CHAPTER VI

PRIMARY ZAMINDARS

(1700-50)

A definite change in the position of the Primary zamindars vis-à-vis the provincial authorities as also the peasantry is discernable in the available sources. Under the prevailing situation the Primary zamindars endeavored to shake off the loosening grip of the administrative apparatus, and extend and intensify their own hold over the sources of revenue. Simultaneously a section of them suffered setbacks and lost its position to other contestants. Besides, the prevailing situation also facilitated emergence of new rights identical to those of the Primary zamindars. Even though specific information casting light on the overall impact of the emerging pattern of zamindar-peasantry relationship is hard to come by, some idea of the problem may be formed from the available evidence which, by and large, represents the imperial point of view.

The author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi furnishes brief, though valuable information concerning the position of the bantha-daran (i.e. the Superior and the Primary zamindars) during the sixth decade of the eighteenth century. As noted in detail in the preceding Chapters (II, IV), the Mirat
states that the bantha-daran had occupied talpad portion of land which they had formerly surrendered to the state under pressure of arms, encroached upon the raiyat lands, the Nazim had to lead military expeditions to collect peskkash, procure sureties and ensure remittance of revenues (mal-i wajib) from the bantha-daran who had made encroachments.1 Elsewhere the same work notes that the Nazim 'visited every pargana' for effecting assessment which he did 'according to his own strength and exigency of situation'.2 As such possessions of the bantha-daran and others could be assessed for revenue purposes and the remittance thereof could be ensured under the immediate pressure of arms and, apparently, not through the routine administrative apparatus which seems to have been rendered ineffective.3 The bantha-daran, if would appear, also seem to have acquired intermediary positions, for they are shown as undertaking responsibility for remitting land-revenue (mal-i wajib).

The observations of the Mirat as they come from and apparently for the sixth decade of the eighteenth century


3. For similar observations, Rasmala p. 545, Bombay Govt. Revenue Records, 1821 II p 636; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, p 142.
need to be examined closely for ascertaining the growth and dimensions of the reported recalcitrance and acts of widespread encroachments upon the state's share. Moreover, the bantha-daran, it may be recalled, consisted of the Superior as well as the Primary zamindars. It has, therefore, to be ascertained if the reported developments were related, exclusively, to the Superior zamindars i.e a section of whom offered 'peshkash' on its bantha-possessions. Or else, the Primary zamindars who were required to offer 'salami' had been able to rise in social status as denominated by the reported offering of peshkash, instead of the salami. Before arriving at a safe conclusion it seems pertinent to examine the observations of the Mirat and other relevant points with the help of detailed evidence contained in the same work and other documentary evidence available for the period.

The process of acquiring control over the talpad and, for that matter the non-zamindari lands, appears to have started on a noticeable scale as early as, if not earlier than, the period of subedari of Shahamat Khan (1713). According to a news report the Khan led military expedition for evicting the Kolis out of a number of villages of parga-

1. Neither all the Primary zamindars were the bantha-daran nor all of the latter were the Superior zamindars. (Chapter II and V above). The Mirat, here, does not take note of the Primary zamindars who did not enjoy their rights in the form of bantha.
Baroda which they had forcibly occupied. Later, Daood Khan Panni (1713-15) took steps against the Koli (girasias) of the same pargana and in the adjoining Mahiwara region for ensuring their ouster from the villages which they had occupied by force. Another document specifies a number of villages in pargana Viramgaon which the girasias had occupied during Daood Khan's period of subedar and later refused to pay revenues on their new acquisitions. Similarly Somji and Anandji, girasias of mawza Deloli (pargana Kadi) had, sometime before the subedar of Mubariz-ul mulk (1724-30) occupied 350 bighas out of 967 bigha and 10 biswas of talpad land of the same village. In such and similar instances the girasias are noticed in possession of a part of the raiyati lands which for reasons not known, was not encroached upon entirely. From 1727 onward the girasias are increasingly noticed in possession of entire villages which

2. Ibid, 5th and 23rd Shawwal, 3rd RY Farrukh Siyar, No. 2312, 2350.
4. Ibid; Kadi, R.No 61 Pune read with Account f 319 a.
5. For the area occupied by the girasias (girasia mutas-sarrif or dar tasarruf-i girasia) Mazruat mawza (so and so) waghaira amla pargana (such and such) Sarkar Ahmadabad, babat fasi-i kharif, 1130 fasli and 1133 fasli R No 37 Pune.
otherwise contained talpad or simply raiyati lands. 1

The Primary zamindars and others seem to have found the prevailing atmosphere increasingly congenial to go their own way and make acquisitions. According to the Mirat-i Ahmadi "some of the Rajputs and Kolis and others, in course of time, had acquired a little strength, raised disturbances in the raiyati villages, far and near, lifting cattle and killing the cultivators. The peasants of those places were thus compelled to gratify them by giving them, in some places, a fixed amount of money every year, or one or two cultivable fields. This exaction is known as giras and wol (or udal). This custom has become well established in this region and owing to the weakness of the Governors has become universal (lit 'reached perfection'). There is hardly a place in the parganas where a group of Rajputs, Kolis and Musalmans have not got their maken or giras and wol". It adds that "now owing to the absence of (imperial) control" these people "have settled in certain places and are seizing (not only) the whole of the talpad or the part under the government but in addition many (other) villages to meet

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1. Yad-dasht dehat pargana Kadi, Sarkar Ahmadabad, R No 61; ibid, parganas Bheel, Baroda, Idar, Viramgaon, Mhorasa, Mekhrej and Piplod, R No 64.
their (claim of ) *giras*. \(^1\)

What emerges from the long statement cited above is that the Rajputs and Kolis (i.e the established land holders of long standing) were joined in also by others in their all out attempt to make acquisitions by capitalizing the prevailing situation; that the acquisitions were made not only at the cost of the state but also the *riaya*, that stood unprotected, was likewise bullied down for making concessions to the encroachers; that such exactions, more interestingly, were also known as *giras* i.e an extension of the legally established right of the zamindars under the same nomenclature. \(^2\)

Further information is not available in the contemporary records but works of later date cast some light on the form of rights which emerged during the period.

The officials of the East India Company noticed many such rights which emerged during the eighteenth century and found their way into the nineteenth. Thus, in addition to the 'legitimate' *giras* claims, the British came across the *giras* which *meant a sum paid to powerful neighbour for


2. Vide Chapter V above. Irfan Habib (*Agrarian System*, pp 142-3, 147) discusses only the emerging form of *giras* and does not pay attention to its legal form. Please see detailed references in the following discussion.
protection and assistance or "to an unruly village as the price of forebearance" and "to please dangerous neighbours (Kothali giras)." It could also be termed abania which meant "land acquired either by usurpation or encroachment". There was then the tora (also called toda) giras which was a 'blackmail imposed in cash' to 'gratify the avarice of the strong' one. The giras, in whatever form was the claim which once established "never becomes defunct". As such the zamindari rights were created and sought to be extended through fair and foul means.

1. Bombay Gazetteer (Kaira) pp. 82-3
2. Ibid pp. 83, 91; Selections from the Records of the Baroda Government No II vol II, (giras), pp 590, 1122; For the difference drawn between the giras as an exaction and giras as a legal claim, Memorandum submitted to the Bombay Government Ibid, pp 1171-77.
4. Hamilton Walter, op. cit, I p 608. There were then the rights called ugaria, Kothali, Kapal, 'pagia', 'baria', Kolapi which also were in the nature of blackmail. Bombay Gazetteer (Kaira) pp 82, 93,315. Ibid II pp 495-6 An interesting instance as to how the giras claims originated is related in the Bombay Revenue Selection, (p 725). A girasia woman, while at the village of Dungri, was delivered of a son, and on the occasion received a little dry ginger, and molasses from the headman of the village. When the child grew up, he claimed this grant as a right and after some dispute, it was settled that, in its stead, he should receive a yearly allowance of Rupee one and eight annas; For a detailed view of the giras in its various legal and blackmail form, Lallubhai Pranvallabhdas Parikh (ed.) Hand book of giras; (Being a compilation of Decrees & c on questions regarding giras, wanta and the guaranteed rights) pp 7, 10,25,35,61,82 Selections From the Records of the Baroda Government, No II, Vol II, ' (Giras), pp 586-655, 853-901, 1121-27.
But it does not mean that all the Primary zamindars were invariably the gainers in the game. The stronger zamindars captured lands of the girasias.¹

As a result there emerged the "mool-girasias" i.e. originally the girasias who had come to terms with the stronger ones who had established over them and by surrendering a portion of their lands to them, had retained the remainder as 'giras.'² Thus the insecurity prevailed for both the raiyat as well as the zamindars. The prevailing insecure state of affair, apparently, might have obliged, rather forced, the zamindars and the raiyat to ensure their safety in their own right.³

The Primary zamindars also sought to acquire additional rights. They contracted ijarah rights and making use of the

1. Treaties VI pp. 9-10; Rasmala p 567; Bombay Gazetteer IV pp 147, 150; Ibid VIII, pp 115-16; East India Papers p 720; For a generalised view to the same effect; S Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars Under The Mughals", p 28.

2. Treaties VI, p. 4; Ibid, VII p 9. The girasias surrendered the major part of their share in perpetuity (aghat) or for a fixed number of years (savad) Rasmala, p 567; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, pp 147-50.

3. In the year 1804 it was noticed that "every gracia village is in itself a fortification and every village is surrounded by a mud wall, many of these having in the centre a high stone tower to guard against the attack of their neighbours." Report from Mr HW Diggle to Lieut Col A Walker, Resident at Baroda, 10 May 1804*; Selection From Bombay Government No XXXIX Appendix, pp 30-34. Please see also Hamilton Walter, op cit, 1 p 652; Bombay Gazetteer, IV, p 104, RD Chowksey op cit, p 14.
state's declining power to collect revenues, continued to retain the position. Thus, the administration could not ensure their eviction and, helplessly, accepted them in the new role which the prevailing situation had facilitated them to acquire. According to a parwana (1747) then Nazim assured Rabhji and other Kolis (i.e. girasias) of village Kasandra that the revenue of the village would be demanded from them only and that the riyaa would not be troubled for making direct payment on any account.\textsuperscript{1} Apparently the girasias had stepped in as intermediaries.\textsuperscript{2} Some girasias of a number of villages (pangana Piplod) seem to have stepped into the shoes of the muqaddams sometime between 1723 and 1726. The available tamassuks for the year 1723-24 (kharif 1131 fasli) mention the muqaddams as undertaking responsibility for the collection and remittance of the assessed revenues for the villages, 11 in number. But three years later (Kharif 1134 fasli 1726-27) the girasias are shown as undertaking the

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Naqi parwana bandhari;} dt. 17 Rabi II, 29 R.Y. Muhammad Shah PC No 79E.
\item The riyaa seems to have been forced into the arm of the girasias by the oppressive acts of the administration and the plundering raids of the neighbouring villagers. For details please see the following discussion. For a reverse position i.e. intermediary zamindars depressing the status of Primary zamindars, S Nurul Hasan, "Zamindars under the Mughals", pp 28-9.
\end{enumerate}
responsibility in seven of the 11 villages.  

Increasing hold of the Primary zamindar on the village is further suggested by another piece of information coming for the year 1743-4. The girasia of mawza Borvi (pargana Bheel) which contained 2550 and 850 bighas of talpad and bantha lands respectively, was assessed at Rs. 701/- for the rabi and kharif crop seasons of the year 1151 fasli. The assessed amount is reflected as blimuqte yekraqmi sal-i tamam (single amount fixed in lump sum for the whole year) together for the bantha and the talpad without reflecting the cropped area and the holders of land.  

It goes to suggest that the distinction between mal-i wajib (talpad) and salami (bantha) had been done away with, details of assessment were not taken into account and the girasia was regarded as assessment unit. There is also evidence to show that the giriasas who, at one or the other stage, had acquired

1. Tamassukat for the fasli years 1131 and 1134 (fasl-i Kharif) for dehat-i pargana Piplod. R No 27, Pune. Particularly see the tamassuks for the villages of Bhalona, Seholi, Ondni, Baori, Jalondra, Rukhal and Kesarpur for which the girasias furnished undertaking. For the rest of villages i.e. Santri, Ankohlo, Baroda and Manjak the muqaddams furnished undertaking for both the years.

2. Yad-dasht khasra mazruat mawza Borvi, amla pargana Bheel, Sarkar Ahmadabad, fasl-i kharif-o Rabi, 1151 fasli, R No 32 read with Account, f 176 a.

3. Also see the similar documents for the villages of Barej, Patri Kochrab, Palordra, Bhudah and Santej, pargana haveli Ahmadabad for the years 1152, 1155 and 1156 fasli, R No 35 read with Account ff 414a-15b.
the position for paying revenues on lump sum basis later (1729-30) refused to pay it at all. But it must not be taken to imply that the girasias had acquired hold over the entire talpad, for that matter the raiyati tracts of lands and done away with the distinction between them and the bantha possessions which, the evidence suggests survived even after the extinction of the Mughal rule from the Subah.

It has been discussed in the preceding Chapter that the imperial administration had endeavoured to correlate its claim (salami) on the Primary zamindars with their actual paying capacity by treating the individual peasant and his holding as assessment unit and by regulating the process of assessment through the routine revenue administrative machinery. But during the period under review the whole system seems to have undergone a vital change.

1. Mazruat mawza Maheem, pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasi-i kharif-o rabi 1127 fasli read with Yad-dasht-khichri-o bewra dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1160 fasli R No 43. Pune.

The expeditionary forces led by the Nizams gradually came to replace the routine administrative machinery for assessing mal-i wajib, including salami. In this regard observations of the Mirat for the sixth decade of the century have already been noticed. From a closer view of the available evidence it would appear that the aforesaid development had acquired momentum as early as, if not earlier than the third decade of the century. Though the military expeditions were led even during the seventeenth century but for a different purpose. From the year 1711-12 the military expeditions came to be led for collecting peshkash on a wider scale. Later from the year 1720-21 these expeditions seem to have been led regularly, the choice of time and area being determined mainly by the extent and magnitude of Maratha presence and internal politics of the Mughal nobility.

1. The expeditions were led for making administrative arrangements, procuring muchalkas and bandharis from leading recalcitrants, ensuring remittance of peshkash from the noted recalcitrants and re-enforcing local administration where and when needed. These expeditions were generally preventive and sometime punitive in approach. Account; ff 15a, 16a; Mirat-i Ahmadi; 1 pp 168-9, 177, 188, 192, 210, 290-1, 303, 324-5, 330, 334.

If we go by the observations of the Mirat, it would appear that from the same year the expeditionary forces came to be led for "making assessment", "assessing parganas" in addition to taking bonds (muchaikas), 'establishment of order' grasping peshkash and procuring sureties. As such the expeditionary forces stepped into the shoes of the assessment-machinery. It would also appear that the hurriedly passing armies required to cover entire subah might not have been able to effect detailed assessment the way it was done during the preceding days by the routine administrative machinery.

Other set of evidence also suggests that the details of assessment were generally ignored. It has been mentioned above that the state could demand a single amount in lump sum for the whole year from the girasias without any reference to the area actually cropped and the individual holdings. The available mazruat documents for a number of villages of the parganas of Bheel, (1723-24), Kadi (1725-26)


2. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp. 43, 46 50, 55, 57, 82, 92, 167, 243-4, 257-8, Mukhtarar Tarikh-i Gujarat. ff 87-9
and Petlad (1727–8) do not carry cultivator-plot-crop wise details for the bantha portion as was usually done earlier. Instead, the entire area with no other details is shown against the girasia himself. Then, the documents recording actual collection of salami reflect a lump sum (bilmuqta) amount for the entire year for both the crop seasons together. It would therefore, appear that the Primary zamindars, in such instances replaced the individual peasants and his holding and acquired the position of, and themselves emerged as, the assessment unit. Obviously, the zamindars were left free to settle details with the peasantry. As such the

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1. Please see documents entitled Yad-dasht muzruat mawza (so and so), amla pargana (such and such), fasl–i kharif for the fasli years 1131, 1133 & 1135. R No 37 Pune. However in certain villages of pargana haveli Ahmadabad, the salami continued to be assessed on the basis of area actually cropped by individual peasant. Mazruat mawza Balad and Odhab, fasl–i Kharif, (1150 fasli), and Faizabad (kharif 1145 fasli) R No 21 Pune.

2. The very title of the documents Tumar Taskhis mawza Harkhij waghaira amla pargana Jamusar babat-fasli kharif-o-rabi, sichqan ll 1127 fasli, hama jeht sal-i tamam bilmuqta (R No 37, Pune) is suggestive. Also see, yad-dasht-paldaish pargana Dholqa, Sarkar Ahmadabad, fasl–i kharif 1129 fasli (R No 29 Pune) which records the amount as under: bantha salami Rs 5525/- bilmuqte sal-i tamam.

3. Later, the British noticed that the bantha lands of the girasias were subject to the payment of somekind of quit-rent which was a fixed amount. Moreover, according to them, state did not enjoy any right to interfere into the affairs of the bantha. Apparently, the British who came across the position that emerged during the days of decline of Mughal rule, erroneously considered it as the practice introduced and kept up by the Mughals during the hey day of the empire. Bombay Gazetteer, ll (Surat, Baroda) pp 387, 482, 495-6, Ibid (Kaira) pp
state's policy of reaching the peasantry directly was reversed by the Primary zamindars along with the other zamindars as discussed in the preceding Chapters. Another set of evidence indicating a fall in the power of administration to force the Primary zamindars for paying the salami and the latter's increasing power to resist the payment, is also available. Girasia of village Kota (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) paid the salami the volume of which went on declining. Thus during the year 1719-20 the salami amounted to Rs. 641/- which figure fell to Rs 500 and annas 6 in 1720-21. During the following ten years, the girasia paid nothing.¹ Likewise the Primary zamindar of village Kasandra of the same pargana paid Rs 261/- and 231/- during 1719-20 and 1721-22 respectively by way of bantha-salami. During the years 1722-23 to 1731-32 no amount by way of the bantha salami from the village could be collected.² Similarly, the amount of salami collected from the entire pargana Dholga in the year 1720-21 stood at Rs 10122/- but the following year

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¹ Mawaznah-I dehsala, dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, R.No.26, Pune.
² Ibid.
it dwindled to Rs 4585/- only.\(^1\) As compared to 1714-5 entire receipts from _pargana haveli_ Ahmadabad dwindled to 5.05 percent in 1751-52.\(^2\) In 1750-51 total revenue receipts, including _salami_ from the entire _subah_ under the _Nazim_'s control amounted to Rs. 400,000/- only.\(^3\) The dwindling volume of income clearly speaks of the declining power of the administration.

The sharp and well evident fall in the revenue receipts inclusive of the _salami_ may not be explained away by referring to the territorial losses to the Marathas because the volume of revenue-returns dwindled in the areas which were under the direct control of the _Nazims_. Moreover, fertility

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\(^1\) _Yadasht-_ _paidalish_ _pargana_ Dholqa, _sarkar_, Ahmadabad, _fasl-i kharif_ 1128 _fasli_ ff 4-17; ibid (1130 _fasli_) ff 8-14 PC. It is worth mentioning that the _Account_ mentions 96 out of 244 villages of _pargana_ Bhil, and Chunwal (Viramgaon) with no _hasil_ figure (_hasil nada-rad_ ) for the year 1725-26. Each of these villages contained _zamindari_ lands. But on the other hand each of the village which was entirely _raiyati_ has been furnished with the _hasil_ figures. _Account_ ff 167b-69a 175b-81b, 236b-37b, 244a.

\(^2\) _Taqseem Mawaziat-mahal_ _pargana haveli_ Ahmadabad dated 1161 _fasli_, R No 42. Pune. The document specifies income from each village for the years 1122 _fasli_ (1714/15 AD) and 1160 _fasli_ (1751-52 AD). For calculating percentage we have taken into account only such villages as were held by the Mughal _Subedar_ at the exclusion of the ones held by the Marathas.

\(^3\) _Mirat-i Ahmadi_ II, pp 396-7. It may be seen that the total revenue returns of the _subah_ (excluding _sarkar_ Surat) amounted Rs. 1,20,000,00 in a perfect (_kamil_) year and Rs 77,000,00 in a normal year during the heyday of Mughal rule. _Account_ ff 14a
of the soil too does not seem to have eroded. Therefore the causes of fall in the volume of revenues have to be found out somewhere else.

The necessity of leading expeditions for revenue purposes might have arisen out of the emerging ineffectiveness of the normal machinery of administration in its dealing with the zamindars effectively and failure to ensure remittance of revenue through the regular process.

Then the military establishment and expeditionary forces which once acted as a watchdog to ensure smooth flow of revenues, themselves acquired the form of assessment and collection making machine thus making the collection dependent upon leading of expeditions. The military expeditions, as pointed out above, were not and could not be led regularly. Moreover, the armed resistance put up by the zamindars

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 316. But then the movement of armies, particularly of the warning ones, might have done damage to the standing crops. Ibid, II p 145.

2. Increasing and increased recalcitrance necessitated increase in military strength. But the available income was found insufficient for the purpose. (Mirat-i Ahmadi pp 306, 360-1 Ibid II pp 9, 57, 245-46, 316, 396). Increasing necessity of additional forces followed by paucity of funds led to further decline in their strength and failure against the rebels. (Ibid I pp 307, 345, Ibid II pp 133, 163-65, 172-4, 245-49, 256-57, 351. Please see particularly Anonymous, Apparao Bholanath collection MS No 245 Pt. II, f 4 where it states that under Mubariz-ul-Mulk the faujdars had assumed the charge but had no power to come out of the fortresses and effect assessment. The faujdars taqat-i sinazori-i tashkhis nadashte, b'dushwar chahar diwari-i qila ra nigahdashte.
as will be seen below, further hindered the movement of the forces rendering the task of assessment and collection all the more difficult.

Though the incidents of armed resistance were not wholly wanting during the preceding days, from 1725-6 and particularly from 1731-32 such incidents seem to have become common, indicating the zamindar's increasing strength and determination to evade payments or, at least, bargain the amount.⁠¹ It is worth mentioning that the girasias among other, put up armed resistance even in the villages of parvana havell Ahmadabad, seat of power and successfully evaded payments of revenue for many years.⁠² Leading nobles of the region like Safdar Khan Babi and Jawanmard Khan Babi found it difficult to effect assessment and collection in south Gujarat and, therefore, withdrew from the field.⁠³

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 133, 144-5, 163-5, 186, 212, 244, 246-8, 257-60, 265-6, 297, 301, 307-12, 319, 323; Rasmala pp 393-4. Nizam-ul mulk Asaf Jah (Subedar) would not like to retain Viramgaon in his conditional jagir (1723-24) as it was noted for its recalcitrance which was on the increase. Ibid II p 48.


3. Mirat-i Ahmadi II, pp 107, 186, 245-6 Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat, f 83
Under the prevailing circumstances, the Nazim whenever strong assessed with heavy hand\(^1\) but at times had to be contented with "more or less" because of the exigency of situation (\(b\'\text{mutaquza-i halat-i waqt}\)).\(^2\) It would therefore appear that the irregularly collected amount was fixed more by the zamindar's power to resist at the moment rather than by his ability to pay.\(^3\) Since the Nazim's power to exert pressure was conditioned by a number of adverse factors, he could extort less and less.

A significant change in the position of Primary zamindars is discernable from the nomenclature used to denominate the offering made by them. Thus one Subhag Singh, girasia of mawza Leth (pargana Piplod) and Rambhai, muqaddam of the village undertook responsibility of paying salami and mal-i wajib respectively in 1723-24. In 1726-27, the girasia is

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1. Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 454-5, Ibid II p 244.

2. Ibid II pp 258-9, 397-8; Ibid, Supplement p 258

3. Ibid II pp 37, 258-9, 275-6 Rogers, op cit I pp. 63, 82; Rasmala pp 394-5. The impact of strength under Nazim's command and of the severe action taken may, to a great extent be gauged from the incident of Dabhali. As a result of the Nazim's severe action "the zamindars and malguzars of the nearby places came on their own accord" and since he was powerful enough he "managed the Kolis as he wished". Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 43-4; For the impact of weakness, Ibid II pp 143-4, 162-4 as also Ibid I p 174 Ibid II pp 133, 164, 247, 305, 351, 353.

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shown to have paid the **mal-i wajib** also.¹ In the year 1734-35 the **girasias** offering is specified as **peshkash**.² One Ajba Singh who had offered Rs. 567/- by way of **salami** in 1719, later (1727) is shown to have paid Rs 501/- by way of **peshkash** to the expeditionary forces.³ From the year 1731 instances of **girasias** making offerings as **peshkash** instead of **salami** appear more frequently and seem to have become quite common.⁴ Then some other **girasias** paid **khichri** (which otherwise was levied from the **raiyyati** tracts of lands)⁵ instead of **mal-i wajib** and **peshkash** in lieu of **salami**.⁶ Still others paid a single amount (**yek raqmi**) on lump sum (**bilmsgte**) for the whole year (**sal-tamam**). Such an offering is not placed under any of the routine head of account. Thus

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1. Tamassukat for the **fasli** years 1131 and 1134 **fasli** for **dehat-i pargana** Piplod, **Sarkar Ahmadabad R No 59**, Pune.
2. Fa'il zamini for the year 1142 **fasli**, **dehat pargana** Piplod **sarkar Ahmadabad R No 51**.
3. Yad-dasht **paidalsh dehat-i pargana** Jhalawar (Viramgaon) for **fasli** years 1127 and 1135, R No 70 Pune.
4. Yad-dasht--**peshkash-o khichri waghaira subah Gujarat**, R No 63, Pune. The document notes the **peshkash** exacted from the **girasias** separately from the one paid by the **zamindars of pargana** Jamusar and Kaparbanj.
5. For details please see discussion in following pages
6. Yad-dasht-Khasra **Mawza** Borvi op cit **Tumar Tashkhis mawza** Harkej op cit. Yad dasht-Khasra **mazruat mawza amla pargana** Mamurabad **fasli-i-Rabi-o-Kharif** 1151 **fasli**, R No 32 Pune. Also the similar documents for the villages Akhrol, Okla and Uledra (**pargana** Munda), **Sarkar Ahmadabad**; **Haqiqaat-i nazar-i peshkash zamindaran waghaira subah Gujarat taraf Mahi Kantha**, RNo 28, Pune.

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the distinction between *mal-i wajib*, *khichri*, *salami* and *peshkash* was getting blurred. The social distinction as denominated by the nomenclature that used to denote the payments was likewise changing. For all practical purposes a section of the Primary zamindars came to enjoy a Superior zamindar-like position, simultaneously holding the intermediary position and enjoying rights of the Primary zamindars.

The preceding discussion indicates that the state apparatus gradually ceased to act as a power that once regulated the affairs concerning the revenue by keeping a check on the zamindar peasantry relationship. The administration seems to have failed to check the Primary zamindars, like the Superior zamindars from extending their territorial sway and hold over the sources of revenue. The administration

1. From the observations of the works of later date it would appear that the position of *banthadar* within the *bantha* possessions and vis a vis the *talpad* had undergone a drastic change. The *girasias*, according to these works, claimed in many places proprietary rights over their *bantha* possession and over the entire villages which contained their *giras* rights. Secondly, the once duly assessed *salami* acquired the position of quit rent', a nominal fixed rental (*udhad wanta*); thirdly, the *banthadar* claimed and asserted full autonomy within the *bantha* possessions; Fourthly some of them claimed that their *bantha* possession were exempt (literally relief, *rahat*) from paying any 'rental', so they called it *rahat wanta*. Finally there were the *girasias* who had acquired *ugaria wanta* i.e share exacted in return for succor (*ugaru*) given to the weaker against the stronger ones. *Bombay Govt. Selections*, New Series, 23; *India Litho Papers* III p 708, Bombay Gazetteer, II pp 495-6; *Ibid* VIII pp 315-9; *Ibid* (Kaira), pp 81-3.
tion, it would appear, compromised its position by accepting
the *isil-awrampli* without making a concerted effort to put
the affairs back in order. However, some pieces of available information appear to be worth considering.

The *Khasra* documents mention the *girasias* enjoying revenue free lands at least from the year 1738. Thus a *girasia* is reflected as holding 37 *bighas* of cultivated land by way of *napa* (free of obligation) in *mawza Balad* (*pargana haveli* Ahmadabad) during the year (1149 *fasli*) 1741-42. In village *Odhab* of the same *pargana* a *girasia* is shown as holding 18 *bighas* of cultivated area under the title of *pusaila* i.e grant conditional upon village service. In *mawza* *Mahej* (*pargana haveli* Ahmadabad) 14 *bighas* and 15 *biswas* of land is reflected as *bantha-riyati:* during the *kharif* season of the year 1146 *fasli* (1738). The land shown

1. It has been observed in the Introduction and Chapter II that the state assigned the executive as well as financial powers to one and the same person. Whether it was an effort consciously made to strengthen hands of the local officials to enable them to deal with the recalcitrants effectively, or else a concession given by the weak centre to strong nobles, or both is difficult to ascertain.

2. *Mazruat mawza Balad, fasl-i kharif 1149 fasli; pargana haveli* Ahmadabad, R No 23, Pune. The similar document for the year 1141 *fasli* (kharif) does not reflect the area as such. R No 22 Pune.

3. *Mazruat mawza Odhab, fasl-i kharif 1149 fasli,* (R No 42 Pune) read with *Ibid* for 1140 *fasli* R No 63 Pune.

"bantha-rajyati" seems to have been carved out of the raiyati portion of land. It is not known as to when and how the girasias acquired these rights. Since the office records reflect them in the above mentioned position, it seems to have carried approval of administration.

Besides, the available evidence also suggests the emergence of new rights termed salamiyah and which, for all practical purposes, appear to be identical with those of the Primary zamindars. In a document (1726-27) coming for mawza Lubha 85 bighas of cultivated area is shown as held by salamiya Rajputs. The area seems to have been taken out of the raiyati portion. In the year 1719-20 the raiyati land was specified 715 bighas whereas in 1726-27 its area is recorded as 630 bighas i.e. less by 85 bighas which is equal to the area shown under salamiyah Rajputs. Another document dated 1724-25 (1132 fasli) reflecting land under actual cultivation shows 115 bighas under salamiya. The area, again, seems to have been taken out of the raiyati portion of land. Likewise salamiya Kolis are shown as holding 210

1. Ibid; see also for the presence of bantha-rajyati, mazruat mawza Mahej, fasli-i kharif, 1146 fasli, PC Nos. 98 and 101.
2. Mazruat mawza Lubha - pargana Thamna. fasli-i kharif, 1127 fasli and 1134 fasli R No 60 Pune.
3. Yad-dasht Khasra mazruat mawza Jamalpur pargana Thamna fasli-i kharif 1129 and 1132 fasli R No 63 Pune.

450
bighas in mawza Rulla (pargana Thamna) during the year 1727-
28 (1135 fasli). The area, again, seems to have been carved
out of the raiyati area which fell by the same figure as
compared to the year 1719-20 (1127 fasli).  

Nature of rights of the salamiyas being unspecified in
any detail, it is difficult to precisely ascertain their
position. However, according to an amal-i dastur the sala-
miya lands were assessed the way the bantha lands were
assessed. Thus:

Salami Salamiya
- produce divided into four parts (chahar hissa):
  : raiya - two parts (raiya du hissa)
share of the government : one part (yek hissa sarkar)
Salamiyah : one part (salamiya yek hissa).

Moreover, the state claim levied on the salamiya lands
was called salami. From the view point of share and its
proportion in the produce of the peasantry, the salamiyas
appear to have enjoyed the position which was identical with
those of the Primary zamindars. It is however not known as
to why and how the privileged position was bestowed upon or

1. Yad-dasht Khasra mazruat mawza Rulla. pargana Thamna
fasl-i kharif 1127 and 1135 fasli.
2. Amal-i dastur--dehat-i pargana Thamna 1135 fasli R No
38 Pune.
else grabbed by a section of the agrarian community. It may be presumed that the state sought to create an influential class of people (or else, sought to appease it) to counter the power of the already strong Primary zamindars.

In spite of emergence of the rights which stood parallel and were identical to the Primary zamindars, the influence and increasing hold of the girasias over the villages under them might not have been eroded, a fact which will be discussed a little later. It may be pointed out here, that the Primary zamindars also interfered with the established section of the village community presumably to subserve their own interests.

The paikashtas who were not so deeply rooted in the community of the villages of their cultivation, appear to have been hit at easily. According to a parwana (July 1731) some paikashtas of mawza Chhatral (pargana Kadi) had lodged a complaint stating that Dhanna Singh girasia of the village had evicted them out of their irrigated (chahi) plots which

1. In some instances we also come across the bilmuqte kashta (whose possessions were assessed on a lump sum basis), bilmuqte kameja (the peasant proprietors who were assessed likewise) or such and such person ‘bilmuqte. Yad-dasht-i mawza Khrab fasli-i kharif 1148 fasli PC No 139; yad-dasht mawza Rakhyal buzurg,2 fasli-i kharif 1148 fasli, PC No. 135. It seems that in some villages the administration directly assessed and fixed the amount of revenues on lump sum basis and allowed them to pay to the state directly without the intercession of the girasias or muqaddams.
he had distributed amongst the members of his own brotherhood (brathri). They had brought the matter to the notice of the desai but he showed his helplessness. The administrator of the pargana (sarbarah-i-pargana?faujdar) too did not take any action against the girasia. Therefore, Maharaja Abhay Singh, then subedar (1730-37) directed the faujdar to enquire into the matter and restore their lands which they had been holding from the times of their ancestors.¹ Another parwana (September, 1738) likewise orders the faujdar of pargana Petlad to oust the girasia from the irrigated lands which he had forcibly occupied by evicting the paikashtas.² Yet another document (November 1742) records that the girasia and his brethren had taken possession of the lands which were formerly held by the paikashtas who had been ousted from their possession.³

Another set of information suggests that the girasias also tried to detract the paikashtas cultivating raiyat lands of the state and attract them for undertaking cultivation on their bantha possessions. According to a muchalka

1. *Naql parwana* dated 3rd Safar, 1144 Hijri, R No 70 Pune.
2. *Naql parwana*, dated 11 Jamala II, 1151 Hijri, R No 70 Pune.
3. *Yad-dasht dehat pargana Bhil, Sarkar Ahmadabad*, 1150 fasli, R.No. 61, Pune.
(1727) the *muqaddams* of *pargana* Mamurabad are shown to have given an undertaking to the effect that they would not allow the *girasias* to take the *paikashta* of the *raiyati* lands for undertaking cultivation on the *bantha* lands.\(^1\) A *tamassuk* (1728) likewise records the *muqaddams* of *mawza* Muzaffarpur (*pargana haveli* Ahmadabad) undertaking responsibility to the same effect.\(^2\) Another document coming from the period of Momin Khan's *subedari* (1737-43), mentions that the *girasias* of the villages of *pargana* Thamna forcibly (*biljabr*) took *paikashtas* cultivating *zamin-i sarkar* (*raiyati*) to undertake cultivation on the *bantha* lands. The document notes that as a result cultivation on the *talpad* could not be undertaken and a part of it went out of cultivation (*ghair mazrwa' gashte*).\(^3\) Still another document (May 1748) states that one Ramji *girasia* and his caste members (*brathri*) destroyed standing crops of the *paikashtas* of *mawza* Bharodra (*pargana* Nadiad, *sarkar* Ahmadabad) on their refusal to undertake

\[\begin{align*}
\text{1. Naql muchalka, dated 15 Rabi I, 1140 executed by the *muqaddams* before the 'Sarkar' R No 53, Pune.} \\
\text{2. Naql tamassuk, dated 15 Safar 1141 AH, R No 37 Pune.} \\
\text{3. Yad-dasht dehat amla pargana Thamna, *Sarkar* Ahmadabad mustatab sarkar-i Nawab Momin Khan Bahadur Najm-ud dawlah.}
\end{align*}\]
cultivation on his bantha lands. ¹

From the evidence cited above, it would appear that the girasias endeavoured to promote their interests by bullying the paikashtas. In this affair the caste-factor seems to have been the main instrument which the girasias utilized against them. The girasias, it appears, tried to occupy prized lands -- the irrigated ones -- and ensure that their lands were cultivated, presumably in to. The effort, for all practical purposes, was intended to consolidate and strengthen the girasias' power base, socially and economically at the cost of the state and weaker section of rajas.

Not that the girasias endeavoured to strengthen their position and consolidate hold over the villages by utilizing caste and family bonds. But also, and more particularly, the increasingly oppressive acts of the administration (which had also closed down the channels of redress) where and when it could succeed, seem to have driven the raiyat into the zamindar's arms all the more. It would appear from the following discussion that the raiya was increasingly and consistently exploited from the first decade of the eighteenth century.

¹ Naqil (?) dated 15th Jamadi ll, 1160 A.H. The document does not carry any title. It seems to be a representation submitted by the muqaddam of mawza Bhadodra for inviting attention of the administration.
A considerable section of rural and the urban society must have increasingly felt the incidence of new imposts and the enhanced dozes of the taxes already in vogue. To begin with, new imposts were levied on certain agricultural and allied items like fodder, grain, vegetables, ghee etc. on their entry into the city from rural side from the year 1708-10 onward. The impact of the imposts which were levied at a 'nominal rate' initially, seems to have increased with the passage of time.

Khichri was another impost which, according to the Mirat, was extorted from the rajyati tracts by the Nazim while leading military expeditions for exacting peshkash. Introduced for the first time by Maharaja Ajeet Singh (1715-17) and subsequently retained by his successors, the Khichri was levied on enhanced rates. The khichri, moreover, seems to have been levied in addition to, and over and above the

2. The income from the new levies swelled up into huge sums of money. Two separate mahals for the same were formed. Ibid I pp 390-91, 405.
3. Ibid I p 174; Account ff 164a, 167ab.
mal-i wajib also. But at times the khichri was also levied in lieu of mal-i wajib\(^2\) from the riaya who had refused to pay the mal-i wajib\(^1\). The Nazims demanded khichri on annual basis but its actual collection evidently depended on their ability to enforce it.\(^3\)

Yet another levy which was repeatedly exacted by the Nazims and other officials from 1724-25 onward was the despised bewra.\(^4\) From the description of the Mirat it would appear that the Nazims levied bewra on not less than 21 occasions during the second quarter of the eighteenth century.\(^5\) The Nazims exacted it from the seths, mahajans, silk merchants, other traders, the Bohras, 'from all sections of

1. The Khichri was also levied on the Jagirs by the Nazims. (Raigobindas, op. cit., f 58). The relevant documents record the amount collected as (a) mal-i wajib (b) peshkash and (c) khichri separately. Account, ff 164a, 167ab, 174a 203ab, 213a, 214, 228a, 236b, 241a, 278a, 290b, 295a; Haqiqat-i-nazar-i-peshkash, op. cit, PC No 9-39; yad-dasht-haqiqat-i sarkar-i Soreth. PC No p 23.

2. Account ff 164a, 167b, 174a, 203ab, 213a-14a, 221a, 236b, 290b; Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash PC No 20, 26.

3. MS No 15 op cit ff 89,91

4. According to the Mirat (II p 68) bewra was an innovation of Hamid Khan, the naib-subedar under Nizam-ul-mulk (1723-24). But peshkash papers (see particularly Haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash PC Nos. 20 and 26) mention the amount collected as bewra and khichri together during Maharaja Ajit Singh's subedari (1715-17) from parganas of Pattan and Kutyana (Sarkar Soreth).

5. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 68, 78, 95, 106, 136-137, 163, 165, 170-71, 190, 192-3, 195-6, 243, 244, 245, 250, 260, 323, 351, 381
people', Hindus and Muslims alike on 'various excuses', separately as well as collectively. The bewrah was exacted from professional groups, individuals, family establishments by head-counting (sar-shumari) and house-counting (khana-shumari). The Kotwals, faujdars and the mutasaddis emulated the Nazims and exacted the bewrah accordingly. Levied at times alongwith Khichri, the bewra was levied once, twice and even thrice a year. The last of the subedars levied the bewrah @ Rs. 3.50 per head from the populace of Ahmadabad.

The burden of bewrah was not felt by the town folks alone. There is evidence to show that it was collected from the rural populace of sarkars of Soreth, Nadot and Ahmadabad.

1. Ibid. It was also exacted from the baqqals of the town. Yad-dasht haqiqat-i nazar-i peshkash FC No 26. Here it may be pointed out that the seths of Ahmadabad had some kind of relationship with the zamindars of villages. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 171-72

2. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 106, 113 136-37 163, 193, 260, 318, 323; English Documents. letters dated 4th May and 6th May 1725; 20th May 22nd May 1743 ibid pp 7,45-6,


5. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 323. Hamid Khan had levied it @ Rs 12/- per house but then reduced its rate to Rs 5/- per house. English Documents, letters dt. 4th May and 6th May 1725.
and then it was collected in all the Kharaji sarkars, excluding sarkar Surat details of which region are not available.¹ The bewra was an exaction which was levied in addition to the other imposts and usual demands.² The bewrah on the agrarian community seems to have been levied at the rates which were revisible.³ Though the relationship between mal-i wajib and bewrah-o khichri may not be ascertained for want of specific evidence, but the two demands appear to have been related proportionately, particularly for counting the latter.⁴ In pargana Dholga khichri-o bewra were calculated @ Rs. 7.50 per cent of the mal-i wajib assessed on the khalsa villages.⁵ But in the pargana haveli Ahmadabad collections of khichri-o bewra amounted to 6.5% of the mal-i

1. Yad-dasht nazar-i peshkash, op cit PC; Haqiqat paidaish pargana Dholqa, op cit.

2. Yad-dasht--nazar-i peshkash-o khichri waghaira, op cit PC Nos p5, 11b, 16b, 18b, 18b-19a, 20a, 29sb, 37b, read with p 21-24b and p 41. yad-dasht bewra-o khichri dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad, fasl-i-kharif-o Rabi, 1134 fas/ıı PC No 172; read with mawazna fis-sinwat subah Gujarat Sarkar Ahmadabad, pargana haveli op cit.

3. When referring to the rate of bewra for pargana Dholga the document entitled 'yad-dasht abwab pargana Dholga mentions that it was levied at the rate of the preceding year (muwafiq sal-i guzisht). PC No 282.

4. Yad-dasht abwab pargana Dholga op cit.

5. Ibid
wajib collected during the year 1726-27.\textsuperscript{1} By all means incidence of bewra and khichri on the tax-payer must have been quite burdensome.

The raiyat, moreover, was also exposed to bear the burden of land revenue which, where and when possible, seems to have been fixed arbitrarily. The riyah of pargana Dholqa, according to the Mirat was 'displeased at the rascality' of faujdar-amil, Muhammad Iraj during Sarbuland Khan's period of subedar.\textsuperscript{2} The next faujdar-amil during the period of the same subedar exacted' sum by harassment beside the mal-i wajib.\textsuperscript{3} The riyah of pargana haveli Ahmadabad had to flee on account of over-assessment of revenue by the amin-faujdar.\textsuperscript{4} Sarbuland Khan replaced him but the new incumbent 'harassed and tyrannised' the raiyat and demanded 'additional sums' with the Nazim's approval even though there "was no scope for additional demands".\textsuperscript{5} The Nazims and faujdars oppressed the raiyat in many ways, plundered villages and crops for

:\textsuperscript{1} During the year 1134 fasli the collection of mal-i wajib amounted to Rs. 2,620091 and that of bewra-o khichri stood at Rs 17000/- yad-dasht nazar-i peshkash-o khichri waghaira op cit read with yad-dasht-mawazna fis-sinwat subah Gujarat op cit.

:\textsuperscript{2} Mirat-i Ahmadi \textsuperscript{11} p 94

:\textsuperscript{3} Ibid \textsuperscript{11} p 97

:\textsuperscript{4} Ibid \textsuperscript{11} pp 105-6.

:\textsuperscript{5} Ibid
providing food, fodder and salary to the army establishment. 1

The exploitative acts and high handedness of the officials who enjoyed immunity from imperial action, did not all the time go unprotested. According to the Mirat the seths, merchants and Bohras at Ahmadabad resisted imposition of Beura but to no avail. 2 The traders remonstrated and went on strike in the imperial capital to register their protest against the oppressive act of the naib-subedar in-charge. 3

The ralvayat of Khanbat misbehaved with the oppressive officials and 'pelted stones' on them while they came out after surrendering the charge. 4 The ralvayat of Dholga lodged complaints before the Nazim and that of pargana havell Ahmadabad fled but was persuaded to resume cultivation but for bearing additional doze of taxation again. 5 The desai of Viramgaon and muqaddam of Padra joined hands with the

1. Thus, for the oppressive behaviours of the officials and imposition of illegal taxes at Khanbat ibid I pp 403-4; for the naib-subedar in-charge practicing immoderation and levying illegal extortion ibid, I I p 11; for other instances of similar nature ibid II pp 34-5, 75, 139, 143, 164-65, 179, 184, 284, 286; for taxes on fords and passages ibid II p 106; Nazim plundering people of Baroda on false accusations, ibid II p 179, for faujdars engaged in similar kind of activities. ibid II pp 165, 286, 334-35;

2. Ibid II p 113


4. Ibid, I, pp 403-4

5. Ibid II pp 94, 97, 105-6.
Marathas which led to the loss of Viramgaon and Baroda.  

The prevailing tendency to extort money increasingly over and over again on various grounds and excuses from the vulnerable sections within easy reach, seems to have led to the erosion of credibility of the administration. It is reflected from the way the sureties and securities came be furnished.

The faujdars and the thanedars were required to procure reliable sureties from the persons of doubtful integrity i.e. the recalcitrants, the girasias and the Kolis for ensuring their right conduct and guarding against the possibilities of their rising in rebellion and for ensuring their availability as and when summoned. Moreover, the zamindars were required to furnish bonds for not levying the illegal

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1. Ibid II pp 167,186-7, Ahwal-i Gaekwar, ff 12-3 Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat; f.5.

2. The document entitled yad-dasht-abwab pargana Dholga, Sarkar Ahmadabad (PC No 12 to 13) specifies 29 abwab of various kind which were extorted from the rural society during the third decade of the eighteenth century.

3. Account ff 14a, 15a; Tamaesuk hazir-zamini, Baroda 99. The sureties, called fa'il zamin, were to undertake responsibility of right conduct and performance of the assigned duties of watch and ward. The hazir-zamini were to ensure availability of the person concerned. Please see Tasmassukat-fa'il zamin and hazir-zamini for the parganas of havell Ahmadabad, Piplod, Bharuch, Kadi, Viramgaon and Petlad for the years 1667-1741, R Nos 27, 63, 67, 70, Pune.
The faujdars and the thanedars were to ensure procurement of the sureties but where and when it was not within their competence, the Nazim stepped in. Though the practice of procuring sureties was not dropped altogether, but it seems to have undergone a drastic change during the period under review.

From the period of Maharaja Abhay Singh's subedar (1730-37) the Governor himself is shown to have furnished sureties on behalf of his subordinate appointees as well as for himself. Thus, Dalla, muqaddam of Padra and in-charge of revenue matters of Baroda, apprehending ill-treatment at Maharaja's hand obliged him to furnish strong men of the region like Momin Khan, Sardar Muhammad Khan Ghorni, Sher Khan Babi, Jawanmard Khan Babi, Faiyaz Khan and others as

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1. Account ff 14a, 15a.

2. Of the tamassuks referred to on the preceding page No (1667-1741) 107 were procured by the faujdars and the thanedars. During the period 1683 to 1701 only 19 were procured by the Nazims from the girasia Rajputs and Kolls of Jhalawar region (pargana Viramgaon), a zorta-lab area and assigned in the jagir of the Nazims who had to lead military expeditions (1683-1701) for the purpose. Mirat-i Ahmadi I pp 324, 326, 330, 344, 394-95.

3. In Gujarat the sureties furnished for a person of doubtful integrity and ensuring his proper conduct, were called bandharis and those who acted as surety were designated bandharan (sing., bandhar). For the prevalence of the institution and its sanctity in the subah from the time of emperor Akbar, Mirat-i Ahmadi I p ibid II pp 138, 144, 146, 166-7 see also Handbook of Giras p 10.
bandharis. Only then the muqaddam came to see the Nazim.¹ Likewise the desai of Viramgaon forced the Maharaja to furnish bandharis at the time of appointment and entry of new faujdar into Viramgaon.² The muqaddam and the desai appear to have grown strong enough to force the Nazim for furnishing bandharis.³

From a careful examination of the documents entitled parwana bandhari it would appear that the administration not only had gone powerless but also, and more particularly seems to have lost credibility.

The earliest of the available parwanas (1739) was issued by subedar Momia Khan, (1737-43) to assure Dhanji girasia and raiyat of village Jagatpur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad). The subedar assured them that they would not be troubled for paying bewra and that no addition would be made to the agreed share in the produce. Assuring them further not to entertain any doubts, the subedar asked them to resume cultivation. In order to add credibility to his word he furnished bandharis who would ensure enforcement of the

1. Ibid II pp 144, 146.
2. Ibid II pp 166-7.
3. Ibid II pp 146, 166, 168, It may be pointed out that apprehensions of both of them who are stated to have feared "deceit and artifice" (khad'-o makr), came true. Ibid II pp 146, 167.
subedar's word. Another parwana bandhari which is addressed to Rabhji Waghara and descendants of Ranchhorji (Wlad Ranchhodji, Kolis), girasias of village Kasandra (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) assures the raiyat that none other than the addressees would be required for paying revenues. The Nazim furnished bandharis for removing their apprehensions. It seems the raiyat had taken shelter under the girasias to guard against the imposition of additional demands. Yet another parwana issued by the Nazim assured the kameja and paikashta of village Ghayaspur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) that the revenue would be determined on divisioning basis (amal-i batai) and that no extra demand would be made (darin bab zayadah talbi-w-safaqat n'khwahad shud). Stating further that the 'word of sarkar is the word of God' the Nazim as such asks the raiya to believe him and undertake cultivation without having apprehensions.

The representative documents cited above suggest that the Primary zamindars and the raiyat had, on account of

1. Naqil parwana bandhari, dt 17 Rabi II, 20 Ry Muhammad Shah R.No 37 Pune; see also parwana bandhari 6th Rajab 29 Ry Muhammad Shah PC No 79/1. Particular note may be taken of the assurance that siwai an bewrah-o izafa b'ahwal anha mazahim n'khwahad shud and that b'hichwajah waswas b'khatir rah n'dehand.


3. Naqil-i ganwat, dt 24 Jamadi I 1153, fasli, PC No 64.
their past experience, developed apprehensions and therefore, mistrusted even the highest official that was once regarded as the fountain-head of justice in the Subah. The above indicated mistrust and distrust seems to have been the direct outcome of the unending exploitation of the raiyat (vulnerable and within easy reach) and closing down of the channels of redress. A further view of the increasing and increased strength of the zamindars into whose arms the riaza seems to have been driven by the prevailing insecure state of affairs, may be formed from the following discussion.

The burden of procuring sureties particularly from the year 1720-21 seems to have passed on to the Nazis. The inference is based on two corroborative sets of evidence. The military expeditions which had become a common feature from 1720-21, as pointed out earlier, were led for procuring sureties also.¹ The necessity of leading these expeditions by the Nazis denominates ineffectiveness of the faujdars and thanedars in procuring sureties. Secondly, of the available tamassuks coming for the post-1720 period, 87 were furnished to the Nazis and only 11 to the faujdars and

¹ Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 20, 27, 46-9, 92, 102, 107, 164, 257, 271, For the incapacity of the faujdars Ibid II pp 97, 105, 172-3, 185-6, Tarikh-i Maratha dar Gujarat, i 4 Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Gujarat ff 17-8 21,58,89, 123.
It may therefore be seen that the zamindars had grown relatively stronger to resist the local administrators and thus force the Nazims to do what otherwise the faujdars and thanedars were required to do.

Then even the Nazims sometime on account of indifference and at other times due to preoccupations could not procure the sureties consistently. The available evidence increasingly mentions the committing of dacoities, plundering of caravans and treasury, raids on and looting of towns and villages, attacks on officials and 'commotions' created by the Kolis and recalcitrants from the second decade of the eighteenth century. From the description of events in the Mirat and other contemporary sources it would appear that the lives and property of the people had become insecure. Such a state of affair, it may be presumed, would naturally oblige the weaker section to seek protection of and align themselves with the stronger ones.

1. Tamassukat fa'il zamini and hazir zamini for the parganas of Bharuch, Kadi, Piplod, Viramgaon, Petlad and haveli Ahmadabad op cit.


3. Ibid, I p 174; Ibid II pp 27, 102, 133, 144, 163, 164, 247, 249, 258, 265-66; Tamassukat-dehat pargana haveli Ahmadabad etc. op cit; Tamassuk, 26 RY Muhammad Shah PC No 268; Yad-dasht haqiqat-i nazari peshkash waghair, op cit PC No p2; Ruqqat-i Harkaran, op cit ff 35-6; Raigobindas Kayath, op cit f 73; Akhbarat, Nos 2312 dt 5th Shawwal, 5th RY Farrukhsiyar, No 2350 dt 23rd Shawwal, 5th RY Farrukhsiyar No. 2506, 23rd Shoban, 3rd RY Muhammad Shah; 2707 dt 7th Ramadhan 4th R.Y Muhammad Shah.
Because of its apparent helplessness in maintaining law and order the administration as well as the people who had thus been exposed to live under the chaotic conditions, seem to have turned to the Kolis and Rajputs who were collectively regarded as recalcitrants and held responsible for the prevailing chaos. According to a news report (1723) the naib-faujdar of Bahadarpur maintained only a single horseman and four footmen and was a failure against the recalcitrants who used to raid the houses of the people. The people, therefore, employed Kolis, 40 in number and paid them out of their own pocket. Instead of lending a helping hand, the naib-faujdar harassed the populace and the Kolis. Likewise the muzarian of Navapur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) paid the Kolis of a neighbouring village Rs. 40/- per month for seeking protection from the inroads of some unidentified recalcitrants. Ratan Singh Bhandari, naib-subedar had asked the Kolis and Rajput girasias of pargana haveli Ahmadabad to maintain 'watch and ward' (chowki-o pehra) and enjoy revenues of the jagir which otherwise was conditional (mashrut) upon the thanedari of the place. The Bhandari also assigned

3. Parwanah of Ratan Singh Bhandari dt 12th Jamadi 11 1148 AH R No 29, Pune.
thanedari of mawza (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) to Yadji, a Koli for maintaining law and order. Similarly Momin Khan, next subedar and his successor Jawanmard Khan Babi entrusted the Kolis and Rajputs with the duties of protecting villages and highways, maintaining chowki-o-pehra, stopping robberies and thefts and plundering of caravans and travelers.

Even though the Kolis and Rajputs had been favoured with administrative assignments but they too seem to have developed strong apprehensions and lost trust in the word of administration for the reasons not known to us. According to a parwana bandhari (1740) subedar Momin Khan furnished sureties (bandharis) to the girasia of village Hirapur (pargana haveli Ahmadabad). The girasia had some reservations and, therefore, reluctant to come to the provincial capital as summoned. The subedar, therefore, furnished bandharis assuring him of his safe conduct from his village to the provincial capital and back and for removal of doubts.

1. Tamassuk, dt 27th Jamadi II, 1148 AH, R No 53, Pune. The Bhandari while besieged (1736-37) at Ahmadabad by subedar designate Momin Khan, had employed Kolis of Chunwal, (the region noted for Kolis' recalcitrance) for supplying fodder and act as spies. Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 179,212,221

(barai raf-i waswas) concerning thereto. Likewise Jawanmard Khan Babi issued a parwana-i qawl-o bandhari in favour of Hiraji girasias and others of village (pargana haveli Ahmabad) when they were summoned to the court. By issuing the parwana and furnishing bandharis the Nazim assured them of safe conduct and non-interference into some matters (b'ab-wab anha mazahem n' khwahad shud) which have been left unspecified. Presumably the girasias apprehended some kind of ill-treatment and felt it unsafe to visit the provincial capital.

Further, the Primary zamindars performing the duty of watch and ward, or else those who were especially entrusted with such duties, were apprehensive of interference of unspecified nature. Subedar Jawanmard Khan Babi, therefore, asked Udalbhan and other Kolis of village Harsa (pargana Kadi) to maintain watch and ward in mawza Kaopur of the same pargana assuring them by furnishing the bandhari to add credibility to his word (qawl) for non-interference in this

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2. Naql parwana-i qawl-o bandhari dt 3rd Ramdhan, 29RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79F.
matter on any ground. Likewise Bhola, Ranchhod and other Kolis of village Kasandra were favoured with the issuance of a parwana. The Nazim asked them to maintain watch and ward without fear (?) of molestation for the removal of which suspicion the bandharis were furnished. The evidence cited above is quite limited, rendering it difficult to make a general statement. But the significance of the fact that it comes for the environs of the provincial capital, may not be lost sight of. Evidently the Primary zamindars( of the environs of Ahmadabad) had grown strong enough to extort sureties and dictate their own terms to the Governor. The situation as might have prevailed elsewhere is not difficult to imagine. It may thus be seen that the administration seems to have lost all of its control over the countryside and the Primary zamindars who were successfully consolidating their hold and emerging as the leaders of raiyat whose direct communication with the state had been broken off

1. Naqli parwana bandhari, dt 20th Ramadhan 29 RY Muhammad Shah PC No 79/F; Also see the similar parwana dt 11 Ramadhan, 29 RY Muhammad Shah issued in favour of Jetha, Bena and Ranchhod Koli PC No 79/E.


3. It seems that those whose possessions were situated far off the seat of provincial power would not like to cooperate even this much.
Revenue Grantees

The government continued alienating its share in the produce of society in favour of individuals and institutions during the first half of the eighteenth century also. In principle no change, whatsoever, in regards to granting and holding the alienated rights is reported to have been effected. However, fortunes of grantees passed through many vicissitudes during the period of declining imperial hold over the province and its administrative apparatus. Some of them lost their means of livelihood whereas the other had to bear the burden of illegal exactions and encroachments. But on the whole the class of madad-i ma'sh holders showed tenacity to survive these vicissitudes.

With regard to the grantees remaining in possession of their grants the author of the Mirat-i Ahmadi has made some observations. Commenting on their position during the closing years of Maharaja Abhay Singh's period of subedari (1730-37) he remarks that "their affairs have reached such a pitch that they are in need of bread at night as well as a dam". He has also commented on their conditions during the closing years of Mughal rule in the subah, saying "there is no trace of such persons getting means of livelihood (madad-"

1. Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 141.
They gave up claims with turpitude and entreaties. They got scattered for want of livelihood and hardship of the situation. These remarks though exaggerated, yet refer to a real situation of hardship as would be borne out by other evidence. Of course not every madad-i ma'sh holder was reduced to utter penury as we have instances from the Mirat, other documents and works of later date mentioning madad-i ma'sh holders in possession of the grants, it is holder of cash-stipend who lost their means of livelihood from 1748-49 when these grants finally seased following Nazim's order.

The Mirat elsewhere mentions some eminent Sheikhs and Saiyeds holding their madad-i ma'sh lands and villages which they were granted during the seventeenth century by the Mughals and earlier by the Gujarati sultans. These grantees were in possession of their lands even after the extinction of Mughal rule from the subah.

Likewise the grantees of Junagadh and Surat regions seem to have continued to hold their possessions even after

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1. Ibid II p 381.
2. Ibid
3. Ibid Supplement pp 11, 14, 28, 32-4, 38, 44, 58-63, 65, 70, 75, 91-2, 94, 105, 126 particularly for Sarkar Ahmadabad; and for further references please see discussion in the following pages.
the extinction of Mughal rule from the subah. The Marathas too appear to have confirmed the Mughal grantees in their possession during the process and after the conquest of the subah.

Besides, the Mughal emperors and the Governors continued to bestow madad-i-ma'sh grants during the period (1700-50) and the grantees continued to hold the same even during later years. Emperor Bahadur Shah granted mawza Kasandra (pargana Haveli) to a Saiyed for defraying expenses on the Propnet's birthday ceremonies beside the village Mehta (Pargana Kadi) and Ranwasan (pargana haveli Pattan) bestowed

1. The grantees who had continued to hold their possessions under the Nawabs of Surat were, later on, likewise confirmed by the administrators of the British East India Company. In 1862-3 the British Crown confirmed them afresh and issued confirmatory orders which are summarily recorded in the Alienation Register, Record office (fort), Surat. Similarly Nawabs of Junagadh confirmed the grantees in their possessions. Later (1880-1) the Nawab tried to levy some taxes from the grantees which they contested before the British officer by submitting farmans, hasb-ul-hukms, parwanas etc. Copies of the same categorized as barakhali settled cases are preserved at District Record Office, Junagadh.

2. For the Marathas allowing the grantees to continue in their possessions after making enquiry into the legitimacy of their claim, Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 245; For the permission granted to a specified grantee to retain his rights, DB Parasnis (ed), Selections from the Satara Raja and the Peshwa Diaries, I, Document Nos 63 p 36; Ibid, p 63; For the general order allowing the holders of 'inan, wazifa and devasthan' lands granted by the Mughals, Historical selections from Baroda state Records-1 (1724-68) Documents Nos 30, 36, 127 pp 22, 32, 121; For actual continuity, Baroda, 57, 84, 97; For further continuity under the British, Bombay Gazetteer, II p 318 Ibid (Kaira), 81-3.
upon the same person as madad-i ma'sh. Children of Sheikh Ali Sarhindi (d 1729) were granted villages of Kochrab, Sanhel and Rahnas by emperor Muhammad Shah. One Sheikh Muhammad Saleh got mawza Mahej as altamgha from the same emperor in addition to village Tajpur (pargana Viramgaon) already possessed as madad-i ma'sh.

From the evidence cited above it would appear that the Sheikhs and the Saiyed continued as the state's favorite beneficiaries of the grants.

The state kept up its policy of extending favours to select Non-Muslims also. Subedar Daood Khan Panni added five more villages to the ina'm possessions of the Kolis of Chunwal (pargana Viramgaon). Sons of Parmanand Bhat were granted a village (1716) in pargana Kutyana (sarkar Soreth) in addition to the villages, two in number, which they already held by way of madad-i ma'sh.

2. Ibid p 105.
4. Please see also Ibid pp 15-6, 28, 33-4, 38, 44, 58-63, 65-70, 75, 94, 105, 126; Junagadh SC Nos 983 (mahal Junagadh); Ibid SC No 443 (mahal Una); Ibid, Sc No 409, (mahal Balagam).
5. Vad-dasht-tappa Chunwal, op cit PC No k1
6. Junagadh, SC No 995 (mahal Kutyana)
One Jiwandas Bairagi got mawza Chandwana (1720) by way of khairat for feeding medicants.¹ One Vasudev Brahman was granted a few more plots (1723) in appreciation of his services as physician.² One Bawa Lakhmidas, a Bairagi was granted mawza Samroli in khairat during Muhammad Shah's reign.³ Yet another Non-muslim, Purshottamdas was granted (1748) a village by way of madad-i kharch for defraying expenses on the bhog of Srinath (?) in parchana Mangrole by Sher Khan Babi, the faujdar turned nawab of Junagadh.⁴ As such the Mughal State and officials kept up the policy of granting revenues during the period on almost the same pattern continuously.

Though very limited in quantity and scope there is however evidence to show that some of the grantees prospered enough to make further investment during the period. Mir Amanullah, a holder of madad-i ma'sh lands in Surat, mortgaged 35 bighas of land of one Rewa of mawza Nabol (parchana Chorasi, sarkar Surat) for Rs 200/- in 1711.⁵ The following year he bought two plots (du qiteh) of land from the desai

1. Ibid, SC No 1042 Ex No 5, 13/3 (mahal Seel)
2. Ibid SC Nos 170, 171 (mahal Sutrapara)
3. Ibid SC No 359 (mahal Sutarpura)
4. Ibid SC No 364A (mahal Mangrole)
5. PC NO 280/Bha/41A dt. 27 Muharram, 4th RY Bahadurshah.
of mawza Barot (pargana Chorasi) for Rs. 205/- only.\(^1\) In 1722 he bought 10 bighas of land for Rs. 55/- from Kanwarji and Siyamji, sons of Ram Kishan desai, and Bhim and Kalyan Mahadev muqaddams of Nabo (pargana Bulsar, sarkar Surat).\(^2\)

Subghatullah, another grantee, bought twelve and a half bigha of land along with 24 mango trees for Rs. 125/- from Nathu and others of mawza Katorgaon in 1724.\(^3\) Yet another grantee, Sheikh Murtaza, raised orchard on his 45 bighas of madad-i ma'sh lands in pargana Mangrole (sarkar Soreth) between 1735-37.\(^4\)

But all the grantees do not appear to have prospered the same way. The evidence available particularly for sarkar Ahmadabad shows the grantees suffering at the hands of Governors who levied illegal exactions from their possessions. The first to do so was Daood Khan Panni (1713-15) who is reported to have exacted a levy, called chhuttaman (literally release, also termed chhuttawan) from the holders

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1. *PC Tamassuk*, dt 17 Safar 1124 AH  
2. *PC No 287/Bha*, dt 20 Rabi 11 1135 AH.  
3. *PC No 481/Bha/41B* dt 11 Ramadhan, 1137 AH  
of allowances and madad-i ma'sh.\textsuperscript{1} The impost was levied during both the crop seasons and demanded in addition to the routine claim of the state as discussed in the preceding Chapter.\textsuperscript{2} During the subedar\textsuperscript{i} of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37) when all the 'former innovations' (?) are reported to have been revived and the madad-i ma'sh grants of 'noble' Saiyeds, and holy saints as well as 'deserving persons' were subjected to some discount of unspecified descriptions. Separate amins and tehsildars were reportedly appointed for its collection.\textsuperscript{3}

Holders of the madad-i ma'sh lands were forced to pay other imposts levied at Nazim's convenience. The Nazims as we have seen in the preceding discussion under Primary zamindars, levied bewra from the rural populace every year from 1725 onward. Whether the bewra was imposed on the grantees also during pre-1742 period, is not known. In the year 1742 Momin Khan, the Nazim, extorted Rs 2171/- as bewra

\textsuperscript{1} Mirat-i Ahmadi II p 364. The matter was brought to the notice of the emperor but to no avail. \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{2} Yad-dasht-haqiqat-1 paidaish, pargana Dholga, Sarkar Ahmadabad, 1130 fasli PC; yad-dasht abwab, pargana Dholga PC.

\textsuperscript{3} Mirat-i Ahmadi II pp 141-2. For a similar trend in the region of Awadh, Muzaifar Alam, 'Some Aspects of the changes in the position of the Madad-i ma'sh Holders in Awadh, 1676-1722', Essays in Medieval Indian Economic History, Satish Chandra, ed; Delhi- 1987 pp 77-8.
from the persons holding madad-i ma'sh lands in 23 specified
villages of pargana haveli Ahmadabad. During the years
1747-48 the persons holding madad-i ma'sh possessions in the
same villages were exposed to bear the burden of improsts
levied separately as well as jointly by the Mughal Governor
and the Maratha chief at Ahmadabad. Thus Rs 2121/- were
extorted by way of bewra by the Nazim. He extorted some
amount as part payment (ala al hisab) of some unspecified
imposts. Again, Rs 1555/- were extorted as ghasdana by the
Nazim and the Marathas together. Then the Nazim and the
Marathas each extorted Rs 741/- the same way from them. A
sum of Rs 2190/8 annas each were levied by both of them by
way of nazrana. In 1750-51 the Marathas extorted bewra from
the grantees again. These imposts and levies were extorted
in addition to the naked loot which was resorted to by both

1. Yad-dasht bewra dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1150 fasli PC No 82
2. Ibid, 1155 fasli PC No 81.
3. Yad-dasht tafrig-i dehat-i wazifadar, pargana haveli Ahmedabad, b'sigha-i alal hisab, 1155 fasli PC No 76.
4. Yad-dasht-gahdana dehat-i wazifadar pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1155 fasli PC No 74.
5. Ibid, 1155 fasli PC No 73.
6. Haqiqat-i nazrana-i dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1155 fasli PC.
of them whenever it was possible.\textsuperscript{1}

Magnitude and impact of the above mentioned levies might have been unbearable for at least some of them. The 
\textit{Mirat} observes that the villages held as \textit{madad-i ma’sh} which were in a 'flourishing state' were 'ruined'.\textsuperscript{2} The statistical information which is available for such villages of the same \textit{pargana (haveli Ahmadabad)} partly substantiates the \textit{Mirat}'s assertion.\textsuperscript{3} Also the agricultural activities even in the villages described as 'populated' (\textit{abadan}) seem to have been at a low pitch during the same period.\textsuperscript{4}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} II pp 160-61, 245, 323. Whether the authorities could adopt the same attitude towards the grantees in the other parts of the \textit{subah} is not known. \textit{Pargana haveli Ahmadabad}, it may be recalled, had been exposed to bear burden of extra levies, particularly because of its vulnerability.
\item In the year 1709-10 out of 40 villages held by the grantees only one is described as 'desolate' (\textit{weeran}). The number of desolate villages shot up to 20 out of 45 such villages in 1747-48. \textit{Yad-dasht dehat-i wazifa, pargana (haveli Ahmadabad). dt 1122 AH, RNo 35, Pune; Yad-dasht tafrique-i dehat-i wazifadaran, 1155 fasli}, \textit{op cit}, PC No 76.
\item \textit{Haqiqat-i wazifa farzandan-i ...} Sheikh Mohd Ghaus *zamin-i wazifa dar dehat-i pargana haveli Ahmadabad, 1156 fasli, PC.
\end{enumerate}
Thus in the year 1747-8 of the entire cultivable area held as *madad-i ma'sh* by the sons of Sheikh Mohammad Ghaus, only 2.29% was under actual cultivation.

It may however be pointed out that the crops were raised on the *madad-i ma'sh* lands in other villages of the same *pargana*. But due to the non-availability of the necessary area figures proportionate relationship between the

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1. For example please see *Khasra mazruat mawza* Mahej, *fasl-i-kharif*, 1146 *fasli*, PC Nos 95-9; *ibid*, Dhamnon, 1140 *fasli*. 

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Entire area held as <em>madad</em> -1 <em>ma'sh</em></th>
<th>Area under cultivation (<em>mazrua'</em> )</th>
<th>Area out of cultivation (<em>uftadah</em>)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neharwala</td>
<td>35-0</td>
<td>4-15</td>
<td>30-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balad</td>
<td>148-0</td>
<td>5-0</td>
<td>143-0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ghayaspur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karad</td>
<td>228-10</td>
<td>4-0</td>
<td>224-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saiyedpur &amp; Nehrwala</td>
<td>20-0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20-0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>776-10</strong></td>
<td><strong>17-15</strong></td>
<td><strong>258-15</strong></td>
</tr>
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area actually held and the one cropped may not be worked out.

But there is other set of information which shows that from the year 1748-49 the process of going more and more village as desolate had been arrested. Thus¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of villages in madad-1 ma'sh</th>
<th>No. of villages described 'desolate'</th>
<th>No. of villages described populated</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1709-10</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>1748-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1749-50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidently the number of desolate villages which had risen from one (1709-10) to 20 (1747-48) came down by 5 (1748-9) and again fell by one more (1749-50) the following year. Whether the same trend (i.e. rehabilitation of the desolate villages) continued during the later years is difficult to explain for want of required evidence.

The available evidence though too scanty to draw a viable conclusion however suggests that the grantees' over

¹. Yad-dasht dehat-i wazifa, 1122 AH op cit; Yad-dasht ta frique-i dehal-i wazifadar, pargana baveley Ahmadabad, 1155 fasli PC No 76; Ibid, 1156 and 1157 fasli R No 37, Pune.
all relationships with the intermediary zamindars were not necessarily cordial. According to a parwana (1739) muqaddam of mawza Rakhyal Khurd (pargana haveli Ahmadabad) had encroached upon an orchard, measuring 10 bighas belonging to Sivparsad, a grantee sometime during the subedar of Maharaja Abhay Singh (1730-37). On the representation of the aggrieved grantee, subedar Momin Khan (1737-43) ordered for restoring the orchard and recovering the misappropriated revenues. Whether the subedar's order could really be enforced is not known. Later on the Marathas also entertained a complaint against the desai of Baroda who had imposed salami on the wazifa lands. The qasbati professional soldiers who acted as ijarahdars also made some kind of interference into the madad-i ma'sh possession of one Nazar Miyan in mawza Dher, pargana Una (sarkar Soreth) sometime before 1750-51.

But, then, all the grantees do not appear to be so docile as to submit before the Mughal officials with ease.

Of the 25 villages described as 'populated' the administra-

1. Parwana (Momin Khan) dt. 19 Rabī I, 20 R Y Mohammad Shah.
3. Parwana dt. 15 Rajab, 1164 AH, Junagadh SC No 419, Ex. No 2 (mahal Una); For similar developments in Awadh Muzaifar Alam, op cit pp 76-7.
tion could levy exactions only from 18 villages. Of the seven villages which enjoyed virtual exemption from paying the additional cess, one is categorized as zortalab i.e. refractory.¹

From the preceding discussion it would appear that the fortunes of a number of grantees passed through many vicissitudes. The Mughal state that created and patronized the grantees during the hey-day of its rule, also victimized them during the days of worsening financial crisis and political chaos. The state fell upon its own 'army of prayers', (lashkar-i duaqoyan) or else the instruments of creating a 'social base' for the empire.

It may however be seen that the grantees as a distinct category of people holding superior rights in land or its usufruct survived the eclipse of its patron, the Mughal empire.² They simultaneously continued to acquire additional resources and add new members to the category, though over all social formation seems to have remained unchanged. Though it is difficult to ascertain their role in precise

1. Haqiqat nazrana: dehat-i wazifa pargana haveli Ahmada­bad, Nawab Jawanmard Khan, PC No 83. The zortalab village is further identified as 'hilly' (Kohi) i.e. located in a hilly tract.

terms in the society but the fact that they managed their survival even after their original patrons had gone, suggests that they were not so insignificant group of people that might be eradicated outright.