speedy recovery of the cropped area. Whereas in 1900-01, the net sown area in these four districts had been 1,007,085 acres, in 1902-02 it had jumped to 2,427,931 acres or an increase of

¹Mann, op.cit., p.19.

²Famine Report, 1902, Vol. I, p.68.

141%.¹ This was still only about 84% of the net area cultivated in 1888/89, but when it is remembered that population had declined by about 18% then net cultivated area may be seen to have recovered its pre-famine level in one single year. In 1891/92, the net cultivated area per unit of the population was 1.3 acres; in 1901/2, it was already 1.1 acres.² Clearly, government and other help had played its part in enabling this quick recovery.

There were other aspects of government help. Substantial quantities of fodder was imported. More significantly, all government loans granted between September 1899 and January 1901 were exempt from payment of interest.³ In addition, these three years saw the remission of 53% of the land revenue in Ahmedabad, 48% in Kheda and 44% in Broach.⁴ No revenue was exacted from those whose crops were assessed to be below 4 annas or 25% of the normal yield. Or else, if the crop was such as would leave no balance after payment of revenue, all arrears were to be remitted. Those who were thought to have the capacity to pay, but did not, were to forfeit their land, which was then to be returned to them on the restricted tenure or one which permitted sale or mortgage of land held only with official permission. This was the most frequent form of punishment meted out for non-payment of revenue. In the 4 years between 1900 and the end of 1903, there were 13,700 cases of land being forfeited and returned

¹Agricultural Statistics of British India, 1900/01.

²Ibid.

³Famine Report, 1902, Vol.I, p.72.

⁴Ibid., Vol.II, Appendix 45, pp 142/143.

on the restricted tenure to the same cultivators, of which 77% were in the Kheda district alone.¹

The official Relief effort had been aided by the efforts of the privately sponsored and nationally minded Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Fund. In these 4 districts alone, it spent 2.1 million Rupees or almost one-third of the amount spent by the government. Almost 90% of this went to help the poorest peasants by granting them seed, bullocks, implements or subsidizing their purchase of fodder. Ultimately, 35,579 persons were listed as having benefitted from this charity.² Contributions were received from Mahajans (merchant groups) and factory owners. In the later famines of 1912/13 and 1918/19, this Fund further expanded its activities. In 1918/19 it transported grass for supply to Pinjrapoles or cattle camps run by Ahmedabad Mahajans. It opened cheap grain shops and helped to reduce the local price of rice. In June 1919, when government could not move imported grain stocks from the Bombay docks, this Fund bought up 1,110,000 Rupees worth of Rice for storage and later release. This was done on the strength of an interest free loan of Rupees 700,000 from Rajaram and Co.³

The relief efforts were still not adequate to prevent a sharp increase in the death rate during the period of the famine. As against 32.6 deaths per 1000 persons for the 10 years ending 1899, Bombay Presidency between 1899/1900 and 1901/2 had a death rate of 77, 42, and 41 per 1000.⁴ The four Gujarat districts experienced the

¹Ibid, Vol.I, p.75.

²Ibid, Vol.II, p.144.

³Review of the Famine Relief Administration in the Bombay Presidency, 1918/19, p.6. (OPR)

⁴Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, Appendix 61, p.194.

highest death rates in the Presidency. In 1899-1900, Ahmedabad had a death rate of 128, Kheda 123, Broach 134 and Surat 70 per 1000.¹

Before discussing the causes behind these high mortality figures, two aspects must be noted. First of all, the largest number of deaths occurred among the age groups of 1 to 10 years and above 50. A count in all the 4 districts for the three months from January to March 1900 showed that 37% of the total deaths were of children below 10 years and another 28% were of those above 50 years.² Since the data collected by the Famine Commission for the entire period of the famine show the age groups at a 10 year interval starting from 5 years, it cannot reveal the exact loss of that part of the population which did not participate in the tasks of agricultural production. Even then, its data shows that between September 1899 and August 1902, 41% of the deaths in these four districts were accounted for by those below 5 and those over 60 years of age. This pattern of mortality could not but affect the age structure even in the long run. In 1891, 38% of the Gujarat population was below 15 years; by 1911, this was only 35%. During the same period, the share of those over 60 came down from 4.2% to 3.8%.³

The impact of famine mortality and death due to disease on the size of the population was more noticeable than on its age

¹RD, Vol.27, 1900, p.133.

²Ibid; Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, Appendix 61, p.194.

³Census of India, Bombay Presidency, 1911, Part I, Subsidiary Table II, p.82.

distribution. A comparison between the Census of 1891 and 1901 gives some indication of the actual loss of population. This amounted to 14% in Ahmedabad, 18% in Kheda, 2% in Surat and 15% in Broach. However, as the impact of an epidemic on the death rate could be a long term one and was particularly so in Gujarat, because of increased mortality in 1912/13 and 1918/19, we have adopted a different procedure to try to estimate the decline in population. The rate of net population growth for the period 1891 to 1899 has been assumed to be the minimum which would have prevailed in the subsequent period if the famines had not intervened. Using this rate one can estimate what the population might have been and what it actually was in the decennial census till 1931. The actual exercise is shown in Appendix IV to this Chapter. In 1911, the population of these four Gujarat districts was 44% less than what it should have been, if the rate of increase had been that of the 1890s. In 1921, it was 35% less and in 1931, it was 38.4% less than the estimated growth. Paradoxically, this fact as well as that of migration from the region would be significant in moulding the pattern and the impact of economic growth in Gujarat.

In considering the causes of the more than average mortality in Gujarat, it would be interesting to examine whether this was caused by higher prices. Firstly, a glance at Appendix II, Chapter 2, shows there were several years, when both in the 1860s and 1870s prices of staple grains in Gujarat were much higher than they were in the 1900 to 1903 period. For example the price of rice in Surat in 1869 was 7.8 Rupees per maund while in 1900 it was just 4.21 Rupees per maund.¹ The price of Jowar was Rupees 4.98 per maund in

¹Prices and Wages, 1921, Tables on District Prices (retail) of foodgrains.

Broach in 1864; it was 4.16 Rupees in 1900.¹ These examples can easily be multiplied. The 1860s in Gujarat saw no rise in mortality. The presumed relationship between price leaps and increased mortality can be questioned on another ground. As may be seen from Appendix V of this chapter, the prices in the Deccan districts of Bombay were either equal to or higher than those in Gujarat. In 1900, they also rose faster. In Gujarat, the price of ordinary rice compared to the one in 1899, went up by 14%; in Deccan by 22%. The respective figures for wheat were 39% and 53%; for Bajra 47% and 92%; for Jowar 94% and 97%; for Gram, 18% and 57%; for Jaggery or indigenous sugar (Gur), 8% and 15%; and for salt, 2% and 4%. Yet for 1899/1900 and the two subsequent years the mortality rate in Gujarat was 128, 73, and 49 per 1000, while in the Deccan districts it was 77, 42 and 41 per 1000.² Lastly, while the prices of all articles declined sharply in 1901, the death rate remained higher than was normal for the 1890s. Clearly, the effects of the epidemic in the form of disease lasted much longer than that of the temporary rise in prices. It is not our intention to deny the loss of purchasing power many would have suffered because of the sudden rise in prices. It was, however, just one of the causes responsible for a scarcity of food, and not necessarily the main one. It must be remembered, that the merchants who usually sold items of daily use in the village shops or the periodic markets were men of small means, and could not suddenly mobilize the funds necessary to import large quantities of grain into the districts. This was especially so since they would know that the sudden increase in the demand for grain would last only till the

¹Ibid.

²Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, Appendix 61.

next rains.¹

A breakdown of mortality by causes shows that Fever, a broad term which could mean Pneumonia, Malaria, Enterric Fever, or Influenza accounted for 55% of the deaths between 1900 and 1902 in Gujarat. Another 10% each died of Cholera and Dysentry. Small Pox claimed 5%, and the rest were classified as being the victims of Injuries, Respiratory diseases and plague.² Since starvation was not listed separately, it may be assumed to have contributed to reducing the people's resistance to all the diseases. Yet, clearly dysentry is more directly related to either eating the wrong type of food e.g. leaves or grass or even to the inability to digest good food after a period of hunger, than is Fever. This is probably best seen in the fact that Fever had always been the single largest killer in Gujarat even in times of normal food supply. Between 1887 and 1896, whereas Dysentry claimed only 0.78 deaths per 1000 persons, small pox 0.12, deaths due to Fever were 30 per 1000.³ Between September 1900 and

¹A. T. Etheridge in his Report on Past Famines had noted this fact. According to him, no grain had been imported into the Madras districts during the famine of 1833, despite the prevalence of high prices. This was so, because, "the grain merchants of inland districts are usually people of very small means, who would be very slow to extend operations." This was true of Gujarat in the 1890s as a look at the description of such traders in the District Gazetteers would reveal. Etheridge, A.T., Report on Past Famines in the Bombay Presidency, 1868, p.10.

²Famine Report, 1902, Vol.II, Appendix 62, pp. 196 to 199.

³Report of the Sanitary Commissioner for the Bombay Presidency, 1900, p.17.

and April 1901 and then again between September 1901 and April 1902, it was a Fever epidemic which laid low the peasants, according to the Famine Commission Report, claiming "the rich and poor alike."¹ In the earlier phase, between December 1899 and May 1900, it was Cholera which had done the most damage. It had affected 50 percent of the villages in Broach and Kheda and 40% in Surat and Ahmedabad.² Cholera could be contracted by drinking unhygienic water from nallahs or drains or from wells which had only a residual supply remaining at the bottom. Both Fever and Cholera could also be spread if people shared the same sanitary facilities or ate from the same plate or even through the fever virus being breathed out by the infected persons. All these could result from people wandering in search of food, visiting the market place or staying at the houses of better off relatives during the famine.³ It must also be noted that compared to the district death rates those prevailing at the Relief Works were much lower. Whereas the death rate for Ahmedabad and Kheda in 1900 was 173 and 148 per 1000 of the population, the same figure on the Relief Works was 12 and 13 per 1000 respectively.⁴

Although compared to 1896/97, when 11 million pounds of grass had been imported into Bombay, in 1899-1900 almost 93 million pounds were sold as 'loan' to the peasants, this was still far short of the required amount. Other help for the peasants was provided

¹Ibid, 1897, p.43.

²Ibid, 1900, p.17.

³Ibid; Famine Report, 1902, Vol.I, pp 94/95.

⁴Ibid, Vol.II, p.207.

by the establishment of cattle relief camps and temporary export of cattle to grazing areas. A subsidy of Rupees 8 per 1000 pounds of fodder was provided by the Bombay Famine Relief Fund, thus enabling Government to sell fodder at Rupees 2 per 1000 Pound.¹ Cattle mortality was still heavy, because peasants concentrated their efforts on saving the workable cattle, often selling off the weaker ones to the butcher or letting them die. Gujarat in 1899 was relatively overstocked with cattle. Their numbers had been increasing at the very time when the expansion of cash crops and grains had been reducing the area devoted to growing fodder and grazing. If the number of bullocks alone were to be taken into account, then already in the 1870s there was a marked contrast between Deccan and Gujarat. While the Parner taluka in Ahmednagar had one bullock to 9.5 acres of cultivated land, those in Poona, Pabal and Supe had one for every 9.7 and 11.2 cultivated acres. The Broach and Ankleswar talukas in the Broach District had one for only 3.5 and 3.1 acres of cultivated land respectively.² If the milch cattle are taken into account, this ratio would be even smaller. While they could share their Jowar with them, the Gujarat peasants could maintain their cattle. Once they could not stall feed them, the cattle died quickly. During these three years (1900 to 1902), 40% of plough cattle, about 60% of the milch cattle and 50% of the young stock were lost in these four districts. And although recovery started immediately, the total number of cattle in 1909/10 was still not equal to that of 1891/92.

¹Famine Report, 1902, Vol.I, p.79.

²Settlement Reports of the 1870s.

A mere look at aggregate figures of resources in the post famine period would not be a proper index for gauging the recovery made by Gujarat peasants as population too had decreased sharply. Perhaps, a better assessment can be made by examining the effect of the failure of rains in 1911/12, and 1912/13. In 1911/12, the staple grains in Ahmedabad were just 30% of the normal yield, in Kheda 23%, in Broach 25% and in Surat 52%. (Cf. Appendix I) Net area sown declined by about 29% when compared to the 2,184,000 acres sown in 1910/11.¹ Prices rose as high, if not higher than they were in 1900. Compared to 1910, the price of Rice was 9% higher, that of Jowar 18% higher and so on. The lower margin of price increase was due to the already higher level of prices in the few years preceding 1911/12. (Cf. Appendix V) Yet, government had to open relief works only in Panch Mahals district. It did provide relief. The number of units so relieved in the 13 months between December 1911 and August 1912 were only 9% of the total population in Ahmedabad and about 1.85 times that of the Kheda district.² This scale of relief was much less than that of 1900. Yet, mortality from all causes was just 36 per 1000 of the population in Ahmedabad and Kheda, the districts most affected in Gujarat. Not only was this figure far below that of 1900, even compared to the average of the preceding five years, it showed a marginal rise.³ It seems fair to conclude, that unless exposed to a long run of bad seasons, the Gujarat peasantry could effectively prevent a temporary scarcity from becoming a real famine. This was particularly true where it concerned the preservation of

¹Famine Report, 1911/12, p.2.

²Ibid, p.16.

³Ibid, p.23.

cattle. Although cattle mortality increased, it did so only marginally. According to the Famine Report for 1911/12, "In Ahmedabad, a Census taken after the Famine had ended, disclosed contrary to expectation an increase of about 25000 over the figures of 1909."¹ The next cattle census taken in 1915/16 showed that the existing total of 8,924,000 was 18% more than that of 1909/10.²

The years 1918/19 again saw a combination of a reduction in yield, area cultivated and hence the outturn of food. In 1918/19, the area sown in Gujarat was 1,486,000 acres or 37% less than in the preceding year. The outturn of food grains was estimated at 237,000 tons or 65% less than before. This time the Government imported large quantities of rice from Burma, and wheat from Punjab, United Provinces and even Australia.³ There was a large scale remission of revenue, and extension of agricultural loans. The scarcity was accompanied by an epidemic of Influenza, which raged all over the country. The rate of mortality was 39 per 1000 in Ahmedabad, 30 in Kheda, and 43 in Broach.⁴ Once again, it may be seen that compared to 1900 mortality was much less. The normal mean mortality between 1914 and 1918 was 32 per 1000 in Ahmedabad, 29 in Kheda and 36 in Broach.⁵ The loss of plough cattle amounted to 2.5% in each of

¹Ibid, p.16.

²Famine Review, 1918/19, op.cit., p.48.

³Ibid, p.7.

⁴Ibid, Appendix 10.

⁵Ibid.

the districts, and total cattle about 10%.¹ That the Gujarat peasantry had learnt how to fight a famine may further be seen by the fact, that the next three decades were not to witness any sudden increases in the mortality rate.

¹Ibid, pp.48. Clearly the growing share of the cultivated area which was being sown with fodder crops played a major role in minimizing cattle mortality after 1910.

ESTIMATES OF CROP YIELDS FOR GUJARAT DISTRICTS

(12 and ⁷/₁ crop = 100% or normal yield)

DISTRICT	YEAR	JOWAR	BAJRA	PADDY	WHEAT	KODRA	RAGI	VARI	TUR	GRAM	COTTON
		(Expressed as proportions of normal yield)									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
DABAD	1892-93	58	58	100	92	75	50	100	92	92	75
	1893-94	50	42	92	100	67	58	100	83	100	83
	1894-95	42	33	117	92	92	75	125	50	100	83
	1895-96	67	83	75	75	58	67	58	50	58	92
	1896-97	58	75	67	108	67	58	75	58	75	75
	1897-98	75	92	67	92	83	75	83	95	83	92
	1898-99	83	92	108	83	108	100	83	108	83	83
	1899-1900	33	25	8	25	17	17	25	17	17	8
	1900-01	25	50	25	58	25	33	17	17	42	33
	1901-02	25	58	33	25	17	8	25	8	17	25
	1902-03	42	67	58	108	50	33	58	17	75	83
	1903-04	100	75	42	83	42	42	58	42	83	92
	1904-05	25	33	-	42	33	33	33	-	75	50
	1905-06	75	83	25	83	42	58	67	25	67	75
	1906-07	83	83	83	75	67	83	83	50	75	75
	1907-08	32	25	75	67	25	25	25	25	67	33
	1908-09	42	58	83	83	42	50	92	58	75	50
	1909-10	71	71	89	84	60	46	46	67	82	99
	1910-11	69	69	56	68	56	67	67	52	61	64
	1911-12	34	26	10	52	33	10	31	3	13	25
	1912-13	58	75	58	92	42	50	52	50	75	85
	1913-14	75	67	98	67	67	67	67	67	74	93

Appendix-I Continued

(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1914-15	75	67	100	91	67	67	65	67	93	74
1915-16	28	75	8	48	42	25	33	25	42	41
1916-17	75	67	54	84	58	67	42	50	75	86
1917-18	42	42	85	47	67	58	42	75	75	59
1918-19	32	51	17	75	34	13	-	34	33	34
1919-20	75	83	85	83	83	75	75	67	83	92
1920-21	67	58	30	40	33	26	47	25	39	42
KHEDA										
1892-93	75	75	108	100	75	83	92	100	100	83
1893-94	75	100	108	100	100	92	83	67	83	83
1894-95	67	67	142	108	100	92	75	67	83	67
1895-96	67	83	67	67	100	42	100	75	33	75
1896-97	25	42	58	83	58	92	42	50	58	58
1897-98	83	117	67	83	100	100	108	100	83	67
1898-99	75	92	92	83	100	100	75	100	75	67
1899-1900	42	33	17	58	8	8	42	8	-	17
1900-01	42	92	17	50	25	33	42	17	33	25
1901-02	25	58	17	33	33	33	42	25	42	25
1902-03	83	83	58	92	67	58	50	100	67	67
1903-04	67	58	83	92	58	50	67	67	67	75
1904-05	42	33	-	67	17	17	67	42	33	42
1905-06	75	75	17	75	42	50	42	58	42	83
1906-07	67	67	100	67	67	83	83	50	75	75
1907-08	25	25	50	83	25	25	83	33	42	67

Appendix-I Continued

(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1908-09	50	58	42	75	50	58	75	67	50	58
1909-10	83	75	100	90	92	108	83	83	76	75
1910-11	81	68	96	67	86	98	80	83	73	39
1911-12	22	25	-	27	8	8	22	17	-	23
1912-13	83	83	90	92	67	83	61	75	75	85
1913-14	108	75	125	67	108	117	90	100	74	93
1914-15	92	67	116	77	100	108	83	83	83	75
1915-16	39	30	-	48	4	17	45	13	31	50
1916-17	100	100	94	108	104	91	100	90	113	88
1917-18	50	25	83	71	50	50	53	83	67	58
1918-19	15	15	-	67	6	4	-	4	23	25
1919-20	75	85	75	83	102	83	-	83	60	75
1920-21	58	49	13	58	29	25	-	11	34	25
ROACH 1892-93	92	75	88	133	100	-	-	92	83	142
1893-94	75	58	67	108	42	33	50	67	83	67
1894-95	92	50	88	108	100	50	50	67	83	67
1895-96	125	58	42	50	58	42	50	58	25	108
1896-97	100	50	50	67	58	-	-	67	-	75
1897-98	75	75	67	67	67	-	-	67	-	75
1898-99	83	83	75	75	75	-	-	75	75	85
1899-1900	33	25	50	33	-	-	-	17	-	33
1900-01	58	92	25	33	25	-	-	25	33	75
1901-02	50	50	18	18	18	-	-	25	-	42

Appendix-I Continued

(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1902-03	92	1 00	50	100	75	100	108	67	67	83
1903-04	58	67	100	92	67	67	67	75	58	92
1904-05	33	25	18	50	18	17	17	25	42	42
1905-06	67	50	17	58	17	17	17	50	42	83
1906-07	-	75	75	75	92	75	75	58	58	92
1907-08	75	33	25	67	17	17	17	50	50	67
1908-09	67	75	50	83	50	50	50	83	58	67
1909-10	75	75	92	100	92	92	92	75	67	103
1910-11	73	58	79	83	85	50	67	73	83	76
1911-12	35	28	-	19	5	-	8	27	8	50
1912-13	100	67	75	108	83	67	75	75	100	100
1913-14	75	58	58	43	75	50	58	67	42	92
1914-15	83	58	75	100	100	83	50	75	75	100
1915-16	58	42	25	33	17	17	33	42	50	58
1916-17	67	83	67	100	92	100	83	75	83	92
1917-18	67	50	83	83	73	33	50	69	83	75
1918-19	29	31	7	9	3	-	-	20	5	-
1919-20	83	83	92	83	100	100	-	67	83	92
1920-21	42	33	25	33	17	-	-	42	8	42
AT.										
1892-93	75	67	117	108	100	67	58	92	75	75
1893-94	108	92	92	75	75	83	83	52	92	75
1894-95	75	67	100	100	100	75	-	100	83	58
1895-96	100	67	83	83	92	83	-	83	-	83

Appendix-I Continued

(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1896-97	67	83	67	67	67	67	-	58	-	83
1897-98	75	75	92	75	83	92	-	83	-	83
1898-99	83	58	83	83	83	92	83	75	67	58
1899-1900	17	17	18	25	25	25	-	17	-	42
1900-01	92	50	67	50	67	75	67	33	33	92
1901-02	58	58	58	33	67	67	-	42	-	58
1902-03	100	108	67	117	92	83	-	83	-	92
1903-04	83	75	108	83	58	67	-	75	-	100
1904-05	67	17	42	25	83	75	-	50	-	58
1905-06	67	33	33	50	67	67	-	33	-	75
1906-07	83	83	100	75	92	100	-	67	58	92
1907-08	83	83	58	58	50	50	67	42	50	92
1908-09	83	83	100	83	92	100	75	67	83	75
1909-10	112	87	117	127	100	92	92	85	83	103
1910-11	102	100	105	112	102	102	101	102	99	74
1911-12	62	73	50	36	100	102	73	59	48	58
1912-13	84	77	99	126	80	95	85	85	85	103
1913-14	87	94	109	59	94	94	93	86	59	89
1914-15	83	98	97	83	91	94	93	82	70	65
1915-16	83	67	63	47	93	82	85	71	77	69
1916-17	100	75	100	83	100	100	83	100	92	83
1917-18	67	67	83	92	75	83	76	75	83	83
1918-19	67	-	42	50	58	58	-	50	-	67
1919-20	78	87	96	60	91	90	100	71	73	78
1920-21	74	83	55	49	89	73	83	57	45	72

Appendix-I Continuedd

SOURCE: Reports on Crop Experiments
Department of Agriculture
(These reports are available in a published
~~form~~ in the Maharashtra Government Archives,
Bombay, India for the period 1892-1921.
For the years 1879-1898, they are also
available in the official Publications
Room in the Cambridge University Library

NOTE: As stated above these estimate were derived ~~for~~
from village level crop cutting experiements.

PROJECTION OF ESTIMATED GROWTH OF POPULATION COMPARED

With Actual Population Increase In Gujarat - 1891 to 1931

DISTRICT	ACTUAL POPULATION 1891			ACTUAL RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH BETWEEN 1891-99 per year	POPULATION FIGURES*			DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ESTIMATED & ACTUAL FIGURES	
	URBAN	RURAL	TOTAL		TOTAL ESTIMATED POPULATION AT THE GROWTH RATE of 9%/99	ACTUAL POPULATION GIVEN BY THE census	BY TOTAL	AS % OF ACTUAL POPULATION	
DABAD	194096	726832	920928	0.55%	1901	971579	795967	175612	-22%
					1911	1022230	827809	194421	-23%
					1921	1072881	890825	182056	-20%
					1931	1123532	999768	123764	-12.4%
VARANASI	66109	805420	871529	1.00%	1901	966526	716332	250194	-35%
					1911	1,061,522	691744	369778	-53%
					1921	1156519	711000	445,519	-63%
					1931	1251516	741650	509866	-69%
GUJARAT	123345	526479	649824	0.67%	1901	693362	637017	56345	-8.8%
					1911	736900	654109	82791	-12.6%
					1921	780439	674351	106088	-15.7%
					1931	933147	693613	239534	-34.5%
MADHYA PRADESH	52207	289243	341450	0.87%	1901	371156	291763	79393	-27.2%
					1911	400862	306717	94145	-30.7%
					1921	430568	307745	122823	-39.9%
					1931	460274	334170	126104	-37.7%

NOTE: The actual rate of population growth between 1891-91 has been used to calculate the estimated population growth. This has been compared with the results of the decennial censuses. This would reveal the net loss of population due to increased death rate.

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APPENDIX VII

RISE OF RETAIL PRICES DURING PERIODS OF FAMINE: A COMPARISON BETWEEN GUJARAT & DECCAN

		Prices in Rupees per Maund of 82.286 pounds (lbs.)													
COMMO-DITIES	1899	1900		1901		1902		1903		1910		1911		1912	
		Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p	Gujarat Rs-a-p	Deccan Rs-a-p
Ordinary Rice	4-0-3	4-0-6	4-14-10	4-0-0	4-9-7	3-13-9	3-13-10	4-1-6	4-1-3	4-6-11	5-6-9	4-13-8	5-6-7	5-5-4	6-7-0
Wheat	3-11-0	3-5-7	5-1-3	4-4-8	4-12-4	4-0-0	4-7-9	2-11-4	3-4-0	4-12-0	5-5-0	4-2-10	4-11-0	4-14-2	5-9-1
Bajra	3-1-3	2-5-5	4-7-6	2-11-11	3-15-5	3-3-1	3-5-0	2-4-0	3-5-3	3-6-3	2-12-11	3-10-9	3-0-4	4-0-7	4-3-0
Jowar	2-5-2	2-3-11	4-8-1	2-12-7	3-1-10	2-13-4	2-7-8	2-3-0	1-11-2	3-4-8	2-9-2	2-14-9	2-13-5	3-6-8	3-10-2
Gram	3-3-2	2-15-8	4-10-6	4-4-3	3-13-5	3-12-0	3-8-3	3-2-8	3-0-1	3-12-7	3-7-10	2-15-11	2-15-3	3-3-8	3-10-9
Turdal (Split peas)	3-3-7	3-2-7	5-3-11	5-5-1	5-5-4	5-5-11	3-15-4	4-0-0	4-2-7	4-12-5	3-13-4	4-1-0	3-9-10	5-5-0	4-3-11
Jaggery or Gur	7-3-10	5-13-7	6-11-3	7-12-11	7-4-4	6-15-4	5-5-0	6-9-1	5-8-1	7-10-4	8-2-3	8-7-7	8-0-0	8-9-5	7-11-1
Salt	3-2-10	3-9-3	3-11-3	3-4-2	3-10-0	3-5-2	3-6-5	2-11-3	3-8-11	1-10-1	2-2-9	1-13-3	2-1-4	1-12-5	2-1-3
Ghi	34-12-5	34-6-9	41-14-0	45-11-5	40-8-5	29-12-6	35-2-4	32-1-0	32-8-3	41-4-7	48-13-9	41-1-10	48-12-2	45-11-5	53-5-4

NOTE - Rs = Rupees; a = annas; p = paise. 1 Rupee = 16 annas; 1 anna = 16 paise.

SOURCE: Datta Committee Report, Vol.II, Pages 446-449 and 456-461.

CHAPTER VI

Tenancy, Land and Labour Markets in
Rural Gujarat 1850-1935

Tenancy per se is simply a juridical relation. Its content and effect are determined by the circumstances in which it develops and the restrictions it does or does not impose on the tenant. By itself therefore, tenancy only shows the existence of landowners who cannot or will not cultivate their land. As we shall analyze below the reasons for leasing out land can be varied and this helps to determine the level of rent and the nature of the tenancy.

There can be little doubt that between 1890 and 1935 the area of land being cultivated by tenants increased in Gujarat. If we summarize the data from the first Revision Settlement Reports, it indicates clearly how until the 1890s only a small proportion of land was being cultivated by tenants.¹

Number of Khatas (or revenue units) being
cultivated by owners and by tenants in the 1890s

District	% of Khatas cultivated entirely by their owners	% of Khatas cultivated by the tenants	% of Khatas lying waste
Ahmedabad	78.0%	11%	11%
Kheda	75%	17%	8%
Broach	71%	21%	8%
Surat	88%	6%	6%
Average	78%	14%	8%

¹A Khata comprised the actual unit of ownership of a revenue payer. It could be smaller or larger than a survey number.

The simple category called tenants, however, hid the various combinations of rents and leases which made up the complex pattern of land use in Gujarat.¹ A similar picture can be had if the data

Tenurial Structure in Broach District (1890s)

	Number of Khatas	% of total number
Total number of <u>Khatas</u> cultivated by occupants and Inamdars directly	86047	77%
Total number of <u>Khatas</u> cultivated in partnership with others	6587	6%
Total number of <u>Khatas</u> given to subtenants on money rents	14855	13%
Total number of <u>Khatas</u> given to subtenants on produce rents	4947	4%
Total number of <u>Khatas</u>	112436	100%

about other districts is considered.²

Tenurial Structure in Seven Talukas of the Surat District (1880s and 1890s)

	Number	% of total
Number of <u>Khatas</u> cultivated entirely by their owners	185998	87%
Number of <u>Khatas</u> cultivated in partnership with others	1827	1%
Number of <u>Khatas</u> given out on money rents	14447	7%
Number of <u>Khatas</u> given out on produce rents	1850	1%
Waste Numbers	8098	4%

¹ This Table has been compiled from the First Revision Settlement Reports of 4 of the 5 talukas of the Broach district namely Broach, Ankleshwar, Amod and Jambusar.

² The 7 talukas which are considered here were Olpad, Chikhli, Chorasi, Jalalpur, Bulsar, Madvi, and Pardi.

What were the reasons for the existence of tenancy in the earlier period? Clearly, it was not a shortage of land. As it was pointed out in Chapter IV, the per capita cropped area increased from 0.99 acres in 1872 to 1.14 acres in 1891. This increase was greater, if we were to consider only the rural population. It seems rather that tenancy was caused by a shortage of cultivators or the desire to farm the superior land which might have been occupied from before by co-parcenary bodies of landowners or granted by the State as gift or in alienation for service to individuals.¹ It was one of the well known duties of the village Patel to settle tenants on existing wasteland and for this purpose even attract outsiders by offering concessionary leases.²

While mediating in a dispute between Bhagdars and tenants in Broach in 1876, N.B. Beyts, the Assistant Collector of Broach observed that "the Japti cultivators constitute the chief portion of the kasba tenantry."³ As he explained "The term Japti Kherut means a permanent tenant, or as he is described in the old records of the Surat collectorate Japti or Gamvalia in contradistinction to the migratory or uparwadia cultivators. As a Gamvalia he is an integral

¹ Etheridge, A.T., Narrative of the Bombay Inam Commission, 1873, pp. 10/11.

² This has been discussed in Chapter I.

³ Beyts, N.B. to White, J.G., Papers connected with the Revision Settlement of the Jambusar taluka, op.cit., para 14. N.B. Bhagdars were the hereditary owners of land in those villages which had a collective responsibility for the payment of revenue.

part of the village community, for whom the patels of the village in former times acted as co-partner and agent in effecting a settlement with the State, the portion to be paid by the different holders of land in a village being settled by the village community among themselves. The Japti-Kherut could not without violence or injustice be ejected from his land, or even be outbid as to rent by other cultivators, as might be done with the casual or migratory cultivator who tilled the spare lands of the village or worked as the tenant of the chief men of the village or even the Japti-Kheruts." ¹ The Japtis, however, had no right to sell or transfer the lands in their possession. In some villages, the Bhagdars allowed them to mortgage their land for 5 years. ² The right to have a fixed rent was acquired through a long residence. ³

In his correspondence with the Revenue Commissioner in 1867, the Collector of Surat pointed out "that in all Bhagdāri, Narwādari, Inam and Talukdāri villages, the superior holder stands in the place of the government and not in a position analogous to that of a large 'khatadar' in a government village who employs labourers on his farm; and the inferior holder correspond very closely to rayats in directly managed villages, that is to say that there is a large body of them possessed of prescriptive rights, precluding their dispossession as long as they pay a certain assessment depending on the custom of the

¹Japti was a corrupt form of the Arabic, Japita meaning law or established practice. Ibid, para 53/54 pp. 46 to 49.

²Ibid, para 14/15.

³In Kheda this right was called Chalu Ganvat. Cf. Chapter I.

country, and also another body holding land from year to year. The same individuals often hold land under both tenures. In most Bhagdari villages we have the class very well defined, as the Japti-Kheruts of Broach, for instance, though in some individual instances reduced by oppression."¹

The favourable land man ratio and the strength of the customary tenants was clearly reflected in the low level of rents. The data from the First Revision Settlement Reports summarized in Appendix I of this Chapter shows how the lands paying cash rents rarely paid more than twice the land revenue assessment. Since in most cases the land revenue was paid by the landlord, this meant that the tenants parted with only a little more than they would have paid as land revenue. In Appendix I, of the 5039 acres of land sublet in the 7 Surat talukas, 66% paid a rent which was only 1.45 times the assessment. Another fact which deserves mention is the absence of any necessary overlap between the area rented out and mortgaged land. Mortgage land was often much less than the area rented out and paid a higher rate per acre. It signified the separate functions of the land-lease and the credit market in rural Gujarat. Whereas mortgages provided security for debts and were strictly comparable only with the prevailing rate of interest on unsecured loans, the land-lease market functioned much more to restore imbalances between owned and cultivated area. As Shukla's survey discovered later, the number of fragments or separate plots in an average cultivated

¹The Japti-Kheruts were said to pay the "customary bighoti rates which are generally recorded in the village books." Ibid, paras 43/62.

holding were fewer than those in an average owned holding. He wrote "We found in the villages studied a number of cultivators taking on lease plots of land contiguous to those owned and cultivated by them."¹ In a situation, where the fragmentation of ownership was bound to occur because of the law of partible inheritance, renting in of land was also required to an increasing degree. This was one factor which caused the increase in the area being cultivated by tenants in Gujarat in the twentieth century.

Empirical information from districts other than Surat also shows the low rates of rent prevailing in the late nineteenth century. Between 1882/83 and 1884/85 of the 76 villages which comprised the Dholka taluka of the Ahmedabad district, land was given out on rent in only 37 villages. The rented area in 31 of these 37 villages was 2828 acres or 91% of the total leased area. The average rent in these 31 villages was just 1.2 times the land revenue assessment. In 9 villages the average rent was less than the assessment showing how landowners retained more land than they could cultivate even in the face of short term losses.² Many observers spoke of the comfortable position of the sub-tenants.³ One Settlement Officer described how

¹Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.104.

²Papers relating to the Revision Settlement of the Dholka taluka, Ahmedabad Collectorate, (SRBG), 1888, Appendix 4, p.30.

³Thus N. B. Beyts concluding his Report on the Jambusar taluka in the 1890s observed that "from enquiries instituted all over the district, I find the occupants of government land subletting portions of their holdings to annual tenants, charging in some instances treble the rates of assessment now in force. It is true, that the prices now existing enable this to be done without depriving the subtenant of a fair margin of profit." Settlement Report, Jambusar, op.cit., 1903, p.52.

"the landlord's profit from his land are far smaller than a peasant proprietor's. This was especially so because when there was a deficiency in the harvest the former loses more than the latter in paying the full assessment," out of the rent which was never more than 50% of the yield after deducting costs of cultivation.¹ In the Wagra taluka it was pointed out that "the rent is very generally paid in grain. The regular landlord class is very often satisfied with one-fourth of the produce, whereas the moneylending classes and those who become possessed of land through the decrees of court take very generally one-third and sometimes one-half of the produce." However, in bad seasons "the people will pay one-third the produce in grain, whereas it is difficult to collect one-sixth the value in money."²

¹A. C. Logan, the Settlement Officer in the Amod taluka, explained that if the yield of a plot be RS. 15 after deducting costs and the assessment be RS. 5, the landlord had to pay this amount out of the RS. 10 which was the maximum he could get as rent. "If there is a failure of crops which reduced the net profit to RS. 10 the tenant then keeps back RS. 5 out of the rent and the landlord gets no profits at all." In such years these landlords paid the revenue with difficulty. Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Amod taluka of the Broach Collectorate, (SRBG) No. CCCX, 1903, p.66.

²Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Wagra taluka of the Broach Collectorate, (SRBG) No. CCCIX, 1903, p.36.

In Broach and Kheda districts, the nature of the Bhagdāri and the Nurwādaree tenures also lowered the level of the rents. By custom and after 1862 by law no land could be sold in villages having joint responsibility for revenue without the consent of the entire co-parcenary body.¹ Unable to sell their share and bound to pay the revenue for it, the Bhagdars were willing to take on tenants at low rents.² This tilted the balance of power in the village in favour of the tenants. If there was too big a difference between the beegotēe rates on the ryotwari lands and rents in Bhagdāri villages, the latter could be dissolved once a majority of the village population petitioned the government or the revenue was not paid often. Of the original 262 Bhagdāri villages in the Broach taluka 96 had been dissolved by 1846/47.³ Between 1867 and 1897, 12 Bhagdāri villages were dissolved in the Jambusar taluka.⁴ As the Settlement Officer pointed out in some of these

¹This was usually impossible and numerous reports pointed out that "Land held under the Bhagdāri tenure is seldom brought under the hammer owing to the legal difficulties involved in their sales." This affected a large area since 74 percent of the villages in the Broach taluka and 54 percent in Jambusar were under the Bhagdāri tenure. Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Broach taluka of the Broach collectorate, SRBG, 1902, pp 9/25.

²The Settlement Report on Jambusar pointed out how in many Bhagdari villages like "Kansnagar, Jantran, Dahri, the Bhags were much too large for a single Bhagdar to cultivate by himself. They could not throw up a portion of their lands even though they did not or could not cultivate it with any good margin of profit; neither could they sell it." Settlement Report Jambusar, op.cit., 1903, p.76.

³AAR, 1849/50, RD 1852, Vol.14, pp 77/78.

⁴The villages were:

	Year of Dissolution
Kora	1881/82
Sindhar	1881/82
Kansnagar	1882/83
Madafar	1882/83
Panch Pipla	1882/83
Jantran	1882/83
Jambusar Kalmi Patti	1888/89

villages "the Bhagdāri tenure had to be dissolved because the Bhagdārīs had tried to wax fat on the tenants whom they did not treat well; the latter therefore did not give the Bhagdārs their rent when the bad years came." Consequently, the land revenue was not paid for a number of years and the village lands assigned to the Ryotwari tenure.¹ The existence of different tenurial systems acted to check rents in a situation where government land was still not completely colonized. It also reduced greatly the incidence of short term leases.

An analysis of the duration and terms of the leases granted in the 1880s in the Parantij and Modasa talukas of the Ahmedabad district was made in the First Revision Settlement Report. It showed that 99 of the 111 leases contracted by landowners between 1886 and 1890 were given for an indefinite period. 59 of these leases levied a rent which was less than 3 times the existing

Footnote cont.

Kajampur	1888/89
Chandpor Bara	1889/90
Jambusar Jani Pati	1899/1900
Karmad	1899/1900
Dahri	1899/1900

Settlement Report Jambusar, op.cit., 1903, p.78.

¹In the other villages the Bhagdārs could not pay their revenue because of persistent waterlogging. Ibid, p.76.

revenue assessment.¹ Since the revenue was to be paid by the landlord this effectively lowered the rent to just twice the existing assessment. The tenants holding land on an indefinite lease were not subject to any increase in rents whereas the government tenants faced a revision of land revenue every thirty years.²

Rents were sometimes low also because of the poorer quality of land or drainage. As E. Maconochie, the Officer reporting on the waterlogged villages of the Ankleshwar taluka wrote "The

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Parantij and Modasa talukas	No. of leases for an indefinite period	Leases for less than 5 years	Leases for 5 - 12 years	Total Area leased Acres	No. Leased at less than 3 times the Assessment	No. Leased at more than 3 times the Assessment
Year						
1886	25	NIL	1	153	15	11
1887	17	NIL	2	86	11	8
1888	14	1	7	108	8	14
1889	21	1	NIL	112	13	9
1890	22	NIL	NIL	133	12	10

N.B. The government assessment in each case was paid by the landlord.

Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Parantij taluka of the Ahmedabad collectorate (SRBG), 1892, Appendix L, p.30.

²Writing about the villages in the Amod taluka, the Settlement Officer spoke of the proprietors and the tenants as being on an equal footing. "Their general appearance undoubtedly indicates a well to do condition. They are well fed - 2 to 3 meals daily - and clothed in ample dimensions of fine linen from head to foot. They wear shoes and are comfortably housed. Their wives are well clothed as per the fashion of the country and are loaded with silver ornaments. Their dairy supplements their income besides giving the family wholesome ghee and butter." Papers Relating to the Revision Settlement of the Amod taluka of the Broach collectorate, SRBG, 1874, p.10.

cultivators are a much indebted set of Kolis and Bhils." Crops were poor because of waterlogging. "The letting value of the land is low. The letting rate is generally for the assessment only."¹

The area rented out in the 4 districts of Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda increased between 1916 and 1937 from 25% to 31.4% of occupied area.² The Kheda district in particular saw a more than average increase in the area under tenancy. By 1939, almost 48% of the occupied area in the five talukas of Nadiad, Anand, Borsad, Kapadvanj and Thasra was cultivated by tenants.³

The causes behind the increase of tenancy were manifold. In general, it was not the increase in population which could explain the growth in tenancy. Earlier, we have already pointed out how between 1911 and 1931 the per capita cultivated area in the four Gujarat districts increased from 1.1 acres per person to 1.27 acres.⁴ In Kheda, however, there being much

¹Settlement Report, Ankleshwar taluka, op.cit., 1915, pp. 123/124. Elsewhere, it was pointed out how high rates of interest in these villages was often a response to the risk of severe losses in years of poor harvests. A few villages in the Amod taluka suffered from soil salinity. Due to a succession of bad years in 1878 and 1879 "the ryots were much impoverished. Even the Sowkars abandoned these villages. "In one instance a Sowkar who held bonds for several thousand Rupees from cultivators of Wagra villages was unable to raise on them RS. 35 to pay a fine and keep out of the civil jail." AAR, 1882/83, RD, 1883, Vol.21, p.66.

²Cf. Chapter IV.

³Second Revision Settlement Reports.

⁴Chapter IV.

slower urban growth the pressure of population increased more than in the other areas.¹ Kheda was an exception among the 4 Gujarat districts because it received a large number of migrants from the neighbouring Princely States. As the Second Revision Settlement Report of the Mehmedabad taluka pointed out "There was no immigration up to 1911. Since then some large blocks of land have been taken up by outsiders, some of whom have imported labourers from other talukas."² It is noteworthy that in 1931 as compared to the average of 1.27 acres of cultivated land in the 4 districts Kheda had only 1.04 acres per head. Even then rents were not too high. The average rent in 1916 on the 3941 acres leased out among the 45 villages of Group I in Mehmedabad was just 1.47 times the assessment and on 1217 acres. In the 11 villages of Group II it was 1.5 times the assessment.³ This was lower than the rent prevailing in the 1890s in the Parantij taluka of the Ahmedabad district.

¹ Thus between 1911 and 1931 the number of persons in Kheda increased from 691744 to 741650 or by 49906. In Surat during the same period the population increased from 654109 to 693613 or by 39504 and in Broach from 306717 to 334170. 85% of the population in 1931 in Kheda was rural, 75% in Surat 78% in Broach and 60% in Ahmedabad. Census, 1931, op.cit., Table I.

² Papers Relating to the 2nd Revision Survey Settlement of the Mehmedabad taluka of the Kheda district, SRBG, 1916, p.5.

³ Ibid, pps. 33/34. According to the Census Report the mean density of population per square mile was

District	1911	1921
Ahmedabad	216	233
Broach	209	210
Kaira	433	445
Surat	396	408

Census of the Bombay Presidency, 1931, Part II, Subsidiary Table No. 26, p.50.

It may in general be said that the increase of the area under tenancy was not accompanied by an upward spiral of rents. In 1921, in the South Daskroi taluka of the Ahmedabad district 1172 acres were leased out. Of this 1028 acres or 88% of rented area was given out on an average of RS.4 per acre or just 1.29 times the assessment. The rest were rented for RS.7 per acre or at twice the assessment of the lands leased.¹ These examples can be easily multiplied. The average value of rents on dry crop land in the North Daskroi taluka in 1917 was 2.75 times the assessment and on garden lands about 4.56 times the assessment.² These data refer to cash rents. However, even in the 1920s an overwhelming number of leases were given out on produce rents. In the Dholka taluka of the Ahmedabad district "the majority of rents were produce rents, the share payable varying with the kind of crop and the custom of the village. One-fourth is the commonest share that the landlord

¹Papers Relating to the Second Revision Survey Settlement of the South Daskroi taluka, SRBG, 1921, pps. 37-40 (MGA). It must be emphasized that by the time of the Second Revision Settlements the data on rent, mortgage and sale price of land was collected very carefully. "Thus all conditional sales, transfers in discharge of debts, sales by way of family settlements were excluded when selecting cases of land sales. In the case of leases, rents based on interest on money advanced to the tenant, punitive rents fixed as alternatives to a share in the crop and rents on irrigated lands were listed separately." Ibid, pp. 9/10.

²Papers Relating to the Second Survey Settlement of the North Daskroi taluka of the Ahmedabad collectorate, SRBG, 1922, p.16 (MGA).

receives for ordinary jirayat (dry) crops, $\frac{1}{3}$ for rice and $\frac{1}{2}$ for garden crops. The cost of the seed etc. is generally halved between landlord and tenant while the bighoti (revenue) is paid by the landlord."¹ The characteristic feature of rent fixation in Gujarat was a lack of standardization across different talukas or any necessary co-relation with the movement of prices. Such a development was possible if cash rents prevailed, but these were few and far between even in villages close to urban centers. According to the Settlement Officer of the Viramgam taluka not far from Ahmedabad "In 32 of the government villages I have not been able to discover any instances of cash rents and in 16 out of the remaining 40 they are too few to be of any real value." He also found through his personal enquiries that "though there are several varieties of shares, ordinarily the predominant share in a village or the particular share in a survey number remains constant over a long period of years, so that the average villager when asked why a particular share is taken in his village in preference to another replies that he is merely following the custom of his ancestors."² Constancy of rents also followed from the fixed rents granted to customary tenants like the Japti-Kheruts. "It is fairly common to find two or more varieties of shares in force in the same village. The three chief varieties are $\frac{1}{2}$ for the best land, $\frac{2}{5}$ for average good land and $\frac{1}{3}$ for ordinary land."³

¹Settlement Report, Dholka, op.cit., 1925, p.39.

²Papers Relating to the Second Revision Survey Settlement of the Viramgam taluka of the Ahmedabad collectorate, SRBG, 1929, p.11.

³The statistics for 1921/22 were occupied Khalsa land

Area Acres	731
of which land leased for $\frac{1}{2}$ share	67
land leased for $\frac{2}{5}$ share	339
land leased for $\frac{1}{3}$ share	323
land leased for $\frac{1}{4}$ share	2

Ibid.

In the Olpad taluka of the Surat district "crop share rents were the most common" in 1926/27. Even where cash rents prevailed, "the rental value in a village varied so much as to range between the amount of the assessment only and about 5 times the assessment." The leases of land for the amount of the assessment were few, but where they were made was "chiefly due either to the indifference of the rich city landlord or to a hopelessly neglected condition of the land". In the majority of the cases "the landlord manures the land or pays in cash the cost of doing so." He also "always bears the expense of weeding the land every 3 or four years or whenever necessary." In normal years the landlords "press their demand. In lean years rent is suspended, being remitted if it is irrecoverable." At the same time loss of rent was frequent and "it is difficult to estimate what percentage of the rent is usually recovered in the taluka."¹

The existence of landlord's liabilities also suggests, that for the poorer sections, like the tribals, cropshare tenancy

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Rents in Olpad taluka

Revenue Group	Assessment (RS)	Rent Rs	Deduct Landlord's Liabilities	Rental Multiple of Assessment
I	4880	14641	2481	2.4
II	11430	30399	6813	2.0
III	41629	124794	21939	2.2
IV	20681	72862	14421	2.8
V	1650	6149	1541	2.7
Average	80392	249146	48675	2.4

Papers Relating to the Second Survey Settlement of the Olpad taluka in the Surat collectorate, SRBG, 1927, pp 7/8 (MGA).

was a means for gaining access to seed, stock and money for weeding and manuring the fields, not to mention land already occupied but not always cultivated by Bhagdārs, Talukdārs and other Inamdārs. As Mehta's study of the Chodhras referred to in Chapter VII shows, the incidence of tenancy was more than average in tribal villages. More than 60% of the land cultivated by the Chodhras was rented on a crop share basis. This land not being the best often had a "low rental value."¹ The tribal villages also suffered from a higher proportion of mortgages. Of the 15416 acres in some of the waterlogged villages cultivated by the Kolis almost 10% were mortgaged.² This showed the tribals' greater need for credit. The Surat Gazetteer pointed out how the tribals often had no "tools for weeding or clearing the fields. They possess little or no agricultural stock. Men of this class, chiefly of the Dhondhia tribe are tempted by an Anavla Brahman to cultivate in partnership with him. In such cases, the Anavla Brahman who provides the capital, takes the lion's share of the profits."³

The main function of tenancy was to allow peasant proprietors to enlarge their cultivated holdings. As the Cotton Committee's Report revealed in North Gujarat of a total of 1065

¹This was the case, for example, in the Alonj village, of the Ankleshwar taluka. Being a lowlying village it had been settled by the Bhils. "The rents here are low and some of this land had previously been resigned by their owners." Settlement Report, Ankleshwar, op.cit., 1915, pp.125.

²Ibid, p. 134.

³DG, Surat and Broach, pp. 62/63.

farmers included in the survey 475 or 51% were proprietors and did not rent any land. Of the remaining 590 who were tenants, 51% also owned some land. In Middle Gujarat (or Surat and Broach) of a sample of 1115 peasants only 126 owned no land and were pure tenants. 432 cultivators or 78% of the tenants owned some land and rented some more.¹

The principal reason for an increase in the area under tenancy was the fact of an increasing scarcity of cultivators within landowning castes and non-agricultural investment in the purchase of land. Although it needs to be explored much more thoroughly, it was probable that a significant part of the outward migration from Gujarat districts originated among the peasant castes. There seems to have been a twofold movement to urban centres outside the village and to non-agricultural occupations within the district. Van der Veen estimated that among the younger generations of the Anavla Brahmans fewer and fewer numbers were

¹Indian Central Cotton Committee's Report, op.cit., 1928, Table II, pp.50. The Land Revenue Administration Reports reported that there was an increasing recourse to produce rents as cash rents remained unpaid in years of bad harvests. Half the gross produce used to be the norm in some Kheda villages but now one-third was heard of. In Broach and Ahmedabad the tenant was said to be "more and more the master of the situation. In a bad year he won't pay at all. In a good year he won't pay arrears." Because of a labour scarcity after the famine the tenant was "in demand and the landlord could not risk quarrelling with him." Land Revenue Administration Reports of the Bombay Presidency; 1906/7, p.71; 1907/8, p.60; 1908/9, p.6.

looking after their land and its cultivation.¹ M. B. Desai pointed out that many Patidars and Kunbis on returning from Africa had invested their wealth in land and offered fancy prices disproportionately to the quality of the land being offered for sale.² An additional reason causing a scarcity of working hands among the peasant castes e.g. the Kunbis, was their unwillingness to marry within any but a higher caste. Mukhtyar estimated from the census data, that between 1881 and 1921 the Patidar population in British Gujarat declined by 28%.³

Population of Patidars and Anavils 1881-1921

YEAR	Patidars in British Gujarat	Anavils (Surat District)
1881	322488	24519
1911	259992	23721
1921	233277	23895

The decline in the numbers of these two prominent landowning castes

1

Occupations of Anavils
Brahmans in two Gujarat Villages

NAMES OF THE TWO VILLAGES

SARAGAN

NOKRICAM

Generation Born	Number of Anavlas	In Cultivation	In Government jobs	Migrated Abroad	Number of Anavlas	In Cultivation	In Government jobs	Migrated Abroad
Before 1900	230	83%	12%	5%	112	50%	49%	1%
Between 1900-1920	126	59%	29%	12%	116	21%	72%	7%
Between 1920-1940	153	21%	75%	4%	120	6%	89%	5%

Van Der Veen, op.cit., 1971, p.15.

²Desai, M.B., op.cit., 1948, p.141.

³Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, p.3.

must be viewed against the fact that by 1921 the overall population in British Gujarat had recovered to its 1881 level.¹ Then there was the tendency, said by some to be widespread, for the Anavils and the Patidars to retire from doing manual work on their fields.² These causes had the cumulative effect of increasing the extent of land available for leasing out.

Land was sold by agriculturalists to other cultivators and to non-agriculturalists and by the latter among themselves and to the former. The Broach Gazetteer listed the fact that in 1874, of 1289 sellers of land in that district 837 were cultivators, 17 hereditary officers, 142 village servants and 271 non-agriculturalists of whom 6 were pleaders, one was a doctor, 17 were traders, 8 were religious devotees and 74 were moneylenders. Among buyers of land, the classes that showed the greatest increase between 1867 and 1874 were cultivators from 503 to 819 and moneylenders from 46 to 246, merchants from 28 to 83 and pleaders from 11 to 30.³ As it was

¹Cf. Chapter IV.

²Breman wrote about how the Anavils of the Gandevigam village in Surat district had "during the last few decades (1920-1970) sought to attain more esteem within their caste by drastically reducing their participation in physical work." (Breman, op.cit., 1974, pp 182/183.) Mukhtyar had also observed that in the Atgam village of the Surat district during the 1920s "the scarcity of labour has been augmented because some farmers have given up manual work. In this village the Anavils with rare exceptions, have retired from fieldwork long ago. In recent years a few others have followed in their footsteps." Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, pp 159/160. Another study estimated that the ablebodied persons among "Patidars, Kunbis, Anavlas, Borahs, and Rajputs in Gujarat" who "have during the last generation been withdrawn from the ranks of active labourers" numbered 300,000. Keatinge, G., Agricultural Progress in Western India, 1921, pp 145-147.

³DG, Surat and Broach, p.456.

shown in Chapter IV over the long run, however, it were the non-agriculturalists who were increasing their land holdings.

Most land sales in these Gujarat districts did not fall into the category of "distress" sales. Firstly, the proportion of land transferred due to court orders was not only less than 1% of the area transferred through private sale and gift.¹ In the years between 1901-02 and 1904/05, 3026 acres were transferred by Court order and between 1906/07 and 1910/11 2639 acres. Both these periods especially the first one included years of a major famine. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the average area annually transferred through private contract or gift in these 4 districts was 61076 acres between 1901/02 and 1904/05 and 66213 acres between 1906/07 and 1910/11 and 65779 acres between 1910/11 and 1914/15. Periods of famine did not in Gujarat push up the figures of land transfers. These were regulated rather by sales due to ordinary causes and transfers of land due to the law of partible inheritance.

1

Land Transfers in Gujarat

District	1901/02 to 1904/05				1906/07 to 1910/11				1910/11 to 1914/15			
	By order of Court		By private Contract and gift		By order of Court		By private Contract and gift		By order of Court		By private Contract and gift	
	Cases	Area in Acres	Cases	Area in Acres	Cases	Area in Acres	Cases	Area in Acres	Cases	Area in Acres	Cases	Area in Acres
Ahmedabad	84	758	6473	145514	18	88	10964	47411	48	202	12593	73845
Kheda	67	459	13975	36106	83	225	34736	91564	109	286	36208	82545
Broach	67	758	6927	50110	212	1460	14308	91450	165	1070	14946	81454
Surat	179	1051	13540	73654	127	866	21813	100639	105	971	20809	91049

N.B. The figures are totals for the years mentioned the first and the last year being included. They include transfer of government and alienated lands. GARBP, 1904/5, 1910/11, 1914/15.

Another indicator of the nature of land sales was the high price paid for land. As the data for the Ankleshwar taluka shows the average sale price of dry crop land in that taluka was 9 times the assessment in 1870 and 13 times the assessment between 1900 and 1911.¹ Appendix I summarizes the data for land sales in 7 talukas of the Surat district. These show that land sold at 6.6 times the assessment constituted 45% of the 4152 acres sold, whereas land sold at 29 times the assessment constituted 53% of the total land sold. Only 73 acres or 2% of land sales were of extremely valuable lands at more than 50 times the assessment. The 1890 land prices can be compared with the much more careful tabulation of land prices made in the Second Revision Settlement Reports.² In the case of the Olpad taluka, total area sold between 1912/13 - 1916/17 was 2838 acres, which gives an average of 567 acres per annum. This compares well with the 485 acres sold in 1897.³ 54% of the land sold belonged to the first two revenue groups or to the class of villages considered more fertile. In these two groups the average price realized was 18 times the assessment, while it was 13 times the assessment in Groups III to V. Among Group I villages the average selling price of dry crop land rose from 24 times the assessment to 45. Prices of land rose for all categories of villages in the 1920s

¹Appendix II at the end of this chapter.

²It has already been pointed out how these Reports struck out cases of "sales" of land, which were not genuine.

³Appendix I, Chapter VI.

a period when there was a fall in the average price level.¹ The reason lay on the one hand in the greater capital seeking an investment in land. The high prices of land in Gujarat also reflected the fact that Bhagdari and Nurwa land was not usually sold. In the twentieth century the category of protected tenants required the collector's permission to alienate their land which was never given if land was demanded for a settlement of debts.² All these causes restricted the land available for being sold. Land prices were pushed up. The consequence was that even in a taluka like Olpad considered relatively backward land was being sold at a more and more advantageous price. This trend was stronger in the other more fertile talukas of Gujarat.

1

Average Selling Price of Dry Crop Land
in the Olpad taluka of the
Surat district villages

Period	Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV
1912/13 to 1916/17	24.6	10	16.1	17.9
1917/18 to 1921/22	31.25	17.8	22.5	21.04
1922/23 to 1926/27	45.21	25.9	31.3	35.3

N.B. Revenue Groups were good indicators of productivity. The price is expressed as multiple of assessment levied on land. 2nd Revision, Olpad, op.cit., 1927, Appendix G.

2

Number of Protected Tenants (in 1945)

District	Number of Owner Cultivators	Protected Tenants	Ordinary Tenants	Total
Ahmedabad	152802	86184	20533	106717
Kheda	118536	244043	109590	353633
Broach	21881	29531	18752	48283
Surat	91483	77434	9594	87028

Information Collected by the Revenue Department for the Bombay Tenancy Act, 1946. RD, 1947, Vol.31, (MGA).

The tenancy and the land markets had their different results for the class of field labourers in Gujarat. The high prices of land meant that for agricultural labourers entry into the tenancy market was easier and preferable. That this choice was no longer a merely hypothetical one in the first two decades of the twentieth century may be seen from an analysis of trends in the labour market.

Traditionally, the caste system while providing for different services needed by a cultivator through the jajmani system had no separate place for a class of field labourers.¹ The hali system or the practise of acquiring permanent field hands attached to, housed, fed and looked after by the employer's family was an addition to the typical jajmani system. While it operated on similar lines in that payment for the services rendered was determined through custom and the right to employment was hereditary, the hali system was different from the jajmani one in a fundamental respect.² Whereas the client in the jajmani system served the whole village community and his annual payment in kind suffered or increased in proportion to the general nature of the harvest, the cost of the hali had to be met by the patrons in their individual capacity. They gave him the initial loan for getting married. In order to repay this loan the hali started

¹For a discussion of different views on the Jajmani system cf. Kolenda, P.M., Toward a Model of the Hindu Jajmani System, Human Organization, Vol.22, No.1. For a discussion of the continued existence and evolution of the jajmani system in the Bombay Presidency cf. Hiramani, A.B., Social Change in Rural India, 1977.

²As the Surat Gazetteer emphasized, in its original usage the term Hali was not applied to servants employed by shopkeepers or liquor sellers. "The use of this term is confined to families who for generations have held the position of hereditary servants." DG, Surat and Broach, p.198.

by agreeing to work only for food and small money allowance for a given period of time. However, as his responsibilities grew along with his family he invariably found himself regularly asking for loans from his Dhaniama, and prolonging his bondage until the prospect of staying on in his hut during old age made him even more dependent on his employer.¹ The expense of maintaining the hali's family in turn provided the farmer with a secure labour supply. However, as one author has pointed out a "hali works from 6 to 10 months in a year accordingly as the master raised dry or irrigated crops."² The hali's wages therefore covered the months in which the agricultural calendar provided no work. In the case of dry farming, this period was approximately six months in the year. The cost of the hali system was not obvious so long as the cropping pattern was dominated by the production of foodgrains and items of consumption bought locally could be paid for with the produce of one's fields. Once cash cropping began to expand, and foodgrains had to be bought in cash, hali's wages began to acquire a compulsory monetary index. On the other hand with growing cash incomes it became possible for the peasants to pay money wages. All these developments started to affect the nature of the hali system in Gujarat during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The hali system was drawn into the process of change for

¹The existence of Halis was mentioned by Monier Williams and Captain Cruikshank in the early nineteenth century, cf Shukla, op.cit., 1937, pp 116/117.

²Desai, M.B., op.cit., 1948, p.158/159.

another reason. By itself, it excluded the hali from responding to an increased demand for labour during the harvesting season. The harvesting season for different crops was staggered through the year in the case of individual crops, but bunched together for fields or villages growing the same crop or following the same crop rotation. A free labour force which could move according to the demand for labour in different areas was more adapted to an agrarian economy like that of Gujarat with its cultivated area often increasing at a faster pace than the aggregate population.¹

The hali system did not disappear. In order to meet a changing situation it became more flexible. By the 1870s, in Ahmedabad it seems to have become common for many cultivators to "engage at least one labourer for the rainy season (June-October) or, if he grows a cold weather crop also, for the double season commencing in the beginning of June."² In Kheda also alongside the old Hali system a new one of mortgaging one's labour was started. "Except the Lundas or hereditary servants in the households of well-do-do Rajputs, who like the Surat Halis are fed and clothed by their masters, there are no hereditary labourers in this district." Now there are "poor field labourers who for ^a money advanced of from RS.20-25 pledge their labour for terms rising to one year. During their time of service they are fed and clothed and well treated by their masters."³

¹This is shown in Chapter VII.

²DG, Ahmedabad, p.74.

³DG, Kheda, pp.63. In Broach also the agreement to serve the creditor in order to repay his loan in the 1870s "generally lasts for one year, though sometimes the borrower may consent to serve for two or three years." DG, Surat and Broach, p.459.

The Hali system and the employment of labour on medium term contracts remained the ~~the~~ ^{widely} method/used in the Gujarat rural labour market in the twentieth century. In 1915, the Ankleshwar Settlement Report remarked "The 'hali' system is still fairly widespread."¹ In 1922 the Settlement Report of the North Daskroi taluka mentioned that "In addition to the daily labourers men are engaged by the larger farmers for terms varying from a month to a year. These men are known variously as mahinadārs in the eastern half, sathis in the western tracts and ubadhias in the villages towards Sanand in the south west of the taluka."² Now, however, as the Dholka Report commented sathis commanded greatly increased wages, did mostly agricultural work and yet like the halis were given a house or other accommodation by the employer. "Sathis are employed in more than half the villages." They were not employed in some poor villages "as there was no farmer big enough to engage a sathi and in a few other villages, no sathis are available."³

¹Settlement Report, Ankleshwar, op.cit., 1915, p.14.

²The number of mahinadārs employed was quite large in 1919.

<u>No. of villages</u>	<u>Name of labourers</u>	<u>No. of labourers</u>
17	<u>Mahinadars</u>	167
15	<u>Sathis</u>	110
7	<u>Ubhadias</u>	32
		<u>309</u>

Settlement Report, N. Daskroi, op.cit., 1922, p.18.

³The only domestic work the sathi did was to take the cattle home or help in churning the milk. In the Dholka taluka in 1925 there were 222 Sathis employed in 22 Government or Khalsa villages and 226 in 14 Talukdari villages. 14 Khalsa and 4 Talukdari villages employed no sathis. Settlement Report, Dholka, op.cit., 1925, pp.49. Surat still was the main area for the employment of halis. Out of 84302 halis enumerated in the Bombay Presidency in 1921, 57010 or about 67 percent of the total were found in the Surat district alone.

The average wage of a sathi in Dholka in 1918 reflected the increased standard of living of this class of labourers.¹

Average Cost of Sathi's Food and Clothing for 12 Months, Dholka taluka 1918

	Rs
4 meals at Rs.5 a month	60
4 Pacheriās (body clothes) at Rs.2	8
2 kedias (jackets) at Rs.1½	3
1 Turban or head cloth of 12 <u>gaj</u>	5
2 pairs of shoes at Rs. 3¼	5
Tobacco and gol (molasses) at Rs. 1½ a month	18
	100½

As against the wage of a sathi in 1918, the earnings of an agricultural labourer's family in the 1870's were still low. In Amod, the Settlement Report had observed in 1875 that "Agricultural wages give the field labourers sufficient to keep their families tolerably well off, especially as every member of a labourer's household - excepting infants - are breadwinners." Dispensing with the luxury of ghce and collecting dung for fuel "a labourer's family consisting of man and wife and 2 children, one of which is infant - can live without being distressed on an income of Rs. 60 per annum, though as a rule an intelligent labourer and his wife will clear 30% more and be quite as well off as a retail dealer."²

By the 1870s the day labourer constituted a small but

¹ Ibid, pp.50. Almost the same estimate is given for a Surat hali by Shukla. The Hali's diet now consisted of jowar, rice, pickles, vegetables. He got one month's leave from work. Shukla, op.cit., p.122.

² Settlement Report, Amod, op.cit., 1876, para.on Wages.

growing sector of the labour market in Gujarat. The single most important source for their recruitment were the tribals now entering the agrarian economy. The 1902 Broach Settlement Report noted that "The Kolis and the Bhils live mostly by field labour". The 1881 Census classified 44% of Kolis, 38% of Mahars and Dheds and 38% of the Bhils as those who lived by regularly hiring out their labour. Their numbers were crucial in meeting the increased demand for labour created by the construction of Railways, Canals, the start of mill industry and the expansion of cultivation. The Wagra Settlement Report in 1874 emphasized that for day labour "money payments are superceding grain payments all over the country." The 1915 Ankleshwar Report also emphasized that "The Bhils are beginning to realize the market value of their labour" and now demand higher wages. Competition from the ginning mills which attracted casual labour at the harvest time was said to have raised the wage of ordinary field labour. According to the Land Revenue Administration Report, wages rose at the time of picking cotton in the Viramgam taluka because of the demand for labour by the cotton presses and the ginning factories.¹

Even seasonal migration of labourers into and within Gujarat did little to lessen complaints of a scarcity of labour especially at harvest time. The Annual Administration Report for Broach in 1886/87 spoke of an increase in the population due to "the immigration of labourers during the year."² The very next year

¹LRA, 1905/6, p.5.

²AAR, 1886/87, RD 1888, Vol.13, p.3.

the assistant collector remarked on "the immigration of labourers into Broach from Baroda and Rajpipla territories." Most of these were often small farmers who could come for one of the harvests depending on their own being Kharif or Rabi.¹ In many cases therefore entry into the labour market even as field labourers represented a better situation for the newcomers. For example, one source of seasonal migration were the waterlogged villages, described as being in a wretched condition. It was from here, that the small farmers "cross the Narmada in search of employment as early as December and proceed to the northern talukas to assist in the harvesting of laung and jowari."² Seasonal migration of labour was certainly a growing trend. "For the wheat harvest of central and south Dholka, there is an annual influx of labour in April. The harvesters are mostly Dhedas, with a few Dharalas, from the Matar, Nadiad and Mehmedabad talukas of Kheda. The wages paid vary with the supply of labour and season. A family of 4 or 5 harvesters can make from Rs. 25-30 a month."³

The one systematic index of average rural real wages for Gujarat was constructed by the Dutta Committee. It shows a rise from 100 in 1890 to 110 in 1896, 131 in 1905 and 142 in 1911.⁴ This trend was to continue in the 1920s even in the less densely populated areas like the Sanand Mahal in Ahmedabad district.⁵

¹AAR, 1887/88, RD 1888, Vol.13, p.4.

²Ankleshwar Report, op.cit., 1915, p.68.

³Report Dholka, op.cit., 1925, pp.17. Migratory currents flowed very year from Kheda to Broach, Baroda Cambay and Dholka. LRA, 1903/4, p.5.

⁴Dutta Report, op.cit., Vol.III, p.213.

⁵2nd Report on Sanand, op.cit., 1923, p.7.

Monthly Wages for Unskilled Labour

	Rs-as-p
1916	7-6-0
1917	10-5-0
1918	11-4-0
1921	30-0-0

In South Daskroi before 1889 the daily wage for field labour was from 2 to 4 annas and Rs 12-14 for the whole monsoon season. Since 1904 wages had risen and by 1921 daily wages were from 8 annas to a Rupee or up by 200% to 400% and the seasonal labourer gets Rs.15 per month during the monsoon and 30 maunds of grain for the winter crops.¹ If the peasants in Gujarat continued to employ labourers at these wages it showed their own increased purchasing power.

¹Report on South Daskroi, op.cit., 1922, p.9.

Rent, Mortgage and Land Prices in Rural Gujarat

District, Taluka, Number of Villages	YEAR →	Surat Bulsar 96 villages 1899	Surat Mandvi 152 villages 1904	Surat Pardi 70 villages 1904	Jalalpur Surat 84 villages 1901	Surat Chorasi 63 villages 1897	Surat Chikhli 60 villages 1900	Surat Olpad 135 villages 1897
(I.I) RENTS LOW	a	72	87	31	98	95	77	85
	b	667	896	791	449	365	495	676
	c	4-12-7	3-6-4	2-4-4	8-11-3	10-15-1	4-9-4	10-12-8
	d	1.8	2.1	1.39	2.24	2.49	1.42	1.95
(I.II) RENTS MEDIUM	a	19	8	NIL	2	5	4	1
	b	75	51	NIL	5	12.4	8	1
	c	16-0-0	11-10-8	NIL	21-4-11	50-8-4	50-8-4	27-2-3
	d	11	9	NIL	9.3	14.4	12.0	6.3
(I.III) RENTS HIGH	a	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
	b	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
	c	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
	d	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
(II.I) Mortgages with Possession Low Rate	a	38	20	43	25	22	48	57
	b	562	209	752	126	142	719	424
	c	16-7-7	10-13-6	10-13-8	47-10-9	40-9-9	15-8-4	33-12-6
	d	5.8	5.9	6.49	8.52	6.3	5.46	6.5
(II.II) Mortgages with Possession Medium Rate	a	43	76	45	75	74	46	40
	b	209	653	692	301	348	330	174
	c	54-4-0	36-14-4	33-8-4	92-0-0	132-0-0	58-0-0	106-13-3
	d	26	24	24	23.2	22	23	17.3
(II.III) Mortgages with Possession High Rate	a	19	4	3	NIL	4	NIL	3
	b	45	17	43	NIL	23	NIL	14
	c	142	86-4-11	49-4-5	NIL	541	NIL	144-10-0
	d	90	61.7	111	NIL	111	NIL	30.5
(III.I) Land Sale (Voluntary) Prices Low	a	31	26	30	24	11	39	47
	b	273	318	459	183	79	333	232
	c	17-5-11	9-6-6	11-2-5	23-3-10	50-3-2	20-6-2	37-9-8
	d	6.2	5.7	5.8	6.33	8.57	6.69	6.93
(III.II) Land Sale (Voluntary) Prices Medium	a	65	74	66	74	78	59	51
	b	191	503	540	253	305	256	149
	c	83-11-3	52-8-8	31-4-4	75-11-3	123-7-3	52-8-1	191-0-0
	d	23.5	39	57	19.5	23.2	18.3	25
(III.III) Land Sale (Voluntary) Prices High	a	4	NIL	4	2	7	2	2
	b	9	NIL	13	5	43	4	4
	c	191	NIL	115-8-1	177-13-1	359-9-8	116-12-0	637
	d	139.8	NIL	131	76	68.61	57	65

a = Number of Cases

b = Acres Sublet

c = Average Rate per Acre in Rs-as-p

d = Average Rate as Multiple of Land Revenue

NOTE TO APPENDIX I

1. The figures refer to the actual number of acres mortgaged, leased or sold during the year preceding the revision settlement. As they were based on the information entered into the village registers their accuracy could vary slightly from one taluka to another.
2. Rents in this case refer to cash rents. Rents in kind are discussed in the text.
3. Rs-as-p = Rupees/Annas/Paise
4. These figures are from the various Revision Settlement Reports included in the SREG.

APPENDIX IV

Different Categories of land sold and mortgaged in Ankleshwar

PERIOD	Quality of land sold. Dry Crop and (Bhattha)	Different Revenue groups of villages	LAND SOLD			LAND MORTGAGED WITH POSSESSION GIVEN UP		
			Acres sold	Price in Rupees per acre	Revenue Assessment as proportion of Sale Price	Acres Mortgaged	Mortgage debt per Acre	Proportion of assessment to mortgage debt
Up to 1870	Dry Crop Only	I	-1	20	15%	3	138	6.3%
		II	9	72	5%	2	28	14%
		III	14	29	12%	14	32	11%
		IV	21	38	8.1%	55	50	6%
1871 to 1880	Dry Crop & (Bhattha) Dry Crop Only	I	30	39	13%	19	30	13%
		II	2.0	15	23%	1.8	70	6%
		III	24	25	14%	-	-	-
		IV	121	55	9.3%	74	43	7%
1881 to 1890	(Bhattha) Dry Crop Only	I	110	90	9.4%	13	121	7%
		II	82	24	17%	23	37	10%
		III	93	47	7.4%	5	41	9%
		IV	171	38	8.3%	172	32	10%
1891 to 1900	(Bhattha) Dry Crop Only	I	217	109	7.8%	178	75	11%
		II	106	60	NA	63	48	8%
		III	223	33	10%	58	32	11%
		IV	300	39	8%	299	30	11%
1900 to 1911	(Bhatta) Dry Crop Only	I	703	124	6.8%	180	98	9%
		II	370	57	6.9%	43	54	7%
		III	1269	35	9.9%	398	29	12%
		IV	1046	40	7%	541	31	10%

N.B. Bhattha land is extremely fertile Island land.

Source: 2nd Revision Settlement Report Ankleshwar, 1915.
Selections from BRBC, MGA.

CHAPTER VII

Peasant Consumption, Credit and Investments
in Rural Gujarat (1850-1935)

During the nineteenth century, a growing number of cultivators in Gujarat acted more and more as free agents in the rural markets and began to have some surplus income after paying for costs of cultivation, land revenue, in some cases rent, and a minimum amount of foodgrains.¹ Such a situation poses the question of the manner in which the peasants decided to spend their surplus money income and the considerations which motivated them.² The everpresent choice between present and future consumption or between immediate consumption and investments in increasing output was a difficult one in the mid nineteenth century for a peasantry gradually recovering from a prolonged price depression. It was made even more difficult by the cultural and

¹This refers to that part of the grain crop which was retained by the peasants. Whether this was adequate for the domestic consumption of different sections of the peasantry and how much of cash was available for their "free" spending will be discussed below.

²Shortage of space prevents any conceptual discussion of peasant motivation in its economic aspects. However as the foregoing and following pages imply, an independent peasantry free to make its own economic decisions can show a surprising sophistication in relying on a strategy which combines a maximization of gains in income with a minimization or reduction of risks in production. At the same time, the typical independent peasant enterprise remains distinguished from a business firm. Neither its scale of capital nor production is large enough to enable it to meet most of its domestic consumption requirements from year to year and yet have a surplus to carry on or expand its business. For the peasant, unlike the firm, ordinary consumption preferences still imply a choice in the use of scarce resources for alternative ends. The term independent peasantry can be used interchangeably with Khud-Kasht peasantry. For a discussion of this term see my paper, The Significance of the Broach Agrarian Economy for an Interpretation of Underdevelopment, Peasants Seminar, Center of International and Area Studies, University of London, 13 June 1980. This term has recently also been used by Robert D. Economic Change and Agrarian Organization in 'Dry' South India 1890-1940, A Reinterpretation, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1983

status norms of the caste system. Caste not only created rigid expectations about expenditure on occasions of festivals, marriages and deaths. It gave them a religious meaning, which made those who could not ordinarily manage to live up to their caste ideals either rely on loans in the short run or use their surplus income towards that end, when they could do so more easily.¹ The caste system set up a social hierarchy, promotion within which was for the middling or lower sections of the peasantry as much of a rational goal as, for example, increasing their monetary wealth.² Kinship obligations and the joint family both enlarged the group whose social respect and acquiescence had to be won by nuclear family units, if the latter

¹D. F. Pocock distinguished between Brahmanic and kshatriya or religious and secular models of prestige within the caste system. Whereas the Brahmanic model demanding the rejection of widow remarriage, meat eating, early marriage and the like was not necessarily associated with wealth, the kshatriya model of a seignorial existence and more pleasant life was not incompatible with the expectations of a peasantry beginning to gain from favourable market conditions. Pocock, D. F., The Movement of Castes, Man, May 1955.

²Srinivas used the idea of sanskritization to characterize one aspect of the process of mobility in Hindu society. Sanskritization implied that "a 'low' Hindu caste or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual ideology and way of life in the direction of high and frequently "twice born" 'caste'". This process had to be understood in a local context. For the lower caste "the models of conduct are the castes higher than itself," with which it is in the closest proximity. Ideals of behaviour were also derived from pilgrimages, religious teachers, plays, secular education etc. Srinivas, op. cit., 1966, pp 8/15. One might add, that there was no necessary logic by which the lower or middling castes always succeeded in moving upwards. Their efforts to do so, however, could make heavy demands on their wealth and energies.

wanted to maintain their prestige in the eyes of others, and expect to get reciprocal treatment or help, if needed.¹ Hence, the wealthier members of the family could not add to their own living standards without in due course finding the resources to meet the heightened expectations of members of the joint family or the kinship group.² This slowed down the process of accumulation of capital by leading families and used up resources which otherwise had the potential of being invested in further expanding agricultural production and improving the productivity of land.

To say that consumption determined by caste norms became a brake on the process of capital accumulation assumes that increases in peasant consumption could occur or were occurring. Historical data on this question are not plentiful, but those which are available clearly indicate that the first use of increased cash income by the peasant was to add to his domestic consumption.

¹The distinction between the kinship group and the joint family corresponded to relatives acquired through marriage and those who owned property in common or were recognized as being members of the immediate family. The maintenance of relations with the kinship group and within the joint family meant the fulfilment of formal obligations e.g. sending gifts with one's daughter whenever she visited her parent's home or making arrangements for looking after one's parents even if they did not live together with their married sons and making all the efforts to put together the dowry for the children of one's brother or sister especially if the latter were not well off. In this context, it is important to remember the continued existence of what Derrett called 'residual jointness' or the continuation of joint family obligations even when younger couples started to live on their own or migrated to the city. Derrett, J. D. M., *The history of the Juridical framework of the Hindu family, Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Vol.6, December 1962. The existence of joint family obligations in Gujarat has been emphasized by systematic surveys of family organization and behaviour. Desai, I. P., *Some Aspects of Family in Mahuva (Gujarat)*, 1967.

²The redistributive effect of the circulation of goods or gifts in this way was limited to upper and middle castes or sub-castes functioning as endogamous groups. The fact that in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries in Gujarat such castes happened to be precisely the ones who gained from the market had its own consequences for the pattern and rate of agrarian growth.

Evidence from the early nineteenth century suggests that different types of millets provided the bulk of the staple diet of even the better off peasants. Monier Williams observed that the majority of the peasants in the Broach district "commonly eat for the meal of the morning and of noon, jowary bread and burka; the latter is a kind of porridge composed of buttermilk (chas) and very coarse jowary flour, boiled with a little salt; and for the evening and last meal kidjeree made of rice and dal; the poorer sort live upon this diet and nothing else. Those who are richer will eat wheaten instead of jowary bread, but will still make their principal meal, the evening one, of kidjeree; and the greatest indulgence or luxury of the most opulent does not go beyond ghee, milk, vegetables and some sugar."¹ Williams estimated that a family of five cultivating "40 beegahs (31 acres) of the good land of Broach" would spend Rupees 82 on clothes and food every year and another Rupees 51 on the wages and upkeep of a man servant in addition to the purchase of seed.² The improvement in the condition of the average smallholder may be briefly indicated by citing another budget estimate made by the Settlement Officer in the Amod taluka of the Broach district in 1875/76.³

¹Monier Williams, op.cit., p.592.

²Ibid, p.593.

³Papers connected with the (First) Revision Settlement of the Amod taluka, 1875/76, PN 11727, (MGA), p.14.

Household budget for a peasant family of 3 with two adult workers

<u>Cash expenses</u>		<u>Cash earnings</u>	
Items	Annual Amount in Rupees	Items	Annual amount in Rupees
Personal Living	96	5 acres of cotton with Jowar and wheat	100
Land Revenue	20	Straw in excess of that needed by 1 bullock	28
Seed	2	Money from Milk and Ghee of 1 Buffalo	56
Deterioration of Livestock	10		
Total	128	Total	184

If we take the expenditure on a child to be one-half that on an adult, then according to the table above an adult needed RS.36 for personal expenses and a child RS.18. This implied, that even if earnings remained stationary, the above family had a net saving of RS.56 every year, out of which it could repay its loans or hire outside help at harvest time or have more children do all three.¹ If the earlier estimates based on Shukla's data showed us that with every possible qualification in mind, the average peasant in Gujarat always had a cash surplus after paying for the costs of cultivation, land revenue and food, the calculations of the Amod

¹The estimate by the Amod Settlement Officer was made on the basis of the crop cutting experiments in the Settlement period and the average of local prices for 1875/76. It therefore represented the income of the average peasant after the price boom of the 1860s.

settlement officer indicate the real extent of that surplus.¹ They also reveal the great increase in per capita expenditure on personal living. Monier Williams' budget had showed that the cultivator of a 30 acre plot spent Rupees 82 on clothes and food for a family of five. According to the data of the Amod settlement officer a peasant cultivating even 15 acres had at least RS. 270 to spend on the personal needs of a family of 2 Adults and one child and yet have a surplus of RS. 168. Clearly, the rate of increase in peasant incomes had been much faster than that of average prices.

Many observers have commented on the gradual change in the pattern of consumption in Gujarat between 1850 and 1870. In 1849, Mr. Davies the collector of Broach had remarked on the fact, that the import of consumption items into Broach was very small and its use was "confined almost entirely to the larger towns and to the non-agricultural classes". According to him "The common cultivators everywhere dress in home-spun cloth, and none but the wealthiest

¹These were not isolated estimates. Evidence given by Indian observers before the cotton committee of 1918 indicated a similar margin of profits for the smaller cultivators. Estimates (a) were by Bhimbhai Desai, an Agricultural Officer and (b) by M. L. Patel a cotton fieldman in Surat. The estimates given below are those provided by Bhimbhai Desai.

District	Gross Income Per Acre	Rupees	Cost of Cultivation per acre Rupees	Gross Profit per acre Rupees
Surat	Cotton	99	17	61
	Juar with Pulses	78	19	41
Broach	Cotton	97	17	70
	Juar	76	19	39
Ahmedabad	Wheat	55	18	38
	Jowar	60	20	41
	Bajra	45	16	NA

use English piecegoods. Sugar and spices are known to the mass of the people not as necessities, but as delicate luxuries to be indulged in only on festive occasions. Iron is used to a very limited extent. Copper serves principally to supply ordinary household utensils."¹ This situation seems to have changed by the 1870s. Whereas the annual value of total imports into Broach between 1837 and 1847 was RS. 24, 62, 350, between 1864 and 1874 this had increased by 250% to RS. 61, 61, 770. Not only was this margin of increase greater than the increase in prices, the District Gazetteer mentioned "that at present a larger share of the imports is consumed within the district than was formerly the case".² Cloth and Sugar accounted for the major part of the increase in the value of imports, followed by vegetables, fruits and Bombay furniture.³ By this time almost every village in Broach had a shopkeeper who sold "grain, clarified butter, oils, molasses, dates and dry spices."⁴ The same process was seen to have happened in Surat. The First

¹DG, Surat and Broach, p.438.

²Ibid, p.437.

³Ibid, p.438.

⁴Ibid, p.437. The cotton districts seemed to have acquired a new standard of consumption as a result of the price boom of the 1860s. One Cotton Department Report described this phenomenon as it happened in the Berar districts of the Central Provinces. Apart from extravagant purchases like "bullocks of a favourite color" the more lasting impact was to be seen "in the richer foods and the better clothes". Amongst the poorer peasants "Earthen vessels disappeared before pots and pans of copper and brass; sturdy plough cattle were imported in considerable quantities from all parts of India; the dwelling houses were improved and in many cases mud and thatch gave way before substantial buildings of brick and stone. The purchase of gold in the district were immense." Report of River Carnac ARCD, 1867/68; also, PP, 1868/69, Vol.13.

Revision Settlement of the Bardoli taluka commented in 1897 "Formerly, the ordinary cultivators wore country cloth; now they must have it from Manchester. Cheap local rice, dal and gul were enough for the daily food; now vegetables, imported rice and refined sugar are in demand. A more luxurious generation seeks after Pan-supari, hired servants, sweet meats and watches and will borrow money to get them."¹ In regard to the peasants of the Jambusar taluka, the Settlement Officer remarked on the psychology generated by years of good harvests. "If their land yielded a meagre crop one year, it yielded an abundant one next year. A good year yields about 20 lakh rupees worth of cotton in this taluka; the cultivator then builds a good house, lavishly marries his children, buys good clothes and animals; he also pays his old debts and (if necessary) incurs new ones."² Even as statements of government officials which need to be considered cautiously, these observations provide us with genuine insights into the consumption preferences of the Gujarat peasantry between 1860 and 1900.

It is not necessary to conclude that every peasant in Gujarat managed to increase his standard of living in the 1860s, or that he could spend in years of bad harvests as much as he did in years of good harvests and high prices. Nor is it necessary to

¹Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Bardoli taluka of the Surat Collectorate; 1897, SRBG, No. CCLIX, Paras 6 and 7, pp 108/109. The District Gazetteer also remarked on the fact that during the decade preceding 1878 "the use of iron pots and pans has greatly increased" in the Surat district. DG, Surat and Broach, p.180.

²Papers Connected with the Revision Settlement of the Jambusar taluka of the Broach Collectorate, 1903, SRBG, No. CCCXII, p.72 (OPR). N.B. 1 lakh = 100,000.

disclaim that many peasants still remained poor and undernourished. As we shall show below the poorer soils, overborrowing, differences in land ownership and in a few cases high rates of interest served to keep some sections of the peasantry poorer than others. However, in so far as their own experience told them, that the growth of a more accessible market and an increase in the demand for and the prices of certain crops made the occurrence of good years more likely than bad ones, this added not only to the creditworthiness of the bulk of the peasants, but also to the confidence with which they were prepared to borrow to fulfil their enhanced needs. The security provided by favourable market conditions ensured that tastes acquired in 'good' years were maintained during the lean ones. Increases in the standard of living of the more substantial peasants acted in turn as an incentive for those lower down to strive to increase their own income to be able to follow the village or the caste leaders. Only such an explanation can account for the fact of increases in cultivated area during years of a downturn in prices or the increased efforts at upward mobility made by the middle level castes in Gujarat during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

A comparison of cropped area, movement of prices and the growth of population between 1872 and 1895 would indicate the extent of the efforts of the Gujarat peasantry to maintain the income level it had achieved during the 1860s.¹

¹The Table is based on Appendix I of Chapter IV. This fact was well perceived by one of the settlement officers who wrote in 1898, that the expansion of the cultivated area had been "vastly accelerated by the immense prosperity of the years between 1860 and 1870. The principal cause I believe to have been the desire of the cultivator to make as much money as he could, knowing that he could keep it all. He may say now, that poverty compels him to sow every acre, but this is merely because his standard of expenditure has grown so greatly, that he calls that poverty which his ancestors would have called affluence." A.C. Logan to Revenue Commissioner, F.S.P. Lely, Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Broach taluka, SRBG, 1902. p.90.

Annual Average Area Devoted to Different Crops
in Ahmedabad, Broach, Surat and Kheda 1872/73 to 1896/97

Crop	(1872/73)	1872/73	1877/78	1882/83	1887/88	1892/93
	Base Year Area in Acres	to 1876/77	to 1881/82	to 1886/87	to 1891/92	to 1896/97
Rice	232424=100	81	85	141	126	152
Wheat	235799=100	108	126	153	123	143
Jowar	376967=100	103	115	161	163	159
Bajra	318919=100	87	89	123	147	116
Gram & Pulse	133340=100	104	157	225	220	256
Cotton	335722=100	114	124	179	215	189
Tobacco	12596=100	115	128	183	207	249
Oilseeds	71145=100	105	108	151	161	157
Vegetables & Fruits	14670=100	87	51	153	314	206

A comparison of the growth in the population of these 4 districts with the expansion of cropped area shows that until the poor seasons of the 1890s begin to bite, the per capita area for all the crops had increased significantly.¹ Since the population figures include those for the urban centers, the increase in the area of crops sown per capita still understates the extent of the additions to food supplies in the rural areas. There seems to have been more

¹Per Capita Cropped Area in Acres

Crop	1872/73	1877/78	1882/83	1887/88	1892/93
	to 1876/77	to 1881/82	to 1886/87	to 1891/92	to 1896/97
Rice	0.08	0.08	0.13	0.12	0.13
Wheat	0.11	0.12	0.14	0.11	0.12
Jowar	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.24	0.22
Bajra	0.11	0.11	0.15	0.18	0.14
Gram & Pulse	0.06	0.08	0.12	0.12	0.13
Cotton	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.28	0.23
Tobacco	0.01	0.1	0.01	0.01	0.01
Oilseeds	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.04
Vegetables & Fruits	0.005	0.002	0.009	0.018	0.011

Population of the 4 districts 1872 - 2523219, 1881 - 2542623, 1891 - 2717313. N.B. Tobacco should really be compared only with the population of the Kheda district which grew more than 75% of the tobacco of the four districts. Then its per capita area can be seen to have increased greatly.

grains to sell and consume. This observation finds strong support from the statistics of trade by rail which begin to be available after 1884/85 and were published until 1922.

Although the figures for the railborne trade of Gujarat have been summarized in Appendix I of this chapter, a word is necessary about their scope before we can discuss their implications. It is a fair estimate to say that by the 1880s more than 75 percent of the exports from and the imports to Gujarat were carried by the railways.² The main users of consumption items imported into

¹ A comparison with prices prevailing in the 1870s and 1880s shows the expansion of cropped area to have partly been in response to a fall in prices. Taking the same base years as for Appendix II, Chapter II, the following Index shows the movement of retail prices in Broach City.

Years	Rice	Jowar	Wheat	Pulses
1865-1869	339	160	195	352
1870-1874	215	113	142	234
1875-1879	211	159	181	248
1880-1884	185	116	134	197
1885-1889	229	122	137	178
1890-1894	224	119	172	156

² The exception was the port of Surat where the value of trade by sea was £507866 in 1875 as compared to £741097 for each year between 1841 and 1848. However, since the division of the Presidency into rail-blocks put Surat into the zone called "South of Narbada and below the ghats" and not in "Gujarat and Kathiawar", the existing sea-trade in Surat did not affect the decline of land and sea trade elsewhere in Gujarat. Already by 1815 "the Broach ports had ceased to have any foreign commerce", which shifted first to Surat and then to Bombay. What remained "was a coasting trade south to Bombay and north as far as Mandvi in Cutch." That this was a declining trade could easily be seen from the fact that even in the period of an economic boom the value of the Broach sea trade between 1865 and 1870 was less than half of its 1847 value. As regards trade by land routes, a steep falling off in long distance cart traffic was reported in Broach. In Surat, land trade towards the North had since "the opening of the railway in great measure ceased" and after 1863 no information was obtained about it. The traffic eastwards had suffered in 1825 when a direct route had been opened between Bombay and Berar and with the opening of the Great India Peninsular Railway had been reduced

Gujarat were its urban dwellers. Hence, we have added up the urban population of Ahmedabad, Kheda, Panchmahals and the Kathiawar agencies. Dividing the population into average families of 5, we get the following figures for net imports for every family of 5 persons in the urban areas of Gujarat.¹

Average Annual Net Imports in Maunds for every
family of 5 persons in urban Gujarat

	1889/90 to 1893/94	1919/20 to 1921/22
Number of families - of 5 in Urban Gujarat	62482	130572
Wheat	0.02	7.4
Gram and Pulse	1.3	6.3
Rice	3.8	26.2
Bajra and Jowar	4.02	5.2
Other grains	1.4	1.5
Refined and unrefined Sugar	13	14.3
Tea	0.02	0.26
Oils	0.62	5.2
Dried fruits and Nuts	0.77	0.61

The Table above shows clearly that as regards grain imports, these were enough to meet the needs of a growing urban population.

Footnote cont.

even further. The fact that more and more of the Gujarat trade was with Bombay made railways a natural first choice when compared to carts. The main points of exit and entry for trade by land into Bombay Presidency were still manned by the Customs. In 1886/87, whereas the total value of goods transported by Rail was RS. 538570379 the value of those entering or leaving by land was RS. 29099569 or about 5% of the value carried by the railways.

¹The population figures are for 1891 and 1921. Periods of famines have been excluded as these would exaggerate the figures of grain imports. In fact a look at Appendix I will show that the period between 1899/1900 - 1903/04 and 1914/15 to 1918/19 had unusually high figures of net grain imports into Gujarat.

In fact, the increase in the imports of rice from 3.8 maunds per family in 1890 to 26.2 maunds in 1921 suggests that a large part of this was being sent to the rural areas. The import of sugar, tea and oils increased substantially despite more than a doubling of the urban population. It is unreasonable to suppose that an average family in urban Gujarat would in a year consume 572 seers of sugar, 10 seers of tea leaves and 208 seers of cooking oils! A part of this import surplus was getting to the peasants.¹ The overall figures for piecegoods show a net export because of the growth of the textile industry in Ahmedabad and Bombay. The district level figures for Surat and Kheda where textiles were not being manufactured show an increasing net import of European and country piecegoods.² Whatever

¹The data for the talukas confirm this trend. Ankleshwar which had a small urban population was still increasing its imports over time. Only 23% of the imports consisted of grains.

Quantity in Tons of Exports from and Imports into Ankleshwar and Panoli
Railway Stations

Period/ Annual Average of	Ankleshwar		Panoli	
	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
1867-1871	3311=(100)	6797=(100)	107=(100)	117=(100)
1894-1898	NA	9265=(136)	NA	747=(638)
1901-1905	7528=(227)	7995=(118)	203=(190)	294=(252)
1905-1909	15213=(460)	13717=(204)	292=(273)	459=(392)

N.B.

1. Figures in brackets are for the index (1867-1871) being 100.
2. Taking both stations together by 1909 imports enjoyed a surplus over exports.
3. The data are from Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Ankleshwar taluka, including Petha Mahal, Hansot (SRBG), DXXIX, 1915, p.13.

²Net Imports of Piecegoods in Tons by (Rail)

	1868		1870		1874		1877	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
Kheda	49	936	57	1425	54	1030	269	1089
Surat	430	677	411	697	528	769	NA	NA

DG, Surat and Broach, p.164; DG, Kheda, p.73.

remained of the sea trade showed that in general Gujarat districts were net importers of grain.¹ It also emphasized the fact that in return for exports of inferior grains like millets and pulses, Broach mainly imported rice, sugar and cotton piecegoods.²

This was a period in which the terms of trade were beginning to move in favour of agriculture. As against a general rise in the prices of most of the products being sold by the peasants, the prices of some of those they were buying were actually going down.³

¹Annual Imports/Exports by Sea into Broach Port

Period	Imports					Exports		
	Jowar and Bajra cwt	Rice cwt	Other Grains cwt	Sugar cwt	Piece-goods in yards	Pulses cwt	Wheat cwt	Jowar Bajra cwt
1908/9 to 1912/13	21819	71398	9118	NA	NA	62809	NA	14956
1913/14 to 1917/18	19429	20579	5863	NA	674372	37911	4631	3218
1925/26 to 1929/30	16682	14876	36237	31426	NA	88912	NA	NA

N.B. 1 cwt = 52 kilograms or roughly 1 Maund.

Annual Statement of the Trade and Navigation of the Bombay Presidency, 1905-1930 (NAI) (382.547)

²The changed pattern of diet and dress was more clearly seen by later field surveys. Thus David Pocock has described how by the late 1950s the older style of dress among the Patidars had changed. Amongst other changes, the more noticeable was the way instead of working bare chested now the peasants and labourers alike wore a western style vest or singlet. Tea was now a must in the morning and many more had a morning breakfast and a midday meal. The poor man now had milk with his millet bread (rotla) and sometimes even a vegetable. The better off had added on another course to their meal. Instead of just having kichedee as mentioned by Monier Williams, they now started off with thin wheat bread (rotli) smeared with ghi and then had rice, and dal. Pocock, D.F., Kanbi and Patidar, 1972, pp. 14 to 17.

³The rise in the average level of agricultural prices occurred after 1860. Thus even when prices fell after 1870, they remained much higher than the level of the 1850s.

Thus as Watt observed, between 1875 and 1890, Manchester cloth on an average "became cheaper by fully 30%" and articles made from it could be sold in India "at very nearly 10% less than formerly."¹ The Dutta Committee Report published data which goes to show that between 1890 and 1912 the wholesale prices of cereals, pulses, oilseeds and raw cotton rose much faster than those of other commodities. During much of this period the retail price of sugar, for example, declined.² The price of country tiles, an important building material for the average peasant household rose only marginally. A "scissors" like movement of prices of agricultural and manufactured items created the space for the peasants to improve their purchasing power, if they had the muscle to sell in the market on terms favourable to themselves.³

¹Watt, op.cit., 1887, Vol.IV, pp.180.

²Prices in Gujarat 1890-1912 (Rs per maund)

	Raw Cotton wholesale Rs-a-p	Wheat wholesale Rs-a-p	Sugar refined Rs-a-p (Retail)	Country tiles Rs-a-b (Wholesale) per 1000
Base Year price	5-8-0	2-14-0	11-4-0	2-8-0
1890-1894	100	100	100	100
1895-1899	92	117	95	98
1900-1904	112	116	84	94
1905-1909	130	139	82	110

N.B. Datta took the average of 1890-1894 prices as base year price. Report on the Enquiry into the Rise of prices in India by K. L. Patta, Vol.II, 1914, pp 194/444.

³Another example of the cheapening of items now being made with the help of modern technology was "the cheap German, Japanese and other kerosene lamps, which have largely displaced the old style castor oil lamps." Shukla, op.cit., p.60.

Surveys of peasant household budgets in the early 1930s clearly show the increase in the level of cash expenditure. Mukhtyar's budget for one poor peasant household estimated that in a year a family of 5 persons had food worth Rupees 180, spent Rupees 33 on clothes and another Rupees 25 on smoking, intoxicants and medicines. Amongst the items considered necessary were one pair of shoes for the husband, a fine bodice for the wife and an umbrella for the family.¹ An analysis of the budget of 9 well off families revealed that as compared to the 75% of their budget spent by the poorer families on food the richer ones spent only 58%.²

Annual Average Expenses of a Well Off Family
in South Gujarat (1929) In Rupees

Food	Clothing	Fuel and Lighting	Expenses on other necessities	Social Expenses	Miscellaneous Expenses	Total Spent
588	56	256	227	64	17	997

Compared to the 100 odd Rupees spent by the farmer cultivating 31 acres in the early nineteenth century, Mukhtyar's 'better off' peasant spent nine times more. The comparison may be seen as an indication of a trend, if not an exact measurement of changing proportions.³

¹ Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, pp. 219/220.

² Ibid, p.224.

³ Actually Monier Williams and Mukhtyar both imputed cash values to foodgrains grown by the peasant for his own consumption. Their survey also did not attempt to classify the families in a village or a district according to income or consumption patterns.

Another indicator of the growth in the resources and expenditure of peasants was the increase in the amount spent on marriage and death ceremonies. The increase in ceremonial expenditure has been mentioned by different sources. According to the Settlement Report on the Bardoli taluka the ceremonial expenditure doubled between 1850 and 1890.¹

	Amount spent by a Lewa Kunbi 30 or 40 years ago In Rupees		Amount spent in 1897 In Rupees	
	Marriage	Death	Marriage	Death
1st Class	500	500	1000	1000
2nd Class	400	200	800	800

The Settlement Officer wrote regarding these expenses "They specially relate to the kunbis, but in all castes from the Anavla Brahmins down to the Kalipraj, the expenditure has more than doubled. It is no uncommon thing for the Anavla Brahmin now to spend Rupees 2000 on marriage. The increase is partly due to the great rise in the price of ghee, but only to a slight extent. The dowry, for example, given to the bride once Rupees 140 is now Rupees 400."² The 1850s were the period when the tradition was started of forming Ekadas or groups of villages of kunbis who had agreed to marry among themselves and limit the expenses on marriage.³ However, the

¹SR, Bardoli, op.cit., 1897, p.108. Enthoven estimated that around 1920 a kulia Patteedar gave as dowry a sum between RS 1000 to 2000 and an akulia kunbi between Rupees 400 and 1000. Enthoven, R. E., Tribes and Castes of Bombay, 1920, Vol.II, p.138.

²Among some of the castes the dowry was not given to the groom but to the bride. Ibid.

³It was feared that the cost of marrying a daughter was driving the Patidars to infanticide. These fears were found to be exaggerated. Crooke, H.R., Repression of Female Infanticide in the Bombay Presidency, 1875, (SRBG) (V/23/261, IOL).

pressures created by the desire for upward social mobility led to hypergamy or the practice of marrying into a family of a higher rank e.g. the Desais or the Brahmans on the strength of paying a large dowry. The system was encouraged by the fact, that sections of the kunbis had gained in wealth and earlier having been regarded almost as sudras had taken on the designation of Patteedar or those related to the original holders of land (pattee) or in other words the founding fathers of the village. In order to justify their claims to a higher status, they had also to marry into the Desai or Brahman families.¹ At the same time being the old elite which had lost out due to the abolition of revenue farming, the resumption of alienated lands and the enforcement of government rules in the villages, the Desais were willing to accept brides from lower caste groups. Enthoven wrote in 1920 "A desai who finds himself in difficulties marries another wife receiving from the bride's father money enough to enable him to pay off his debts. Another result of the rivalry is that expenses consequent upon marriage such as payments in honour of the bride being sent to her husband's house

¹Pocock, op.cit., 1972, pp. 29/30. H. R. Crooke noted the "constant competition among the Akulia (those without a kul or lineage) for sons of Kulia families in marriage to their daughters, enabling the Kulias to exact enormous dowries from the former." Crooke, op.cit., 1875, p.34. With respect to the Kunbis and the Kolis, Pocock has suggested that the pressure for the better off sections to differentiate themselves from the others, arose because these were large, amorphous castes "subject to infiltration at the lower levels". Pocock, op.cit., 1972, p.55. Risley, the Census Commissioner in 1921 described the Kolis as a tribal caste and the Kunbis as a national caste, both terms denoting broad occupational and cultural types easily susceptible to further differentiation. Etymologically the word kunbi only meant a husbandman. Census of the Bombay Presidency, 1921, Part I, pp. 181/183.

in honour of pregnancy, of the birth of a child and on other occasions were not made by the husband but by the wife's father. So heavy are these expenses, that some families with many daughters have been ruined."¹

The extent to which hypergamy could affect the fortunes of some of the Patteedars was reflected in the report made by one Mamlutdar on the causes of the decline in the population of 4 Jambusar villages. According to him the diminution of people was "due chiefly to the paucity of wives amongst the kunbis and the Rajputs. As every family was anxious to marry its girls into a higher one, the boys of inferior families had to go without wives." Even within the ekadas girls were "given to the highest bidders". "The rich only can afford to marry or those who have the credit or the recklessness enough to raise the money." Consequently, "the large population of Patidars Kachias and Barots has now dwindled" and the Girassias or landlords have been obliged to take to cultivation for the number of those willing to rent land had declined and the waste lands had increased."²

¹ Enthoven's examples, unlike those cited by Pocock, were drawn from the Anavil and the Bhatela Brahmans showing how the desire for upward mobility affected different levels of the caste hierarchy. Enthoven also explained that such efforts had the sanction of the classical Hindu law givers. According to them, the degradation caused by marrying into a lower caste is washed out by itself, in the course of a certain number of generations. "The offspring of a Brahman from a Vaishya woman regains his status in five generations and that of a Brahman from a Kshatriya in three generations." Enthoven, R. E., Tribes and Castes of Bombay, 1920, Vol.I, pp. 215/216.

² Report of the Mamlutdar Gopalji, 11 March 1902, SR, Jambusar, op.cit., 1903, pp. 73/74/75. Clearly, this phenomenon had only affected small groups of kunbis, but it did show the strength of feeling about the need to marry into a higher family.

By the time Van der Veen studied the marriage system of the Gujarat Brahmans in the 1960s, it was possible for him to state separately the amount of money paid as vankado or dowry for isogamous and hypergamous marriages.¹

Average Vankado given and received

	1930-1940		1940-1950		1950-1960	
	Iso- gamous	Hyper- gamous	Iso- gamous	Hyper- gamous	Iso- gamous	Hyper- gamous
	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees
<u>Received Vankado</u>						
Upper Desai	1700	3200	2500	3100	4800	7500
Middle Desai	700	1600	2300	3300	3200	4000
<u>Given Vankado for</u>						
Upper Desai Women (highest group)	1700	-	2500	-	4800	-
Middle Desai Women	700	2600	2300	4000	3000	5000

The dowry system became an onerous one, when it set up rigid standards of gift giving as an affirmation or denial of social status. This clearly seems to have happened amongst the majority of the peasant castes in Gujarat during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries.

The need to differentiate themselves from other castes led

¹Isogamy meant marrying within the same subcaste. Van der Veen pointed out several interesting features of the marriage system. The increased cost of the vankado was shared by the joint family, different male members pooling their savings to make up the dowry. If a vankado was not paid, the amount was often made up by more money being spent on the wedding feast and the girl's trousseau. The average amount spent by some of the subcastes could be substantially higher than the cost incurred by others. Thus, in Veen's sample, 56% of the Vashi girls (belonging to the Vashi village) married into Desai families. RS.10000 was the minimum amount paid as vankado plus a splendid wedding feast arranged for the guests. Since expensive weddings were restricted to the upper castes the dowry became a means of circulating wealth as bride givers also became bride takers once their status was established as being equal to the other higher castes. Van Der Veen, K., I give thee my daughter, 1971, pp. 43/144/181.

the kunbis to adopt elaborate pre-natal and birth ceremonies.¹ They started having a family priest. It became a practise for a dying kunbi to give the family priest presents in cash or in the form of clothes in addition to a cow or enough money to buy one. Other Brahmans were invited to bless the dying person and they too were given gifts. This was done again after he or she died. After one year a great pujā and feast or shradha were held.² These religious rites added to the necessary items of expenditure.³

Imitation of the superiors as an affirmation of equality with them could occur within the caste system only when it was allowed or welcomed by the superiors or they were helpless to prevent it. When the kolis who at the beginning of the nineteenth century had been described as "recently settled wild tribes" started to arrange their marriages and pay a bride-price because of "Brahman influence" this did not seem objectionable to anyone.⁴ Sometimes such imitations occurred on the initiative of the lower castes. The Dhodias or Dhedas of South Gujarat were small farmers

¹In Gujarat, the kunbis were the largest peasant caste. In 1878, in Surat of 60441 classified as cultivators 47157 were kunbis. In Broach at the same time, of 55095 cultivators, 30705 were kunbis. The Ahmedabad Gazetteer classified 393776 persons as belonging to the families of husbandmen. Of these 123697 were kunbis and 49663 Rajputs. In Kheda of 456,634 'cultivators' 144639 were kunbis and 23508 Rajputs. In the four districts at least 49% of the cultivating peasantry was made up of kunbis. Kolis were the next largest caste.

²As Enthoven pointed out "Patidars and headmen of villages call all the villagers to dinner on marriage and death feasts. This custom has ruined many families." Enthoven, op.cit., 1920, Vol.II, p.144.

³These ceremonies were also a spur to the richer among their caste to increase the amount they spent in order to do better than the others. Pocock, op.cit., 1972, p.114.

⁴Enthoven, op.cit., Vol.II, p.247.

who had taken to agriculture as late as the middle of the nineteenth century. However, by the start of the twentieth century their men had changed their skull cap of striped material for the Gandhi topi or a plain turban. The women had given up their brass bangles and anklets for silver ornaments and had also started wearing sarees and blouses.¹ The adoption of cultural norms of the higher castes occurred within the broad limits of the resources of the lower castes. Thus in most cases the bride price or dowry needed for a marriage remained small amongst the lower castes. The Dublas, a caste of agricultural labourers required RS. 15 to 20 for their bride price.² The Chodhras, another recently settled tribe of small farmers and labourers too had adopted the custom of giving a bride price which by 1920 ranged between Rupees 45 and 100. They had, however, also retained a part of their tribal custom by permitting a khandalia marriage where no expenses had to be paid, but where divorce was freely permissible. In the case of the other marriages a case for divorce had to be decided on by a caste panchayat.³ Imitation of the fashions or customs of the upper castes by the lower ones was a slow, partial and an evolutionary process not marked by the haste of sections of the kunbis to achieve a higher status through rapid social differentiation. Such imitation could create the need for occasionally borrowing money, but there was little social pressure

¹Solanky, A. N., The Dhodias of South Gujarat, Unpublished MA Thesis, Bombay University, 1955; also Enthoven, op.cit., Vol.I, p.324.

²Ibid, pp.342.

³Ibid, pp.290.

for speeding up the improvement of the status of the lower castes.¹

In spite of the existence of some imitation of the culture of the higher castes, poverty was not absent from sections of the Gujarat peasantry. The division between greater and lesser wealth was drawn mainly along the lines of inheritance and variations in the productivity of the soil. As late entrants into the settled agrarian economy, the tribal people started off with fewer acquisitions in the way of domestic wealth, livestock or carts. Studies of some of the tribes in the 1930s showed, that they remained backward as compared to the bulk of the peasant castes. Money still played only a small part in the economy of the Chodhras of South Gujarat in 1933. Their consumption of foodgrains depended on the nature of the harvest. "An abundant supply of crop will be consumed in a single feast, whilst for days together a family will go on a single meal in case the harvest had failed on account of rain."² Although most of the goods were bought and sold in the weekly markets, barter was still practised.³ Since they had a low credit rating, were thought of as capable of migrating and had to borrow for basic subsistence needs, sometimes the Chodhras borrowed

¹The lower castes had also their traditional preferences which could get modernized and increase their need for cash. One such preference was the desire for ornaments. Even among the Bharvads or Rahbaris, the professional cattle grazers, the men wore a gold button in both ears called bhungi and silver fingerrings and the women had silver earrings (akota). By the early twentieth century Bhil men were seen wearing silver earrings and bracelets and women silver earrings and brass and tin head ornaments. Enthoven, op.cit., 1920, Vol.I, pp. 120/121.

²Mehta, B. H., The Social and Economic Conditions of the Chodhras, Part II, p.635, Bombay University Monograph, 1933. (Bombay University ESP 58A).

³Ibid, p.599.

"Khavti" or foodgrains with a 50% interest added on to the value of the loan.¹ As latecomers, the tribal cultivators had often to rent land already occupied by other farmers.²

While they were worse off than the dominant peasant castes, the tribals in Gujarat were more prosperous when compared to their kinsfolk in other parts of the Bombay Presidency. This fact was well brought out by one of the Administration Reports. The collector of Broach pointed out that "Bhils are not well off, but the condition of these people is a matter of comparison. Compared with the Thana Thakurs, Katkaris and Warlis, the Broach Bhils are wealthy and they seem contented. There is not the same naked look about them as there is amongst the Thana jungle tribes. Their women have armlets of glass, necklace of beads and are decently clad, while the men are strong and wiry. When their own scanty crops fail, the Bhils and Kolis, male and female find a ready market for their labour either in the city of Broach itself or in the large and wealthy villages in the Jambusar, Amod Broach and Ankleshwar talukas. In an ordinary year, the poorer classes in this district are well off as compared with those in others, but in a year of scarcity they

¹Ibid, p.588.

²This point has been discussed in Chapter VI. It might be still emphasized that in the village studied by Mehta of the 1313 cultivated acres at least 774 were rented by the Chodhra families from other landowners. The average size of the holding owned by the peasant proprietors was 11.5 acres and that owned by the absentee landlords was 18.8 acres. This shows that Gujarat mostly had a small landlord class. Ibid, Part I, p.458.

suffer considerably."¹ When the harvest was about 30% below normal in 1878/79 "The failure of the kharif crops and the consequent dearth of food for the lower rural classes began to be indicated by an influx of destitute vagrants into the towns in early October."² The comparatively better condition of the tribals could also be seen in the variety of items sold in the weekly markets held in the eastern and southern subdivisions of Surat, the prominent area of tribal settlements. The weekly markets held at 4 places in the Bardoli taluka, for example, sold dates, spices, vegetables, salt, coconuts, tobacco, coarse cloth, bamboo manufactures and brooms. Liquor, toddy, fish, brass vessels, mat and coir were also sold in other neighbouring weekly markets.³

Apart from the late entry into the agrarian economy which affected the tribals, another significant cause of poverty in rural Gujarat was variation in soil fertility and drainage. The Settlement Report on the Jambusar taluka pointed out the contrast between the condition of the villages located on the marwā or gorat soils and those on the barā or the lowlying coastal soils. "The marwa villages

¹AAR, Broach, 1884/85, RD, 1885, Vol.22, p.22.

²AAR, Broach, 1878/79, RD, 1879, Vol.18, p.39/40.

³There was one such market held in the Chikhli taluka, 3 in Bulsar, 5 in Pardi and 3 in Mandvi. The number of persons selling or buying goods in these markets ranged from 100 to 500 in Bardoli, 400 to 500 in Chikhli, 1000 to 2000 in Bulsar, 100 to 3000 in Pardi and 400 to 500 in Mandvi. The caste of buyers in all these talukas was listed as "chiefly kolis, Dublas, Chodhras and the other aboriginal tribes." Clearly, the ordinary needs of the tribals had become more varied. DG, Surat and Broach, p.181.

with a few exceptions are prosperous and well cultivated, whereas the condition of the waterlogged and barā villages is no better than that of the barā villages of Wagra or the Southwestern villages of the Ankleshwar talukas."¹ An inquiry into the condition of the Ankleshwar taluka in 1899 reported that "on the east of the railway there are the goradu villages lying along the Narbada, which are fertile and prosperous." However, "from Amratpura and the east of the railway a more or less well defined ridge runs westward to a mile or so beyond Ankleshwar, which deflects the drainage of the villages on the south side towards the "Wand" creek, and the surface being generally very level, all the central villages suffer more or less from waterlogging in an ordinary season. The result of this is, that the crops rot and several resowings are sometimes required. Then, if the later rains are short the outturn from late sowings are poor." In addition, "Katpur, Ankalwa and other villages in the extreme west suffer somewhat from salt, but not to the same extent as the barā tracts in Wagra and Olpad."² It was in areas

¹SR, Jambusar, op.cit., 1903, p.6. Poverty due to ecological drawbacks could be a lasting one. In 1876, the Settlement Officer had written in much the same way about the Southwest corner of Jambusar "which terminates towards the sea and the Dhadhar river shore in a Runn" or poorly drained tract. "In this part, the country is hedgeless and almost devoid of trees except in the immediate neighbourhood of villages and even there they are restricted to stunted specimens of the tamarind, pipal and babul. The villages are far apart and do not approach in appearance the stability and comfort of villages in the kanam - the superior tract lying north and east. There the country is closely hedgebound and beautifully wooded, containing in a compact group some of the most magnificent villages of the province. Several of the villages like Gajera, Sarod, Kavi and Degam are more like kasba towns having mansions of 3 or 4 stories." Ibid, p.35.

²The Ankleshwar villages said to suffer from waterlogging were Sartham, Hajat, Adol, Piludra, Karmali, Ravidra, Ghodadra, Adadra, Pardi, Edris, Kathodra, Telwa, Motwan and Rohid. Report as to the Condition of the Ankleshwar Taluka and Hansot Mahal in 1899-1900, Papers Relating to the Revision Survey Settlement of the Broach taluka of the Broach collectorate, (SRBG), 1902, p.108.

like these that the moneylender could hope to gain some measure of economic control over his debtors in Gujarat.

An analysis of the amount, terms, objectives and consequences of rural credit is central to an understanding of why many peasants in Gujarat could, maintain an improved standard of living in the face of a cash income, which fluctuated with the nature of the harvest and the prices of different commodities. The first development which eased access to rural credit in Gujarat was a decline during the nineteenth century in the rate of interest on loans to peasants. The fact itself has been well documented in different sources. It appears that before the start of the Company's administration and for sometime afterwards most cultivators had to pay a uniform rate of interest. In Broach, "the rates of interest paid by cultivators and heads of villages to sureties and other moneylenders before 1803 varied from 48 to 60 percent per annum."¹ In Surat in 1827 "when a cultivator had to apply for a loan, the usual terms were at the rate of twelve and a half percent for six months." However, if the debt remained unpaid at the end of the six months interest was added at the rate of twenty four percent. In case the debt was outstanding at the end of a year, the principal and interest were joined to make one sum which paid 25 percent per annum.² By 1846, in Broach at least the average rate of interest for the "higher class of cultivators" had declined to between "9

¹Colonel Walker's report of 8th April 1804, DG, Surat and Broach, p.452.

²Ibid, p.202. P. C. Melvill recorded that in 1827, the Parantij cultivator paid 15 to 25 percent besides a premium which was added to the sum lent. DG, Ahmedabad, p.71.

and 12 percent."¹ By 1856, loans at moderate rates given to the better off amongst the Kheda peasants cost 12% per annum.²

By the 1870s, in Broach, the lower rate paid by "well to do cultivators varied from 6% to 7½% in 1864 and from 6% to 9% in 1874. For the poorer classes the corresponding charges were from 18% - 24%."³ The differential treatment meted out to borrowers was not based on arbitrary criteria. It was the estimation of the capacity of the borrower to return the loan which was the principal basis for the determination of the rate of interest in individual cases. Someone who was known not only to be wealthy but honest and efficient enjoyed a good credit at low rates merely on the strength of his personal security. Wealthy persons with a budget larger than their annual purse were considered not too creditworthy.⁴ Local knowledge and a small scale operation remained the characteristic and unchanging feature of rural moneylending in Gujarat as elsewhere

¹At this time there were 3 classes of borrowers mentioned separately. The second class of borrowers paid from 12% to 18% and the third from 18% - 24%. Ibid, p.430.

²DG, Kheda, p.61.

³The lowering of the interest rate in the 1860s brings out the fact that prospects of higher incomes lowered the interest rate on loans to peasants. It shows the extent to which the risk factor affected the level of the interest rate in insecure markets. DG, Surat and Broach, p.453.

⁴The class of superior landlords in Ahmedabad known as Girasias and Kasbatis paid an interest of 9% - 15% on mortgage of land or crops with a premium of 2% to 10%. For a similar loan the patteedar kunbis only paid from 6% to 9%. The Kasbatis were notorious for their spendthrift habits and irregularity in making repayments. DG, Ahmedabad, p.71. In Surat also "The credit of holders of state allowances or watandars, who live upon an income derived from rents is also low. Men in this position hold themselves bound to incur considerable expense in celebrating marriages and in giving caste dinners; and as they have a character for carelessness and want of thrift they are required to pay heavy rates of interest." DG, Surat and Broach, p.190/191.

in village India.¹

The factors which influenced rural rates of interest may be well illustrated with examples from the Ahmedabad district. Here, in the 1870s, the most substantial of the rural classes commonly borrowed, not from the village shopkeeper but directly from the banker in the neighbouring town at between 6% and 9% per annum without any mortgage, bond or security being required. Those amongst the kunbi cultivators who were "already encumbered with debt up to though not, as a rule, beyond their assets ... could only obtain loans on stamped bonds with or without securities, but they are left free to realize the produce of their fields as they please." (emphasis mine). These persons were required to pay an interest at a rate varying between 12% and 18% per annum exclusive of a premium. They nonetheless seemed to have retained control of their economic

¹It is important to note that both the old and the new rural money-lenders were small scale operators, be they the professional Sowcar who specialized only in moneylending, the village buniya who invariably owned a shop, the emerging agriculturalist moneylender, pleaders, lawyers or traders. As opposed to the large scale urban money transactions, rural moneylending relied on higher interest rates. In addition to greater risk of sudden failure due to drought, floods or disease and the longer anticipated period of return of the capital loaned, rural moneylenders often did business with capital borrowed from their caste brethren in the towns and had to recover the interest they themselves might be paying. The Surat Marwari moneylender was described as someone "who seldom became a large capitalist" although he "lived in considerable comfort." DG, Broach and Surat, p.189. The Kheda Gazetteer noted that in advancing money, the bigger urban bankers "deal only with persons of credit, petty traders, retail shopkeepers, cultivators of substance and usurers who borrow to relend at higher rates of interest." DG, Kheda, p.59.

resources. "Ornaments are not usually deposited in pawn even by this second class of cultivators. Nor is a formal mortgage ever executed of a respectable man's movable property though his land is commonly hypothecated", although not necessarily sold or transferred from his possession. Finally there were "the lowest order of landholders including the great majority of kolis who fail to get more favourable treatment, not only because of their poverty, but also because of the stigma which still attaches to them as a caste." In the case of such cultivators loans in grain are repaid in kind with 25% to 50% added to the quantity initially given out. "The Vania appropriates the whole of the crop as soon as threshed and credits in his book at a price settled in many villages by a mixed committee of Vanias and cultivators. Against this, he debits the grain already advanced" and 15-25 maunds are then given back to the borrower for his subsistence and that of his family. The poorer peasants pay between 12% and 24% for loans in cash besides the usual premium.¹

The significant fact about the Gujarat rural economy in the 1870s was that the poorer peasants forced to borrow on onerous terms were a minority amongst the peasantry. In Broach, about 20% of the "poorest class of cultivators and field labourers - Kolis, Talavis, Bhils and Dhers - are said to require advances for grains and seed." After 1862, they seemed to have improved their position.

¹"Almost every loan transaction is accompanied by the payment of a premium which goes by the name of vatar or discount; mandamni, a fee for booking the debt or kothlisanth, a fee on opening the bag." DG, Ahmedabad, pp 69/70.

"Great competition among small capitalists" meant, that "the debtor will sometimes obtain from his new banker a sum sufficient to meet the demands of the original creditor."¹

The contrast between the long settled peasant castes and the tribal cultivators or the later entrants into the agrarian economy also existed in the credit market. This was to be seen clearly in Surat where by 1876, 33 percent of the district population consisted of the aboriginal tribes.² Here, the Gazetteer remarked that "the position of the ordinary Bhatela cultivator has improved and they may be said to be almost free from large and ruinous debts." The kunbi and the Bohra cultivators are careful, "borrow only small sums and are punctual in making repayments". They had to borrow "in years of scarcity" or for "marriage and family ceremonies". Otherwise "few of the better class of cultivators are dependent on the moneylender". The Kolis, who were said "to have comparatively moderate ideas on the subject of marriage expenses" escaped the worst consequences of such indebtedness.³ They could often hope to get the small advances they required from fellow cultivators. The poorer among the tribal peasants, however, could not till the land without relying on the moneylender and always owed some money to the liquor seller. The grain advances they

¹This point will be analyzed below at greater length with reference to the 1920s and 1930s. DG, Surat and Broach, pp 451/452.

²Of a total of 499,938 tribal settlers, 71533 were Dublas, 46433 Dhondias or Dhedas, 19153 were Chodhras and 17632 Naikas. Ibid, p.194.

³According to the Gazetteer the Bhatela Brahmans spent from Rs. 500-2000 on a marriage and so did the Bahrās, whereas the kunbis spent from RS. 200 to Rs. 1000. The kolis spent about Rs. 100. Ibid, p.193.

often took were given to them at special rates according to the proverb "binnu bamnu, khawanu dohru"; for seed double and for food one and a half." The problem for the moneylender in the case of the poorer tribals was that he could not always recover the amount owed to him. "In the eastern parts of Surat, as soon as the rains are over, the moneylender goes round from hamlet to hamlet claiming his share in the crop. Beyond this he can do little to recover his debts."¹ Indeed, he risked forcing the poor peasant to migrate, a course of action not too difficult for the recently settled and the more mobile tribals. Until the 1930s, land was not lacking in these four districts but more so in the Panch Mahals and some of the Princely States. A prominent example of such migration was the departure in 1876 of about 5000 Talavias from these 4 districts for Panch Mahals.²

Before presenting the more precise data on indebtedness provided by surveys in the 1920s, it is necessary to draw out the conclusions inherent in the preceding narrative. In general, the nineteenth century had seen^a cheapening of rural credit and an increase in its availability for all sections of the peasantry. The reason lay not so much in the government's regulation of interest rates, which were limited to 12% by Regulation V of 1827.³ It was caused mainly by a much greater availability of bullion and

¹Ibid, pp.196. The extent of litigation against borrowers was small compared to other areas. In the 4 districts of Ahmedabad, Surat, Kheda and Broach between 1901 and 1905, for example, every year there were just 99 transfers of land effected by order of the court. This aspect will be discussed below. GARBP, 1905/6, p.340.

²GARBP, 1876/77, p. lxxiv.

³DG, Kheda, p.61.

coin. As Appendix II to this chapter shows compared to the first 50 years, the second half of the nineteenth century showed a phenomenal increase in net bullion imports into the Bombay Presidency. This level was increased further in the twentieth century.¹ Since much of this bullion was for coining money then in demand to make payments for goods exported by private agencies working in a fairly competitive market, the sphere of distribution of this gold and silver in the form of currency, ornaments or credit based on savings held in gold or silver was a large one.² It is also true that the number of rural moneylenders greatly increased during the nineteenth century. As existing studies show at the start of or before the Company's administration, apart from the town based sowcar or manotidār, it were the Patel or other local officials who were often the village moneylenders.³ The omnibus institution of the village shop and its Buniya or Marwari owner who combined trade and moneylending seems to have arisen after 1800. By the 1870s in Broach, a class of small town moneylenders had also grown, some of whom like pleaders and merchants

¹The increase in net bullion imports started around 1859/60. In 1866/67 RS 40654935 worth of gold and silver remained within the Bombay Presidency, if we discount their exports, which included payments made by the Bombay Government to the Central Government. If 1866/67 be taken as 100, the Index of the net value of bullion imports stood at 463 in 1906/7; 990 in 1912/13; and 1241 in 1923/24. Appendix II, Chapter VII; also Vakil, C. N., Currency and Prices in India, 1928.

²The start of the Imperial Bank and the Bank of Bombay also served to channel bullion imports into rural trade. Within 8 years of its being established in Broach in 1864, the Bank of Bombay was financing seven-eighths of the much expanded cotton trade. The cotton markets typified the widening sphere of circulation of money which ultimately fed rural moneylending. The Ahmedabad Gazetteer pointed out how the humbler class of traders had gained by the increased facility of obtaining credit consequent on safer and speedier trade. DG, Ahmedabad, p.106.

³Perlin, Journal of Peasant Studies, loc.cit.

lent to their rural clients. In the village itself, the main moneylenders were "village shopkeepers, well-to-do cultivators and cotton dealers."¹ Mukhtyar's survey pointed out that apart from two professional resident moneylenders, there were a host of non-professional and petty moneylenders inside and outside the village who lent to its inhabitants.² Between 1905 and 1941, 649 cooperative credit societies were organized in the 5 districts of Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Panch Mahals.³ Although the gowcar remained by far the most important source of rural credit, even the limited growth of other potential and actual sources of credit acted as a check on him.⁴ Another such source was the Taccavi loan granted by the government.⁵ It added to the possible alternative sources of credit available to the peasants in years of scarcity.

¹DG, Surat and Broach, p.449. In Bombay Presidency, the number of rent receivers reporting "moneylending and grain dealing" as their subsidiary occupation was 138 per 10000 in 1911 and 165 in 1931. Amongst the cultivators the corresponding figures were 20 and 23. Census of the Bombay Presidency, 1911, Part II, pp 470/472; idem, 1931, Part I, pp.330.

²Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, pp.252. He also pointed out "that a majority of families resorted to more than one creditor". Ibid, p.249.

³The proportion of villages covered by the cooperative societies in these districts in 1941 was just 20% covering only 5.3% of the district population. The working capital of these societies averaged RS. 104 per member. Report of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, 1942 (NAI); Selected statistics about Co-operative Societies (OPR).

⁴Shukla's survey of the Olpad taluka showed that only 8.4% of the loans were given out by the Co-ops and another 6.5% by "friends and relatives". Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.221.

⁵In normal years, the Tacavi loans to peasants in Gujarat were almost insignificant. In 1876/77, for example, just RS. 1596 were granted as Tacavi in Ahmedabad and Kheda and none at all in Surat and Broach. This was only 0.6% of the total Tacavi granted that year in the Bombay Presidency. Again in 1897/98, RS 8707 were given

The main beneficiaries of the growing credit market in Gujarat were the dominant peasant castes. In the Olpad taluka of the Surat district, for example, in the 15 villages examined, the peasants in 1931 owed RS 460,411. Of this nearly 35% was owed by just 3 villages forming Group I for revenue purposes, hence the most fertile. More significantly, 60% of the loans had been given out at less than 12% interest per annum, that is to castes considered well-to-do and creditworthy. Another 29% of the loans had been issued at 12 to 15 percent and only 3.3% at between 15 and 25 percent. Nothing could indicate better the fact, that the main source of the moneylender's income in Gujarat was a large amount of capital given out to the well-to-do or the richer peasant castes at comparatively low rates of interest and not the insignificant amounts lent to the poorer peasants at higher rates of interest. The higher level of debt per family in North and South Gujarat mentioned by the Banking Enquiry Commission in 1929 was thus made up chiefly of borrowings by the better off peasants.¹ In the case of most peasants, it would be true to say that in years of high prices and normal yields, debts were paid off or reduced. This was said to be true of the Kunbis in the 1860s, as also of many peasants in the Kheda district.² The 1860s were usually contrasted

Footnote cont.

out in Ahmedabad and Kheda and nothing in the other two districts. This came to only 014% of the total for the Presidency. An unattractive feature of Tacavi loans was the security demanded. GARBP, 1877/78, pp.183; idem, 1897/98, p.116.

¹The Banking Enquiry Committee found that a family in North Gujarat each owed an average of RS 340, one in South Gujarat at RS 551, in Khandesh RS 685, in Panch Mahals RS 347 and in the Famine tracts of Sholu and Bijapur RS 259. Report of the Bombay Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, Vol.I, henceforth (RBPBEC).

²DG, Surat and Broach, pp.454; DG, Kheda, p.60.

by the District Gazetteers with the 1840s when the burden of debt was said to have been more distressing.

The capacity of large numbers of peasants to either repay or periodically scale down their debts alone can explain how in the 1920s and 1930s peasant debts in Gujarat remained within the limits of peasant incomes. Mukhtyar compiled an interesting estimate of the proportional relationship between the annual incomes and debts of different sections of the peasantry.¹

<u>Ratio of family debt to income in Atgam</u>	
<u>Village (South Gujarat) 1929</u>	
Number of families free from debt	124
In debt up to 1/10 of their income	41
In debt from 1/10 to 1/2 of their income	102
In debt from 1/2 to 1 of their income	90
In debt from 1 to 1 1/2 of their income	53
In debt from 1 1/2 to 2 of their income	19
In debt from 2 to 2 1/2 of their income	13
In debt from 2 1/2 to 3 of their income	7
In debt from 3 to 3 1/2 of their income	1
Total number of families	450

Given the fact that Mukhtyar had estimated the income of the peasant families in Atgam during a period of low prices, this scale of indebtedness could easily be cleared in years of better prices.

Mukhtyar did not mention the social origins of the 28% of the Atgam families entirely free from debt. In Shukla's sample of 793 families 24% owed no debts. The highest percentage of such families belonged to the villages in revenue groups IV and V where 26% of the 372 families examined owed no debts at the time of the enquiry. The

¹Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, p.248.

corresponding proportion in the first 3 revenue groups was 13%. This shows that agricultural labourers and poorer peasants with fewer needs and a bad credit borrowed much less than the better off peasants.¹

It is widely recognized that mortgage, with possession being retained by the owner was the standard method used by moneylenders to squeeze their debtors since outright alienation of land would have been like killing the fabled golden goose. The Gujarat districts were again distinguished by the fact that while not a little land was owned by non-cultivating owners very few acres were held on mortgage. The First Revision Land Revenue Settlement Reports almost invariably published figures showing the extent of land held on mortgage with or without possession. Taking these categories together, in the 1890s, in the Broach district 0.12% of occupied land was mortgaged in the Jambusar taluka, 1.6% in Broach, 0.5% in Wagra and 0.03% in Ankleshwar.² Similarly, in the Surat district the land mortgaged was 0.8% of the occupied area in the Jalalpur taluka, 1.1% in Bulsar, 1.9% in Mandvi and 2.5% in the Pardi taluka. The moneylender might own lands and rent them out, but he was not very successful in mulcting the Gujarat peasants through the long drawn out mortgages. In this respect too,

¹ Shukla, op.cit., 1937, p.217. The same observation was made ⁱⁿ the investigations of the Indian Central Cotton Committee. Of the 774 cultivators interviewed in North Gujarat and 1155 in Middle Gujarat 77% borrowed. Amongst the borrowers, the per capita debt of proprietors was RS 381 and of the tenants RS 161. The amount of the debt per acre in Middle Gujarat was roughly only 20% of the value of cotton crop sown on one acre of land. Investigations into cultivators' cotton, op.cit., 1928, pp. 13/55. The Banking Committee discovered that in the 3 villages of Dharwar, another cotton tract, 36% of the families owed no debts in 1929. RBPBEC, op.cit., Vol.I, p.45.

² The occupied area in each case is the average of the years between 1890 and 1898. The mortgage figures were generally published as Appendix L or M in the Settlement Reports. These are easily available in the Selections from the Bombay Government Publications (OPR) and are not being listed separately.

the agrarian economy in Gujarat appears different from the existing typologies of colonial agriculture in other parts of India. It reflected the fact that the bulk of the borrowings there were not due to compulsory causes, but to finance voluntarily preferred increases in domestic consumption. In this case credit was not a fait accompli but almost a point d'honneur; An analysis of the reasons which had made peasants borrow was published by the Banking Enquiry Committee.¹ In the two Broach villages, the amount of debt for financing marriages and miscellaneous consumption needs was 26% of total debts in Khanpur and 45% in Sajod. It must be remembered that the purchase of bullocks and milch cattle were included under agricultural expenses and some of the funds claimed as famine relief too could be legitimately used for the replacement of cattle lost due to drought. The more detailed breakdown of the use made of debts in the Olpad taluka provided by Shukla showed, that only 19.7% was spent on agricultural needs including the payment for hiring labour

¹Object and Amount of Debts as it existed in 1928

Object	District and Village									
	Dharwar					Broach				
	Budarpur		Sangrur		Advisompur		Khanpur		Sajod	
Amount in Rupees	% of total debt	Amount in Rupees	% of total debt	Amount in Rupees	% of total debt	Amount in Rupees	% of total debt	Amount in Rupees	% of total debt	
Repayment of earlier debts	30847	20%	8940	25.1%	299	7.6%	28727	14.3%	6891	4.4%
Agricultural Expenses	25840	17%	6536	18.6%	2119	19.8%	42433	21.2%	33315	21.4%
Purchase of land	14375	9.3%	1354	3.8%	503	4.7%	7426	3.5%	3269	2.1%
Domestic needs due to Famine and other distress situations	15210	10.1%	5406	15.7%	1806	17.2%	63780	31.9%	41650	26.8%
Marriages	26374	17.1%	7622	21.4%	4880	45.6%	29915	14.1%	39075	25.1%

N.B. The remaining amount was borrowed for Miscellaneous Consumption items. RBPBEC, op.cit., Vol.I, p.49.

and purchase of livestock. 63.8% of the debts were used for non-agricultural objects of which 30% was used for marriage and other ceremonial expenses, 7.2% for purchase or repair of houses and almost 15% for repayment of old debts.¹ The need to borrow for marriage expenses showed that the savings of most peasants were insufficient to provide large amounts of cash at short notice, although their capacity for repayments in the long run was adequate to contain their debts within safe limits. This did not apply to the apex of the rural hierarchy which was in a position to finance its consumption entirely from its own savings. One of the Administration reports observed that in Broach "The best class of cultivators are men owning in some cases as much as half a lac of rupees, but not a pie is laid out in drainage or other improvements and all is invested in giving loans."² The Broach Gazetteer estimated that "of the rural population about six percent can, without borrowing, pay for the large sums they spent on feasts and entertainments."³

There can be little doubt that increases in domestic consumption were the first concern of the Gujarat peasantry. A closer look at this peasantry's investment preferences highlights its propensity for building houses and buying milch cattle rather

¹Shukla, op.cit., 1937, pp 231/233.

²1 lac = 100000. AAR 1878/79, RD 1879, Vol.18, p.29.

³DG, Surat and Broach, p.50. It was the domestic economy of this very small section which had the possibility of becoming entrepreneurial provided that they used their money wisely over a long period of time. Any tendency towards the rise of a capital owning class with its investments mainly in agricultural production was very slow and very small.

than more bullocks, new agricultural implements or constructing irrigation wells. As Appendix III at the end of this chapter shows between 1873 and 1899, while the number of bullocks decreased by 17%, those of cows and buffaloes increased by 34%. The area cultivated per bullock went up from 4.2 acres to 7.1 acres while the gross cropped acres per cow or buffalo declined only from 3.3 to 3.2 acres.¹ This was a period when the Gujarat peasants were beginning to make better use of their bullocks since a pair of them could easily cultivate an area varying between 15 and 21 acres.² That the average area cultivated by a pair of bullocks in Gujarat was 17 acres even in 1934/35 showed the excess number of plough cattle which had to be maintained by small owners even though they could not use them fully. Increases in the number of milch cattle were perfectly understandable since it was estimated that a she buffalo could easily yield a net annual profit of RS. 94 in 1929.³ The production of milk and ghee not only improved the quality of the peasant diet, it provided an easy source of additional cash income

¹Cultivated Acres per:

	Bullock	Cow and Buffaloe	Plough
1873/74	4.2	3.3	10.3
1889/90	7.0	4.83	14
1899/1900	7.1	3.2	15
1901/02	7.9	5.5	16
1909/10	7.4	2.9	17
1924/25	8.7	3.6	17
1934/35	8.5	3.2	17.5

²Shukla, op.cit., p.144.

³Mukhtyar, op.cit., 1930, p.141.

and meant a boost to domestic consumption.¹ Given the increasing demand for milk and ghi due to a slowly growing urban population earnings from milch cattle were also a good way to offset the effects of any fall in prices of produce sold on the world market.² As Appendix III shows carts increased faster than population and ploughs. More people were buying carts, most of them for purposes of transport, and some for pleasure trips or social visits, these being known as "riding" carts. While the cultivated area per plough went up from 10 acres in 1872 to 17 acres in 1909, the proportion between houses and population remained the same.³ The number of houses in itself was not a good indicator of the investment in housebuilding. As a later day visitor observed, the Kunbis and the Patidars often built upwards "to produce large rambling mansions or as building space became scarce pagoda like constructions, each

¹The prices of milk and ghee increased in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century almost in proportion of the increase in prices of the plough and milch cattle. Dutta Committee Report, op.cit., Vol.II, p.196; Shukla, op.cit., p.146.

²The increase in milch cattle after 1902 was remarkable. Between 1901/2 and 1909/10 their numbers increased from 453843 to 826662 or by 82% while bullocks grew from 318633 to 331066 or by 4%. In the next 20 years milch cattle increased by another 31%, but bullocks by 25%. Appendix III, Chapter VII.

³

District	Houses and Residents per House					
	1846		1872		1931	
	Number of Houses	Residents per House	Number of Houses	Residents per House	Number of Houses	Residents per House
Ahmedabad	212464	2.8	260940	3.2	254280	3.6
Broach	79923	3.6	96723	3.6	84807	3.8
Kheda	NA	NA	218596	3.6	184007	3.9
Surat	108579	4.5	137613	4.4	151602	4.4

Source: Chapter on Population, District Gazetteers; Census, 1931, op. cit., Part II, pp.4.

storey reflecting the taste of a different generation."¹ A better house was a sign of greater wealth and improved status. The greater number of livestock and carts also showed definitely the greater purchasing power of the peasants, for the prices of both these items increased in the first three decades of the twentieth century.²

The contrast between increased investment in items of domestic consumption and a lack of investment in some aspects of agrarian modernization gives us another clue about the economic preferences of the Gujarat peasantry. This contrast was best brought out in the decline of the area irrigated in a year of normal rainfall. Although the number of wells and tanks increased, these were used mostly for supplying drinking water or for irrigation when a drought forced the peasants to increase the irrigated area. Between 1886 and 1923, the number of wells increased from 13039 to 17221 in Surat, from 3093 to 3321 in Broach and from 16031 to 20187 in the Ahmedabad district.³ Yet, the area normally irrigated declined in Ahmedabad from an annual average of 68716 acres in the five years

¹Pocock, *op.cit.*, 1972, pp.76. The number of tiled houses increased. DG, Ahmedabad, pp.46. In the 1870s one Administration Report noted that "A Broach village and still more a Kunbi village in Jambusar will have substantial houses with charnamed walls gaily decorated with pictures, good cattle and well draped cultivators." The Report was comparing Deccan and Gujarat villages. AAR, 1876/77, RD, 1877, Vol.13, pp.699.

²As the Second Revision Settlement Report of the Dholka taluka in the Ahmedabad district pointed out "Owing to the heavy price of wood and iron at present, a redwa or the superior class of carts cannot be bought new under RS. 200-300. A redwa could be obtained 5 years ago for as little as RS. 70-100. Gadiaz were bought new this year for RS. 80." The Gadiaz were ordinary carts. Papers relating to the Second Revision Settlement of the Dholka taluka, 1925, p.14, N4922776, (MGA).

³Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency, 1888; idem, 1925.

between 1885/86 and 1889/90 to 57455 acres between 1922/23 and 1926/27. For the same period the corresponding reduction in irrigated area was by 40% from 48835 acres to 29062 acres in the Kheda district and by 42% from 12508 to 7317 acres in the Surat district.¹ Irrigated crops yielded much higher profits than unirrigated ones only when the cultivator could make do with his family labour. The unwillingness or inability to pay this 'cost' seemed to be an important consideration in the decline of irrigated area in Gujarat. The cost of manuring and watering the irrigated crops, essential if the maximum gains were to be had from wet cultivation, would also have meant the diversion of funds from immediate domestic consumption and social expenditure. This too seemed to be an unacceptable choice for the Gujarat peasants even in the 1920s and the 1930s.² In order to become a means for the elevation of family and caste status, wealth was required to promote a conscious articulation of social relations. Without being able to play a status determining role, the possession of wealth lacked its full meaning. At least in terms of the prevailing ethics of the caste system, wealth was not simply a means for

¹ Calculated from the GARBP and Season and Crop Reports of the relevant years. The irrigated area in the Broach district was negligible in both periods.

² As we have already indicated rice and sugarcane were two items, the demand for which increased sharply in Gujarat during this period. Even with hired labour their cultivation would have yielded slightly more profits than that to be had from cotton or groundnuts. It would, however, have implied a stricter management and more detailed supervision. A business farming approach, however, did not easily fit in with the ideas of small peasants who had yet to start keeping any farm-accounts and were still striving to fulfil their enhanced personal consumption requirements. Wet cultivation trenched on the fertility of the soil which then required manuring or rest, both raising its cost and demanding a diversion of domestic funds. As Volecker pointed out "Irrigation cannot be carried on beyond the limits which the supply and cost of available manure fixes." Volecker, J.A., Improvement of Indian Agriculture, 1897, p.100.

generating more wealth.¹

The need to save one's surplus income for personal consumption, to avoid making excessive labour commitments and the limitation of a low level of scientific knowledge set the boundaries within which technical improvements were acceptable to the Gujarat peasantry. It is not surprising that it did not pursue the use of manures with the needed vigour. Manure was an expensive item and used in conjunction with well irrigation increased greatly the labour requirements of cultivation.² The policy of the British government was concerned mostly with the improvement of the breed of crops being grown for export, or trying to promote the sale of agricultural machinery manufactured in England.³ In this respect, it was not based on the needs of the local economy and unsuited to the cultural and economic thinking of the Gujarat peasantry. There can be little doubt, however, that the technique of using

¹The significance of land purchase and land ownership for family status has already been mentioned in Chapter VI. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in purely economic terms, it would have been profitable for those members of the family who had migrated more or less permanently to the city or gone abroad to have sold their share in the land. This would, however, have deprived them of a readily demonstrable form of wealth and in the eyes of their caste brethren created an uncertainty about their capacity to pay a handsome dowry.

²Volecker noted that one acre of garden crops in 1899 cost RS. 96 in manures. Ginger, sugarcane, and plantains needed RS. 160 worth of manure per acre. Betelvines cost RS. 380 per acre to manure. Volecker, *op.cit.*, 1897, p.103. In the post-1947 period when tube wells had become cheaper both the irrigated area and the use of manure expanded rapidly in Gujarat.

³Volecker points out in detail why the Gujarat peasants were perfectly rational in rejecting the use of the heavy iron plough, imported seed drills, mowers or reapers. The iron plough cost about RS. 6, whereas the local only RS. 3. Being heavier the transportation

improved seeds was successfully promoted by the Department of Agriculture. By the time the Royal Commission on Agriculture enquired into the subject, Mann estimated that fully 30% of the 5 million acres under cotton in Bombay Presidency were being sown with an improved variety yielding 33% more than the previous breeds. In 1926, there were 500,000 acres sown with a higher class of groundnut seeds, and improved wheat seeds were being supplied for another 100,000 acres.¹ The end result for crop yields was a partial improvement accompanied by a general stagnation. At any rate there was no significant decline in yields of the principal crops and this should be put down to the system of fallowing land and a proper

Footnote cont.

of the iron plough was more difficult. Its repair had to be done at a foundry and paid for in cash. Without manuring and irrigation, deep ploughing could turn up inferior soils and lose the moisture in the shallower soils. This again would have put up the cost of production, which in turn would reduce funds available for personal consumption. The saving of labour to be gained from the use of other implements too would have had to be bought at great expense. The local seed drill, for example cost RS. 5-7 and an English one RS. 77, although the latter was more efficient and speedier. Ibid, pp 217/218.

¹Harold Mann noted the speed with which peasants took on a new seed once it had established its utility in improving productivity without disturbing any other part of peasant agronomy. Thus within a decade of introducing the improved groundnut seed, "the old Indian seed is practically gone", and the demand for improved wheat seeds was much greater than its supply. Mann felt that the British government had not put in enough funds or manpower in promoting the modernization of agriculture. Evidence before Royal Commission, op.cit., Vol.2, pp 70/76/88.

rotation of crops practised by the Gujarat peasantry.¹ The limitations of a poor scientific knowledge also prevented a resolution of ordinary problems. Insects damaged or destroyed at least 5% to 10% of the Gujarat harvest every year.² With the decline of the professional cattle breeder and the reduction in grazing lands, the peasantry in Gujarat did universally adopt the practise of stall feeding and hence its cattle were better looked after than those in the Deccan region. Beyond this, however, it failed to develop the breeding techniques required in the new situation which would have prevented the intermingling of different types of cattle on the much smaller grazing areas now available. Hence, its livestock quickly became half breeds, and more prone to various diseases.³

¹Average yield in lbs. per acre of principal crops

	1906-7 to 1910-11		1910-11 to 1914-15		1942-43 to 1946-47	
	Irrigated	Unirrigated	Irrigated	Unirrigated	Irrigated	Unirrigated
Ahmedabad						
Rice	NA	1440	NA	1440	NA	1440
Wheat	1300	560	1300	560	1300	560
Jowar	NA	1080	NA	1080	1200	980
Cotton	NA	125	NA	125	NA	125
Kheda						
Rice	NA	1320	NA	1320	1320	NA
Wheat	1300	600	1300	600	1300	600
Jowar	NA	1050	NA	1050	NA	
Cotton	NA	115	NA	115	NA	115
Broach						
Rice	NA	900	NA	900	NA	1200
Wheat	NA	600	NA	600	1300	700
Jowar	NA	1020	NA	1060	NA	1190
Cotton	NA	130	NA	130	NA	130
Surat						
Rice	NA	1560	NA	1560	NA	1560
Wheat	NA	560	NA	560	NA	560
Jowar	NA	1160	NA	760	NA	760
Cotton		120	NA	120	NA	120

(Quinquennial Average Yield of Crops in India)

²Mann, loc.cit.

³Evidence given by E. J. Bruen, Livestock Expert, Government of Bombay, Royal Commission on Agriculture, op.cit., Vol.2, p.400.

The Gujarat agrarian economy was in the 1930s therefore run by the resilience of a khud-kasht peasantry, the mass of whom were confident of getting the better of bad seasons and the money-lenders, and for the moment were content with being able to retain the gains in domestic consumption that had accrued to them at various points of time during the preceding 80 years.

APPENDIX I PART A

Total Imports by Rail of Selected Commodities
Into Gujarat and Kathiawar from Outside
And Within the Bombay Presidency

	1884/85 to 1888/89	1889/90 to 1893/94	1894/95 to 1898/99	1899/00 to 1903/4	1904/5 to 1908/9	1909/10 to 1913/14	1914/15 to 1918/19	1919/20 to 1921/22
WHEAT	170590	213576	324151	756660	535143	2701768	1314002	1196740
GRAM AND PULSES	92713	278074	78785	1127644	548256	735212	814335	1307333
RICE HUSKED AND UNHUSKED	175643	242169	235924	2140701	1586483	1665395	3065772	3462313
BAJRA AND JOWAR	266302	410279	602651	1172074	1112589	2143380	2493408	965485
OTHER GRAINS	221841	208514	602651	1172074	1112589	2143380	597200	461496
SPICES	108031	36173	62420	528532	180684	713941	167912	186730
REFINED SUGAR	193380	263122	308659	290497	422931	176637	631439	683273
UNREFINED SUGAR	576387	873114	736624	739889	1077239	1475442	1307013	1201529
TEA	551	1215	1615	3104	5483	16828	21558	34024
OILS	2262	47706	50829	147377	233520	365052	944746	763880
OILSEEDS	112516	161510	139331	408676	210123	820342	661397	874944
GHEE	3054	10572	3629	59824	3251	8384	19246	14642
TOBACCO	961	1239	1238	8620	3176	9617	6590	9853
SPIRITS	12456	6526	16166	13650	9801	5319	12428	11697
DRIED FRUIT AND NUTS	145251	114184	381344	131614	131239	150789	230556	216721
TWIST AND YARN	14255	20370	30473	24780	50383	34595	94792	288425
EUROPEAN AND INDIAN PIECE GOODS	122217	120399	123604	142018	119693	160469	168440	104125
FODDER	NA	NA	NA	261147	78928	504397	351943	338254
BRASS AND COPPER	21350	29308	116085	9819	22443	25964	15599	89294
WROUGHT AND UNWROUGHT IRON	154211	335983	350684	180221	320284	564639	321570	588647

(All quantities are five yearly annual averages
expressed in Maunds of 40 seers or 82.286 lbs.)

APPENDIX I PART B

Total Exports by Rail of Selected Commodities
from Gujarat and Kathiawar

ITEM	1884/85 to 1888/89	1889/90 to 1893/94	1894/95 to 1898/99	1899/00 to 1903/4	1904/5 to 1908/9	1909/10 to 1913/14	1914/15 to 1918/19	1919/20 to 1921/22
WHEAT	286969	212836	324151	344678	237331	276543	249753	233912
GRAM AND PULSES	14719	202078	499450	1127644	477601	553839	454857	297834
RICE HUSKED AND UNHUSKED	10715	6478	38986	10535	20389	26313	37325	33996
BAJRA AND JOWAR	25410	53919	82989	56634	70145	16650	41547	289808
OTHER GRAINS	168996	216528	250328	184801	123413	48078	373099	156753
SPICES	16611	19737	49499	30084	35880	47825	81725	72580
REFINED SUGAR	4867	6877	104067	1919	2767	5717	5112	1045
UNREFINED SUGAR	544	6727	11994	6778	12691	27109	16616	17033
TEA	12	33	52	51	153	146	373	546
OILS	7970	8858	15689	20857	63188	68291	136760	91019
OILSEEDS	188884	1050912	1262650	848749	1372959	1731010	1127198	874944
GHEE	16644	19912	27379	59824	76738	61885	117371	79148
TOBACCO	260835	333919	406117	284448	321193	353256	393904	391595
SPIRITS	1102	328	340	479	871	2003	30153	23626
DRIED FRUIT AND NUTS	67559	65998	79528	72458	131239	104872	163062	137653
TWIST AND YARN	102851	130032	177020	316032	386091	381951	168440	229489
EUROPEAN AND INDIAN PIECE GOODS	27330	52658	246175	219865	344828	737142	235774	945409
FODDER	NA	NA	NA	374587	1334040	393727	880630	359988
BRASS AND COPPER	33464	5244	5850	26801	5934	5823	5556	4563
WROUGHT AND UNWROUGHT IRON	26912	33790	7243	12974	103593	13062	39299	28570

(All figures in Maunds)

Source: Report on the External Land Trade and the Rail borne trade of the
Bombay Presidency, 1884/85 to 1921/22, (O.P.)

APPENDIX II

Value of Net Imports of Bullion (Gold and Silver) Imported into Bombay
Presidency (1801/2 - 1925/26) Expressed in an Index Form

Base year or 100 = 1866/67 value of
Net Bullion Imports = Rupees 40654935

Year	Index	Year	Index	Year	Index	Year	Index	Year	Index
1801/2	NA	1826/27	3.0	1852/53	NA	1878/79	42	1904/05	NA
1802/3	0.3	1827/28	2.0	1853/54	NA	1879/80	163	1905/06	NA
1803/04	1.0	1828/29	3.0	1854/55	13	1880/81	143	1906/07	463
1804/05	1.0	1829/30	3.0	1855/56	19	1881/82	208	1907/08	563
1805/06	2.0	1830/31	2.1	1856/57	17	1882/83	291	1908/09	290
1806/07	3.0	1831/32	2.0	1857/58	15	1883/84	240	1909/10	321
1807/08	NA	1832/33	1.0	1858/59	18	1884/85	231	1910/11	658
1808/09	2.0	1833/34	1.0	1859/60	20	1885/86	279	1911/12	977
1809/10	1.0	1834/35	3.0	1860/61	25	1886/87	NA	1912/13	990
1810/11	2.0	1835/36	3.0	1861/62	42	1887/88	NA	1913/14	825
1811/12	1.0	1836/37	3.0	1862/63	63	1888/89	NA	1914/15	340
1812/13	1.0	1837/38	3.2	1863/64	NA	1889/90	NA	1915/16	46
1813/14	0.5	1838/39	3.3	1864/65	NA	1890/91	NA	1916/17	570
1814/15	0.1	1839/40	4.0	1865/66	NA	1891/92	NA	1917/18	1675
1815/16	0.1	1840/41	3.4	1866/67	100	1892/93	NA	1918/19	566
1816/17	2.0	1841/42	1.6	1867/68	129	1893/94	NA	1919/20	1178
1817/18	2.0	1842/43	0.1	1868/69	215	1894/95	NA	1920/21	482
1818/19	3.0	1843/44	4.0	1869/70	176	1895/96	NA	1921/22	295
1819/20	5.0	1844/45	6.0	1870/71	42	1896/97	NA	1922/23	1126
1820/21	2.0	1845/46	3.3	1871/72	NA	1897/98	NA	1923/24	1241
1821/22	2.0	1846/47	2.1	1872/73	NA	1898/99	NA	1924/25	NA
1822/23	1.0	1847/48	2.0	1873/74	69	1899/00	NA	1925/26	785
1823/24	1.0	1848/49	2.0	1874/75	101	1900/01	NA		
1824/25	1.0	1849/50	4.0	1875/76	160	1901/02	NA		
1825/26	1.0	1850/51	4.0	1876/77	122	1902/03	NA		
		1851/52	NA	1877/78	249	1903/04	NA		

NOTES

1. The source for these data are the Tables in the Parliamentary Papers PP, 1864, Vol. XLII, pp. 311/133 and the Annual Statement of the Trade and Navigation of the Bombay Presidency.

2. The largest part of these bullion imports was on public account and may be presumed to be for payment of exports.

3. Since the figures for the earlier period were in £ sterling, we have used the rate of £1 = 1 Ahmedabad Sicca Rupee mentioned in DG, Ahmedabad, pp.72. Even if this were to be an underestimate the scale of bullion imports before 1856 will remain substantially lower than in the following period.

APPENDIX IIICAPITAL STOCK in the 4 districts of Ahmedabad, Surat, Broach and Kheda

Year	Bullocks	Index	Cows and Buffaloes	Index	Carts	Index	Ploughs	Index
1873/74	478978	(100)	669348	(100)	101966	(100)	194614	(100)
1879/80	460461	(96)	619780	(94)	100941	(99)	183512	(94)
1884/85	540391	(113)	706135	(105)	120428	(118)	213247	(110)
1889/90	427968	(90)	814647	(122)	116881	(115)	213478	(110)
1894/95	416565	(87)	882674	(132)	112360	(110)	200076	(104)
1899/1900	399049	(83)	893883	(134)	106116	(104)	191206	(98)
1901/02	318633	(67)	453843	(68)	93999	(92)	157315	(81)
1909/10	331066	(69)	826662	(124)	96326	(95)	162875	(84)
1915/16	401351	(84)	1045146	(156)	108362	(106)	192339	(99)
1919/20	396526	(83)	927629	(139)	122734	(120)	187912	(97)
1924/25	408482	(85)	998366	(149)	121725	(119)	206073	(106)
1929/30	427453	(89)	1085506	(162)	126317	(124)	213186	(110)

For Ahmedabad, Surat, Kheda

1929/30	366609	(100)	995725	(100)	105316	(100)	174444	(100)
1934/35	369137	(101)	1016243	(102)	104214	(99)	178894	(103)
1939/40	376468	(103)	980714	(99)	112180	(107)	180516	(104)

NB. From 1934/35 the figures for Broach and Panch Mahals were given together. Hence, Broach is excluded after 1934/35.

Source: General Administration Reports of the Bombay Presidency and Agricultural Statistics of India.

Concluding Notes

The evolution of the agrarian economy in Gujarat during the nineteenth and the twentieth century suggests many points of contrast with existing typologies of agriculture in the colonial period in India. Perhaps, the chief conclusion to be derived from the experience of the Gujarat peasantry is that agrarian growth or atleast increases in per capita cropped area can have varying economic and social implications even within the same ecological Region. Changes in structural factors like the weight of taxation on agriculture, the form of rural markets, the demand for primary products, the size of population and its age distribution, opportunities for earning an off-farm income and for migrating to urban areas can give a new meaning to statistical aggregates of increasing cultivation. Hence, the consequences of agrarian growth can only be grasped, if a regional economy is studied for a sufficiently long period of time to determine the nature and extent of changes in structural conditions. This idea may best be illustrated by considering the different phases of agrarian growth in Gujarat.

The context in which there was some expansion of cultivation in Gujarat between 1800 and 1850 had nothing in common with any other dynamic or prosperous pre-industrial economy. A decline in existing urban and court employment, a lowering of prices especially of cotton and foodgrains, and a high land revenue demand meant the presence of new cultivators and the need for them to grow and sell more of their produce in order to realize their former cash income. Even if the peasantry was willing to expand production at low prices, the better part of which was appropriated by intermediaries, moneylenders or the East India Company with its monopoly control over rural markets, the absence of adequate demand and proper transport for long distance trade in bulky items meant that increased output could only cause a glut in the local bazaars. In this phase, agrarian growth in Gujarat clearly had a perverse character since by lowering prices further increased output could actually reduce

total cash income. Yet, the effort to sell more was the only option for the peasant, if he was to meet his tax obligations and the minimal cash requirements of a low level of domestic subsistence. It is not surprising, that often he had a shortfall in his money income, and the first half of the nineteenth century in Gujarat was characterized by the necessity for large scale remissions of revenue and substantial arrears in the collection of the assessed amount even in years of normal rainfall. Realizing that they could only generate losses by trying to bridge the huge existing gap between a high revenue demand and low prices, the moneylenders or the bankers were not prepared to extend loans to make up for the deficits in the land revenue earnings of the East India Company.

Ultimately, an increase in land revenue collection occurred after 1850 when the peasantry was encouraged to expand cultivation by a reduction in the per acre rate of revenue. The Thirty Year Settlements provided a measure of security to the cultivators, and between 1850 and 1860 new land was taken up for cultivation, primarily because land revenue rates had been lowered. Given an opportunity to increase their incomes, the Gujarat peasants were able and prepared to work harder. This phase of growth showed, that the large spaces of unoccupied arable land in Gujarat were in part the result of cultivation being unprofitable. A stepping up in the population growth rate after 1850, and the price boom created by the impact of the American Civil War provided the economic incentive, the labor resources, and new stock for the expansion of cultivation, now to be devoted more to cotton and other crops which could be sold on the market.

The substantial additions to cultivated area could not but involve the greater part of the cultivating peasantry in these four Gujarat districts. Here, the land units of ownership and cultivation had traditionally favored small and medium peasants. In 1885/86, 50% of the owned holdings were below 5 acres and 42% between 5 and 25 acres. As later, more detailed data showed, these proportions also meant, that a large part

of actual area was owned by the small and medium classes of landholders. In 1916/17, for instance, 17% of total area was owned by those having less than five acres, 31% by those with between 5 - 15 acres, and another 18% by those having between 15 - 25 acres. Only 18% of the total area was owned by those having more than 100 acres each. As the owners of the larger estates usually rented land to the smaller landowners, differences in land held were greatly reduced if cultivated and not just the owned holdings were taken into account. The price of rented land varied from village to village. The average rent in the 1920s was equal to one-third or one-fourth of the gross produce. It was mostly paid in kind. What was especially significant about tenancy in Gujarat was the fact, that even in the twentieth century most of the leases were held for an indefinite period and on a customary basis which denied the landlord the power to change the rent.

The change in the form of the market after 1850 further ensured that gains in income were widely distributed, a result one would have expected from the prevailing pattern of land ownership. The penetration of the cotton markets by European firms specializing in the purchase and sale of raw cotton and functioning through their paid agents added greatly to the competition between the buyers of Kapas. The spread of the Railways and the Telegraph enhanced the process of price integration between the metropolitan and the mofussil markets. The setting up of machine Gins and steam Presses in the rural interior cut down the costs of packing and transporting raw cotton to the ports, thus enabling the buyers to offer a higher price for raw cotton. They were willing to do this for the demand for short stapled cotton had gone on increasing after 1860. This had greatly increased the prices of raw cotton, and even after the cotton boom of the 1860s, they remained at a much higher level in Gujarat than had been the case before 1850. On an average almost 40% of the cropped area in the Broach, Surat and Ahmedabad districts was cultivated with cotton. In the twentieth century, this area increased further, and more peasants started growing

cotton even in the Kheda district, where it had previously occupied a negligible proportion of the cropped area. By the 1920s, only about 15% of the cotton cultivators had to sell their produce through moneylenders on unfavorable terms and below the market price. This was also a trend to be found in the markets for tobacco and wheat. When sometimes the merchant made a large profit from rural trade, as in the case of Rice trade, it was due not to his monopoly over the cultivator, but because he alone had the facility and the interest to have the Rice cleaned and polished at the local Mill. The increase in the volume of rural trade, the greater competition in rural markets and the convenience of being able to import or export at any time of the year due to the Railways reduced greatly the difference between the prices in the months preceding and following the harvest.

Increases in cultivated area did not always reflect gains in money income even after 1850. If the period between 1850 and 1870 may be said to have been one where peasants made absolute gains in income because of a lowering of the tax burden and the price boom of the 1860s, the expansion of cultivation between 1870 and 1890 was meant to try and retain those gains in a period of lower prices. A similar cycle was to characterize the years between 1905 - 1917 and 1918 - 1935. In the first period an increase in the demand for wheat and fruits helped to offset the impact of a fall in cotton prices and in the second this was countered by an expansion of groundnut and tobacco cultivation. Diversification of crops was accompanied by an expansion of dairy farming or at least the purchase and maintenance of greatly increased numbers of milch cattle for the manufacture of Ghee and the procurement of milk. The area sown with grass for feeding the cattle also helped in preserving a proper system of fallows, just as the cultivation of pulses, groundnuts, and grains like Ragi was a part and parcel of the system of mixed cropping followed by the Gujarat peasants. The impact of the market or of British policy did not deflect peasants in Gujarat from their traditional ways of maintaining soil fertility

in a region of dry farming.

The necessity for using all the known and tested techniques for keeping up a secure agriculture was brought home to the Gujarat peasantry by the long run of bad seasons in the 1890s, which culminated in the famine years of 1899 to 1901. The impact of the famine years and of diseases like the Plague was to substantially slow down the rate of population growth. By 1921, the population in the four Gujarat districts of Broach, Ahmedabad, Kheda and Surat had only recovered to its 1881 level. Yet, this reduced population was better off economically, especially in years of a normal harvest and high prices. Its level of cash earnings and expenditure on domestic consumption had increased over the nineteenth century. More peasants now ate imported rice, refined sugar, and wore shirts and shoes. The increase in the standard of living was best exemplified in the diet and dress of middle level castes like the Kunbis. Their investments in improving their caste status by paying out larger dowries, keeping family priests and adopting more elaborate birth and death rituals showed the extent to which wealth was still considered chiefly as a means of gaining higher social status rather than simply generating more wealth. In varying degrees, the consumption pattern and the social ethos of the Kunbis was reproduced by the other peasant castes. This included the Tribals in Gujarat. As late entrants into the agrarian economy they provided the main recruits for day labor, and the Hali system which continued to exist in different forms. Due to the rapid expansion of the cultivated area, the construction of Public Works like the Railways and Roads, and the start of cotton gins, steam presses and Textile Mills, rural labor was in short supply, especially at harvest time in twentieth century Gujarat. The result of this scarcity was a rise in the real wages of field labor in Gujarat, as shown by the Report of the K.L. Datta committee. Improved wages allowed the field laborers also to participate in partly improving their consumption standards.

Although most sections of the agrarian population seemed in some degree to have improved their economic position differences in terms of wealth remained prominent. The Tribals who had started to take to settled cultivation only in the nineteenth century suffered from a lack of inherited wealth, and the occupation of the best lands by the existing peasant castes. They were inducted into the agrarian economy in a subordinate position, one which was often reinforced by the poorly drained land they might occupy or the high rate of interest they might be forced to pay. Their condition seemed, however, to be better than that of the Tribals in the Thana or the Panch Mahals districts. Differences of wealth also existed among and within the peasant castes, although it would be very difficult to make them correspond with any single dominating factor. The impact of a bad season, the premature death of working members in a family due to disease, the absence of marriage for one generation of sons or daughters due to the high bride price or dowry being demanded, or the migration of a part of the family to the city could alter the labor supply and the resources available to a peasant family, and start it off on the road of relative poverty. In Gujarat, borrowing, although it was universal did not often impoverish the peasant castes. They enjoyed credit at low rates of interest, and although they accounted for the largest part of the borrowings seldom mortgaged their lands or pawned their ornaments. Sales of land due to compulsory processes were few and far between. Land was sought chiefly by non-cultivators for renting out. Data relating to genuine sales of land shows that the selling value of agricultural land rose in Gujarat during the twentieth century. A loss of land did not always mean an economic loss for the seller.

Within the peasantry, there were of course, those who have been termed a 'rich peasant elite', and they were to be identified by the possession of surplus wealth which could be used as capital in trade or moneylending. However, there was nothing to

suggest, that the 'rich peasants' alone had gained or that their acquisition of economic gains necessarily implied the impoverishment of a so-called 'middle' peasantry, one which is better described by the term khud-kasht or independent peasant. These khud-kasht peasants, who owned and cultivated their lands were the dominant numerical majority in the Gujarat countryside. They had been the main beneficiaries of the market, which had improved their cash earnings so that they could no longer be dictated to by the State, the moneylender or indeed the 'rich peasant elite'. Free to take their own economic and social decisions, they were guided much more by considerations of increasing domestic consumption and improving their caste status than by any concern to accumulate capital or rapidly modernize agricultural production.

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