Chapter Four

TENSION, CONFLICT AND EXPLOITATION

Tension emanates from the unequal access to resources and the differential distribution of power within society, both of which, as we have seen in the previous chapters, are inter-related. Friction is inherent in the very structure of society – given its exploitative and variegated nature. There is first the exploitative relationship between the rulers and the ruled and the act of surplus appropriation. There is also the fact of heterogeneity and differentiation both within the category of the ruling classes as well as within the world of those who are ruled. There are various kinds of relationships and varying degrees of dependence and independence. There is consensus, contradictions and clash of interests. There is conflict born out of the system of domination and subordination. There are instabilities born out of social stratification. Antagonisms are endemic and deep-seated and get expressed in the form of disputes, conflict and resistance. We will discuss resistance in the next chapter. Discord between various sections of the ruling class, conflicts within each and disputes between sections of the peasantry, will be dealt with here.
Inter AND Intra Ruling Class Conflicts

Between sections of the ruling class and within them was a commonality of interests. All of them had shares in the revenue resources of the Amber principality. Each of them had claims on the surplus appropriated from the peasantry – claims either big or small, permanent or transferable, independent of or granted by the Amber Raja. All components of the ruling class were dependent on this surplus appropriated from the peasantry. Born out of this identity of interests was the keen-ness to ensure status-quo of the exploitative relationship with peasants, so as to rule out the possibility of interruptions in the flow of surplus – interruptions which could jeopardize their very existence.

And yet, given the fact that the ruling class was anything but a single composite group, there were conflicts and disputes. The ruling class was differentiated both vertically as well as horizontally and comprised two distinct elements – the land revenue assignees and grantees (jagirdars, udikis, ijaradars etc) who were entitled to a portion of the state’s share of land revenue and the rural aristocracy. Within the rural aristocracy, there were the bhomias who had hereditary rights to a share in the surplus and there were the Patels, patwaris, Chaudhries and Qanungos, who enjoyed administrative powers and were given shares in the
surplus by way of allowances and perquisites. In the discussion that follows I have sometimes included the lower level officials also (as for example sahnas). Though not a part of the ruling class it is important to include them in any discussion on the tensions within the ruling class, since the denial, delay or reduction in the payment of their allowances and dues was a major cause of misgivings in society. There was of course, considerable overlapping due to the policy of combining offices in one person, usually belonging to the dominant section of the region. On the basis of their status and position, these sections of the ruling class were given shares in surplus. The apportionment of shares, quite understandably gave rise to misgivings and attempts by each to enlarge claims.

Disputes between sections of the ruling class mostly centered over surplus appropriation. Related to this, but less numerous were conflicts over land, office etc. Bickerings over shares in surplus are well documented. We have numerous documents which testify to the friction between and within the dominant sections over shares in surplus. A Qanungo of pargana Narnaul complained of harassment by Amil over qanungoi dues.\(^1\) Another Qanungo of Gaji Ka Thana complained that jagirdars of several villages did ‘hujjat’ (literal meaning is ‘to argue’ or ‘to fight’)

\(^1\) Chithi to Amil, pargana Narnaul, dated Pos Sudi 9 V.S.1809/ AD 1752
over dastoor. Harji Mal Qanungo of pargana Pavata was reportedly being harassed by jagirdars, ijaradars and talluqdaras of several villages over dastoor qanungoi. Reduced payment and non-payment of qanungoi dues by bhomias, jagirdars, ijaradars, amils etc was a recurrent complaint. Lal Singh Pawar, the jagirdar of a village in pargana Aaveri reported that the Brahman udikis of the village did ‘ujarkhai’ (literally to avoid) in the payment of haasil. Particularly frequent are complaints by sahnas over reluctance of Amils to give them seh nagi. Amils are known to have harassed officials over their salaries. Patels and patwaris fought with Amils and Jagirdars for their rightful share. These were all disputes resulting from denial of what was perceived as one's rightful share.

There are several instances of disputes between sections of the ruling class over demarcation of shares. Jagirdars of jointly

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2 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gaji Ka Thana, dated Pos Sudi 12 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763
3 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pavata, dated Bhadva Sudi 15 V.S. 1816/ AD 1759
4 Chithi to Sah Shri Sahib Ram, dated Mah Sudi 9 V.S.???
5 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Fagun Vadi 55 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763; Chithi to Amil, pargana Dausa, Kati Sudi 7, V.S. 1816/ AD 1759; Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Kati Sudi 14, V.S. 1816/ AD 1759; Chithi to Amil, pargana Fagui, Asoj Vadi 4, V.S. 1816/ AD 1759.
6 Boogh Singh Bakshi of pargana Sambhari was entitled to a ‘darmahahl’ from pargana Narayana. He complained that he was being harassed by the Amil over it. Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Asoj Vadi 13, V.S. 1816/ AD 1759; A sipahi of Kasba Gijgarh lodged a similar complaint; Chithi to Sah Harde Ram, Asoj Sudi 3, V.S. 1784/ AD 1727
7 Chithi to Sah Shri Gulab Chand Ji, Sawan Sudi 15 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763; Chithi to Amil, pargana Niwai, Fagun Vadi 12 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763; Chithi to Sah Shri Saheb Ram, Kati Sudi 8 V.S. 1784/ AD 1757
held villages fought amongst themselves. Sujan Singh Rathor and Padam Singh were both Jagirdars of village Rup Puravaas, pargana Sawai Jaipur. They were entitled to pattis of Rs. 1000/- and Rs. 250/- respectively. They were reportedly fighting over their shares. Village Toda Khurd, pargana Pindayan had three jagirdars – Daulat Singh Jaswant Singh Rajawat had a share of Rs. 500/-, Lakshman Singh Devi Singh Rajawat had a share of Rs. 500/- and Amar Singh Vadh Singh Rajawat had a share of Rs. 1100/-. It was reported that due to their fights, the village could not prosper. The state directed that a tapdar be sent and their pattis separated. The Jagirdards of village Piragpur were engaged in a similar quarrel. Patels also fought over their respective pattis. A case of violent confrontation between patels over their shares has been reported. What is important to note is that in none of the cases mentioned above is the state’s prerogative to assign shares, it’s criteria (if there was any) of demarcation, even questioned. These are all essentially examples of mutual differences and failures to co-operate i.e “आपसी खेल”. There are

8 Chithi to Sah Shri Ganga Visam Ji and Sah Shri Gulab Chand Ji, Chait Vadi 11 V.S. 1816/ AD 1759
9 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pindayan, Mah Sudi 2 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763
10 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Asoj Vadi 5 V.S. 1816/ AD 1759
11 Chithi to Diwan Kalyan Das from Keshodas, Chait Vadi 12 V.S. 1722/ AD 1665
12 The Document (Chithi dated Pos Sudi 5 V.S. 1808/ AD 1751, pargana Malpura) has been cited in Madhavi Bajekal’s dissertation, ‘Rural Disputes in Eastern Rajasthan in the 18th Century’ pg. 58, 59.
many more instances of disputes between dominant sections over surplus. There were several clashes between amils and jagirdars over haasil. Anop Singh Rathor, jagirdar of village Kudali, pargana Udehi, complained of harassment by the Amil over bhomi. Ijaradars clashed with Amils. The ijaradar of a well in Kasba Vairath was being forced by the Amil to pay more than what was due. Inamis and amils fought over haasil. Amil of pargana Narayana harassed the patel of village Palasoli over mapa. The Amil of pargana Pavata tried to force Kishan Das Mahajan, who was an ijaradar, to pay sehnagi, sayar etc. The chokayat of kasba Malarna alleged that he was being forced to pay ‘Nyota’ by the Amil. Ijaradars often could not get their share of the haasil. They in turn, did not let Bhogis collect their dues.

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13 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Bhadva Sudi 3 V.S. 1816/ AD 1759; Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Sawan Vadi 7 V.S. 1786/ AD 1729
14 Chithi to Amil, pargana Udehi, Asadh Sudi 1 V.S. 1810/ AD 1753
15 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gaji Ka Thana, Kati Vadi 14, V.S. 1820/ AD 1763
16 Chithi to Sah Shri Saligram Ji and Sah Shri Raja Ram Ji, Bhadva Sudi 8 V.S. 1810/ AD 1753
17 Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Fagun Vadi SS V.S. 1796/ AD 1739
18 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pavata, Chait Vadi 6 V.S. 1785/ AD 1728
19 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malarna, Fagun Vadi 12 V.S. 1785/ AD 1728
20 Mansaram Mahajan had taken village Podpur, in pargana Bahatri on ijara. He complained that he was not given haasil of the village. Chithi to Amil pargana Bahatri, Asadh Vadi 9, V.S. 1816/ AD 1759
21 Brahman Pujari Sadupchand reported that he had always received 100 mans of salt as punya arth bhog and the ijaradar was now doing hujjat in payment. Chithi to Amil, pargana Sambhari, Bhadva Sudi 11 V.S. 1820/ AD 1763
pargana Bahatri complained that he was being harassed by the Faujdar over faujdari.  

Still another category of disputes over surplus was born out of the policy of transfers. New appointees often faced hostility from the dominant sections of the region. The re-ascertainment and re-assessment that came in wake of transfers, disturbed the existing pattern. Some within the ruling class used the opportunity to appropriate haasil. We have the case of village Manpur in pargana Pavata, being granted to Raja Har Sahay in jagir in VS 1815/AD 1758. In a chithi dated Bhadva Vadi VS 1816/AD 1759, it is reported that Kilanot appropriated the haasil of syalu before Raja Har Sahay could claim it. Likewise, when jagirs were confiscated or resumed in khalisa, jagirdars often seized the haasil, before the parwana reached them. What we see in all these disputes over surplus is individuals defending their rightful claims, refusing to part with their share, resisting attempts to be forced to pay unfair dues, trying to enlarge their claims to surplus, attempting to

22 Chithi to Amil and Faujdar, pargana Bahatri, Kati Sudi 12 V.S. 1823/AD 1766
23 Irfan Habib, The Social Distribution of Landed Property in Pre-British India: A Historical Survey” in “Essays in Indian History Towards a Marxist Perception” pp. 95-96. Habib wrote of each transfer and every promotion in mansab, disturbing the existing distribution of jagirs.
24 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pavata, Bhadva Vadi V.S. 1816/AD 1759
25 Arzdashta, Asadh Vadi 1 VS 1747/AD 1690; Arzdashta, Chait Vadi 12, VS 1749/Ad 1692
encroach into the jurisdiction of another and making the most out of situations of transfer etc to seize whatever came their way.

A very interesting feature of inter and intra ruling class clashes is the 'I win you lose' situation. The gains of one member of the ruling class were the loss of another. Given that unmitigated exploitation was ultimately self destructive\(^2^6\) and also that the tendency of members of the ruling class to increase their immediate gains by resorting to a more intensive exploitation of the peasants was inevitable\(^2^7\), exploitation by different components of the ruling class had to be mutually accommodating. The notion of the "possibility boundary"\(^2^8\) may help explain this feature better. Considering that the peasantry is the fabled golden goose which was not to be killed and that there was an ultimate limit to which peasants could be pushed, a final boundary; considering that pushing the peasants was the very essence of the entire structure,

\(^2^6\) The very tax base of the state would be destroyed if peasants were not left with what was necessary for their survival; *The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556- 1707*; Second Revised Edition, 1999, p. 367; Documents from our region often mention that such and such a village has been rendered unproductive and its revenue paying capacity has been destroyed because of excessive harassment of raiyats or due to excessive strictness by officials. See Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, dated Sawan Sudi 12, VS 1800/ AD 1743 and Chithi to Faujdar, pargana Tonk, Jaith Vadi SS, VS 1800/ AD 1743

\(^2^7\) Irfan Habib wrote that the tendency to press harder on peasants emanated from the transferable nature of the jagir system; Ibid, pp. 367-368.

\(^2^8\) Although the concept of a 'possibility boundary' is essentially an economist's concept, it has been used competently by Kenneth E. Boulding to further our understanding of Power. He writes of conflict arising due to shifts in the possibility boundary between two parties. See *Three Faces of Power* by Kenneth E. Boulding Sage Publications, 1989, pp. 16-20.
sanctioned as it was by custom as well as the state; considering also that components of the ruling class were inclined to extend their rights and enlarge their claims, there was literally a thrusting and repelling of the possibility boundary. A (member of the ruling class) pushed the possibility boundary towards B (another member of the ruling class) and B pushed it back towards A. Any attempt to increase one's area of influence by advancing the possibility boundary to a forward position was met with resistance.

The document which best illustrates this phenomenon is a Chithi addressed to the Amil of pargana Khohri, dated Vaisakh Vadi 5 V.S. 1816/ AD 1759. Purohit Rao Hemraj reported that he had been assigned Rs. 500/- out of the hasil of the village. (Name of the village is not clear in the document). He complained that due to excessive demands of the jagirdar of the village, the haasil of the village had decreased i.e. “जागीरदार की अदाह सु हासिल कम पैदा हुआ”. Consequently he was unable to realize the entire amount due to him by way of ‘tankhwah’. In another document, the ijaradar of rahdari complained that due to exploitation of the village, he was unable to collect haasil.29 The ijaradar of village Sadagaon complained that due to excessive demands of the Naruka, the paltis have abandoned the village, land remains

29 Chithi to Daulat Singh, Mageshra Sudi 9 VS 1795/ AD 1738
uncultivated and the hasil cannot be obtained.\textsuperscript{30} When the patel of village Kishorpur forced raiyats to pay his peshkash the jagirdar, Khushyal Singh Kumbhani got alarmed.\textsuperscript{31} A bhogi complained that due to exploitation by Faujdar and Amil over baith and begar, the village could not prosper.\textsuperscript{32} A jagirdar of pargana Malpura reported that the patel was harassing raiyats over bhomi.\textsuperscript{33} Jaravar Singh Karnavat held a part of village Vidholav in Jagir. He reported that

- raiyats were being harassed by the old bohra.\textsuperscript{34} When one jagirdar of a jointly held village collected dues illegally, the other objected.\textsuperscript{35} An ijardar of pargana Hindaun complained that udikis had encroached upon the land of the Meenas.\textsuperscript{36} Demands made over and above what was sanctioned by custom therefore precipitated conflicts within the ruling class. Transgression of the possibility boundary by any one member of the ruling class would be the loss of another. The tendency to increase immediate gains was thus, somewhat contained within socially acceptable patterns. Although it may not be fair to round off completely, the moral imperatives of at least some within the ruling class to protect the weak, the evidence available does not sustain the notion of philanthropic

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} Chithi to Amil, pargana Tonk, Mah Sudi 8, V.S. 1798/A.D.1741.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Chithi to Amil, pargana Dausa, Vaisakh Vadi 9 VS 1785/ AD 1728
\item \textsuperscript{32} Chithi to Faujdar and Amil, Kasba Sanganeri, Chait Sudi 13 VS 1816/ AD 1759
\item \textsuperscript{33} Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Mageshra Vadi 14, VS 1785/ AD 1728
\item \textsuperscript{34} Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Fagun Vadi 6, VS 1796/ AD 1739
\item \textsuperscript{35} Chithi, Mageshra Vadi 4 VS 1815/ AD 1758
\item \textsuperscript{36} Chithi, Vaisakh Vadi 4 VS 1819/ AD 1762
\end{itemize}
jagirdars or bhomias, advocating the cause of the weak for their greater good. If and when this did happen, benevolence was guided more by the need to mobilize caste and clan networks for some gain, rather than for the sake of the masses. Interestingly, what happened due to this kind of conflict, was that the weak benefited. Some relief, howsoever short lived and meagre, came their way. Social boundaries got clarified. Those in a position to exploit became mutual checks on one another. They prevented exploitation from going overboard. Irretrievable violence could not be resorted to.

Conflicts over land revolved around the demarcation of territorial jurisdiction and forcible occupations. Udikis of village Padli and Shrikishanpur fought over the respective size of their land grants. An Udiki and a jagirdar in pargana Mauzabad were

37 See R.P. Rana “A Dominant Class in Upheaval: the Zamindars of a North Indian Region in the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries, IESHR, Vol. XXIV No. 4, Oct-Dec 1987, pp. 399-400; Rana has written of the manner in which caste and clan networks were mobilized by bhomias to emerge winners in the flux which characterized the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

38 Harbans Mukhia wrote of the conflict of interests among the dominant groups bringing relief to those subjected to extortions. See “Illegal Extortions from Peasants, Artisans and Merials in 18th C Eastern Rajasthan”, IESHR, Vol. XIV No. 2, p. 240.

39 Lewis Coser had argued that conflict works in a positive sense and is not always destructive. He wrote that conflict clarifies social boundaries, helps maintain balance of power, creates effective group coalitions and adds to group cohesion and stability. See Conflict and Consensus, A Festschrift in Honour of Lewis A. Coser, edited by Walter W. Powell and Richard Robbins, p. 287.

40 Chithi, Chait Vadi 11 VS 1820/ AD 1763, pargana Bahatri.
engaged in a dispute over the size of their grants.\textsuperscript{41} Between the heirs of religious grantees, such disputes tended to be like property conflicts.\textsuperscript{42} There were antagonisms born out of the manner of demarcation of grants. A Punya Udiki complained that the tapdar had over estimated the area under Kyari within his grant and that a lot of land given to him in punya had never been cultivated.\textsuperscript{43} The jagirdars of a village in Sawai Jaipur reported that the Patel had given away the most fertile land and the land cultivated by paltis to one co-sharer.\textsuperscript{44} There are umpteen cases of forcible occupation and forcible cultivation of land. The Patel of a village in Vairath complained that the zamindar of the village, Than Singh Syob Singh Shekhavat had forcibly occupied his land and ousted him from the village.\textsuperscript{45} Hamirdeka had forcibly occupied the land of an udiki in pargana Khohri.\textsuperscript{46} The Qanungo of Malpura forcibly occupied the land of the Patel of village Baapdaudi. The Patel complained that the Qanungo did not let him cultivate his land.\textsuperscript{47} Gangli Patel’s land had been forcibly

\textsuperscript{41} Chithi to Amil, pargana Mauzabad Vaisakh Sudi 1 VS 1820/ AD 1763
\textsuperscript{42} See Madhavi Bajekal, \textit{Rural Disputes in Eastern Rajasthan in the 18th Century}, pp. 52-53.
\textsuperscript{43} Chithi to Shri Chakravarty Shree Hare Har Ji Shri Gulab Chand Ji Sawan Vadi 11 VS 1816/ AD 1759
\textsuperscript{44} Chithi dated Bhadva Vadi 10 VS 1800/ AD 1743
\textsuperscript{45} Chithi to Amil, pargana Vairath, Asadh Vadi 9 VS 1816/ AD 1759
\textsuperscript{46} Chithi to Amil, pargana Khohri, Asoj Vadi VS 1809/ AD 1752.
\textsuperscript{47} Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Asoj Sudi 2 VS 1809/ AD 1752.
taken over by Umed Singh Dhiravat.48 Veerdhe Patwari of Kasba Malpura owned 100 bighas of land, which had been forcibly taken over by Nagori.49 The Khojis and chokayats of several villages in pargana Sawai Jaipur were prevented by jagirdars from taking possession of the land granted to them.50 The fact that in all these cases of forcible occupation of land, the aggressors were invariably Rajputs, is not just a coincidence. In a study of rural disputes in 18th C Eastern Rajasthan, it has been noted that it was invariably the Rajputs who forcibly occupied the lands of paltis.51

Usurpation of office was another source of tension. This was both part of and consequence of the attempt of dominant sections to establish their sway over stretches of land. Patels were ousted from office52, their patelis were disputed53 Patwaris were forcibly evicted.54 Efforts of bhomias and jagirdars to establish kotri in villages was resisted not only by peasants but also by sections of ruling class. The patel of a village in pargana Sawai Jaipur resisted attempts of the jagirdar to establish kotri.55 There were disputes

48 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Mgeshra Vadi 10 VS 1820/ AD 1763.
49 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Bhadva Sudi 9 VS 1809/ AD 1752.
50 Chit to Shri Saligram Ji and Shri Raja Ram Ji.
51 Madhavi Bajekal, Rural Disputes in Eastern Rajasthan in the 18th Century, p. 46.
52 Chithi dated Asoj Sudi 1 VS 1784/ AD 1727.
53 Chithi dated Chait Vadi 2 VS 1785/ AD 1728; Chithi dated Bhadva Vadi 9 VS 1800/ AD 1743; Chithi dated Asadh Vadi 9 VS 1816/ AD 1759.
54 Chithi dated Asoj Sudi 12 VS 1783/ AD 1726.
55 Chithi dated Bhadva Vadi 1 VS 1800/ AD 1743.
over zamindari rights between contenders.\textsuperscript{56} Patels of Chandpura complained that the jagirdar had forcibly taken over their zamindari.\textsuperscript{57} Tensions within the ruling class often got expressed by way of defiance and unwillingness to co-operate. The patel of Rampura complained that Zalim Singh Madho Singh Rajawat who had a share in the village was doing ‘sokhi’\textsuperscript{58}. The disgruntled patel and patwari of mauza Biharipur, tappa Ramgarh, refused to do jamabandi for Gulab Singh Hara’s Share.\textsuperscript{59} The Amil completed assessment of the village before the jagirdar of the village could receive his kagad.\textsuperscript{60} Sahnas and mutasaddis harassed jagirdars.\textsuperscript{61}

Between sections of the ruling class and amils, ‘sanads’ were a common object of dispute. We have numerous cases of amils questioning the shares of jagirdars, inamis, ijaradars etc. by insisting that they produce the required sanad. The ijaradar of pargana Narnaul complained of harassment by the Amil over sanad.\textsuperscript{62} Another inami had a similar complaint.\textsuperscript{63} The state response in almost all such cases was in favour of the petitioners. The Amils were directed not to harass over sanad. The sanads, in most cases, had either not reached or were lost. Old sanads would

\textsuperscript{56} Chithi dated Mageshra Sudi 11 VS 1795/AD 1738.  
\textsuperscript{57} Chithi dated Vaisakh Sudi 14 VS 1798/AD 1741.  
\textsuperscript{58} Chithi to Amil, pargana Dausa, Bhadva Vadi 10 VS 1786/AD 1729.  
\textsuperscript{59} Asadh Sudi 9 VS 1805/AD 1748, Amber Records.  
\textsuperscript{60} Chithi to Amil, pargana Malarna, Chait Sudi 7 VS 1809/AD 1752.  
\textsuperscript{61} Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Mageshra Sudi 3, V.S. 1792/AD 1735; Chithi to Vidyadhar, Vaisakh Vadi 10, V.S. 1785/A.D.1728.  
\textsuperscript{62} Chithi to Amil, pargana Narnaul, Sawan Sudi 6 VS 1810/AD 1753.  
\textsuperscript{63} Chithi to Amil, pargana Narnaul, Bhadva Vadi 12 VS 1816/AD 1759.
often not satisfy Amils and they would insist for recent sanads i.e. “सनदि हाल की”. From the nature of the state response (which as we have mentioned earlier, was invariably in favour of the petitioners and in the form of warnings to Amils not to harass over sanad) it seems possible that sanads were being used by Amils as weapons to verify the credibility of claims to concessions and exemptions. Sanads might also have been used by amils to settle scores and increase their reckoning in the power game. We know also of disputes between other sections of the ruling class over sanads. One major area of dispute between jagirdars and amils was the power of amils to ensure that jagirdars came for the muster. We have several examples of this. Jagirdars were unfairly harassed over muster.64 Amils demanded ‘sanad’ for ‘tasiya’65. The state mostly sided with the jagirdars. We have isolated cases of disputes between dominant sections over pasture66, cattle, right to irrigate67, right to drink water68 etc. These were personal in nature.

64 Chithi to Amil, pargana Toda Bhim, Chait Sudi 7 VS 1811/ AD 1754; Chithi dated Vaisakh Sudi 6 VS 1811/ AD 1754
65 Chithi to Amil, pargana Udehi, Chait Sudi 1 V.S. 1811/ AD 1754; Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Chait Vadi 55 VS 1811/ AD 1754
66 Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Kati Vadi 12 VS 1811/ AD 1754; This documents a dispute between a grantee and the audhadar over pasture.
67 Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Mah Vadi 7 VS 1813/ AD 1756; Gunchand Patwari of village Aadhra complained that the patel and zamindar took away his camel to carry the Amil’s luggage to Sawai Jaipur and never returned it.
68 Chithi to Amil, pargana Maujavadi, Kati Vadi 10 VS 1799/ AD 1742; Raghunath Singh Khangarwat, who was a jagirdar quarreled with another jagirdar over right to drink water.
Tensions and disputes between the dominant sections of society and within them, has to be contextualized in terms of the displacement, usurpation and reshuffling going on at every stage of the emergence of the Amber principality, its time of strength and its disintegration. The observation of Dr. Dilbagh Singh that intra class disputes were, in the initial phases, more in the nature of clan rivalries and later over the distribution of surplus.\textsuperscript{69} has to be understood in terms of the larger framework. The very nature of Rajput polity made clan rivalries and internal feuds inevitable\textsuperscript{70}, more so at the time of establishment of the Amber principality. As the state and its apparatus began taking root, clan feuds took a back seat as there was now the more lucrative surplus to be fought over. Tensions erupted between members of the same clan over shares in surplus. Clan rivalries were not however completely obliterated. Clan considerations continued to influence the contours of the quarrels over surplus, land, office etc.

Conflict always tends to become more evident and more explosive in situations of social change.\textsuperscript{71} In times such as the late

\textsuperscript{69} Dilbagh Singh, \textit{The State, Landlords and Peasants}, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{70} This has been amply discussed by scholars of Rajput polity. See for example G.D. Sharma \textit{Rajput Polity A Study of Politics and Administration of the State of Marwar 1638-1749} and A.C. Banerjee \textit{Lectures on Rajput History}, pp. 110-113.

\textsuperscript{71} George De Vos, “Conflict, Dominance and Exploitation in Human Systems of Social Segregation: Some Theoretical Perspectives from the Study of Personality in Culture", in Anthony de Reuck and Julie Knight (ed.), \textit{Conflict in Society}, London: Churchil, p. 79. He explains that during situations of social change, conflict becomes more evident due to the possibility of taking on new definitions of social identity. He also writes that conflict remains minimal as long as the system of dominance in society is internalized and mutually accommodating.
18th century (characterized by economic decline, decreasing control of the state, increasing poverty and exploitation of the peasants) conflicts within the dominant sections became more bitter and acrimonious. Matters came to a head as toleration levels reduced considerably.

**Tensions within the Peasant World**

The fact that peasants comprised various sections with different rights and positions, different resource potentials, different statuses etc. (we have discussed these at length in Chapter III) made tension and conflicts within their ranks inevitable. We have discussed in the previous chapter that the categories which constituted the peasantry, the gharuhalas, paltis, pahis, menials and labourers were not composite units and there was sizeable differentiation within them. The attempt, in this section is to highlight the tensions within the peasant world, and this will be done with reference to issues and processes so that the reasons for antagonisms are understood. Personalized conflicts and disputes between peasants, though well documented, will not be discussed here. Social and commercial disputes will also not be discussed. The focus instead, will be on agrarian disputes, since the purpose of this section is to facilitate an understanding of the contradictions and tension generating issues in the agricultural world.
At the core of tensions in the gharuhala-palti relationship was the imbalance created in rural society because of the privileged position of the gharuhalas and the unprivileged state of the paltis. We have discussed in the previous chapter how gharuhala status entitled individuals, mostly of the upper castes, to a favourable treatment at the hands of the state. They were required to pay land revenue at concessional rates and were either wholly or partially exempted from malba. Various other advantages must have accrued to them. As historians, we cannot even begin to recount the grudge nursed by paltis due to this discriminatory policy of the state. Historical evidence is not sufficiently equipped to explore how those discriminated against coped psychologically. It is possible however, to discuss at some length, the animosities that were generated over the acquisition of land by gharuhaals and their disinclination to pay dues on such land.

Land of the ordinary cultivators passed under control of the gharuhalas by three ways. When the poor and oppressed abandoned cultivation, the gharuhalas often took over and cultivated such lands. We have an example of this from pargana Fagi.\textsuperscript{72} Better documented than this is the process of transfer through mortgage. Hard pressed raiyats had to frequently

\textsuperscript{72} Chithi to Amil, pargana Fagi, Bhadva Vadi VS 1780/ AD 1723
mortgage their land either to make ends meet or to fulfil other requirements. The well to do often also purchased the land of the raiyats, when they were unable to return the money lent out. These two processes were natural in so far as they were the result of impoverishment of the ordinary cultivators and there was no element of force used. The state aggravated this process if not facilitated it, through its policy of discriminatory taxation.

The third process by which land passed into the hands of the rich and powerful peasants involved use of force. Original proprietors were forcibly evicted and their land appropriated. Although we will discuss here instances of gharuhalas and the well-to-do forcibly occupying the land of the ordinary cultivators, it is pertinent to point out that we have instances, even though rare, of forcible occupation of land even within the categories of the gharuhalas and paltis. From village Ram Khohri in pargana Aaveri, we have the example of a Meena complaining that Tulchhyo Meena, Khemle Meena and Kusle Meena of the village had forcibly occupied his 'kyaari' land. Similarly Bhagut Singh Dev Singh Chaturbhijot of Luhara, pargana Chatsu, got land

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73 Dr. Dilbagh Singh has discussed in details the misery of the ordinary peasants, made even more miserable during harvest failures and famines. See “The State...” Chapter 2, especially pp. 20-24.

74 Chithi to Amil pargana Mauzabad, Bhadva Vadi 6 VS 1815/ AD 1758; Chithi to Amil pargana Mauzabad, Sawan Sudi 9 VS 1819/ AD 1762; Chithi to Amil pargana Chatsu, Vaisakh Sudi 3 VS 1820/ AD 1763; Chithi dated Chait Vadi 7, VS 1826/ AD 1769, pargana Gazi Ka Thana.

75 Chithi to Sahib Ji Ram, Mah Vadi 5, VS 1785/ AD 1728
cultivated in village Beechpadi. He complained that Kirath Singh Rajawat came and surrounded his 'jotas' and ploughed the land forcibly. Far more numerous are instances of gharuhalas forcibly occupying what was deemed as 'raiyati' land. Thus, the Narukas of Sada, pargana Tonk, forcibly occupied the land belonging to paltis. Land of the patels and raiyats was forcibly occupied in pargana Tonk, Malpura and Malarna.

When land thus passed from the possession of ordinary cultivators into the hands of the well to do, (either with or without the use of force) what happened was that the existing power equations (which were already lop-sided) were rendered even more lop-sided. Disparities increased. Implications of this for relationships within rural society have been discussed at length by Dr. Dilbagh Singh.

Related to this and possibly generated by it, were tensions between gharuhalas and paltis over malba. Gharuhalas were either wholly or partially exempted from contributing towards

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76 Chithi to Amil, pargana Chatsu, Kati Vadi 1 VS 1816/ AD 1754; Bhagut Singh Dev Singh Chaturbhujot reported that Kirat Singh Rajawat "म्हा की जोता ने तो पैरी दिया अर आप का हल चलाय दिया"
77 Chithi dated Mageshra Sudi 8 VS 1798/ AD 1741
78 Chithi dated Mageshra Vadi 1 VS 1795/ AD 1738; Chithi dated Mageshra Vadi 11 VS 1795/ AD 1738; Chithi dated Asoj Vadi 14, VS 1795/ AD 1738
79 Chithi dated Asadh Sudi 3 VS 1804/ AD 1747
80 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malarva, Kati Vadi 5 VS 1816/ AD 1754
81 "The State....." P. 20; Also see Satish Chandra The Study....' P. 10
Malba was thus a burden majorly if not solely born by the poor, ordinary cultivators. When raiyati land was acquired by the gharuhalas on a large scale, the malba expenses had now to be paid from the yield of lesser land and lesser ploughs. There is no evidence to suggest that the malba dues collected from raiyats were correspondingly reduced. With the transfer of land therefore, the burden of malba became even more burdensome. More so because of the disinclination of the rich and powerful to pay malba on the land thus acquired.

We have many instances of the animosity generated over malba arising out of the acquisition of raiyati land by gharuhalas. The classic example comes from qasba Fagi, where the raiyats petitioned that the malba had become extremely burdensome since what was formerly levied on 700 ploughs had now to be born by just 28. We have several other instances. The Raiyats and Patel of a village in Gazi Ka Thana voiced a similar concern. The picture gets even more complicated when we consider that there are several documents where gharuhalas petition to the state and complain about harassment over malba. Ram Chand Khushyali

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82 Dilbagh Singh "The State....." p. 18
83 This has been cited by Dilbagh Singh in The State....., p. 24.
84 Chithi dated Chait Vadi 7, VS 1826/ AD 1769
85 Chithi, Bhadva Vadi 7 VS 1801/ AD 1744, Gazi Ka Thana; Chithi, Fagun Vadi 5 VS 1818/ AD 1761, Tonk; Chithi, Fagun Vadi 4 VS 1813/ AD 1756, Fagi; Chithi, Sawan Sudi 6 VS 1801/ AD 1744, Fagi; Chithi to Amil, pargana Chatsu, Jaith Sudi 15, VS 1810/ AD 1753
Chand Luharia\textsuperscript{86} and another Brahman\textsuperscript{87} of pargana Narayana, complained in two separate chithis, that they were being harassed over malba, when formerly, they were never required to pay. This apparent "paradox" \textsuperscript{88} has to be contextualized. When seen in conjunction with the process of land transfers and acquisitions, the petitions both by paltis (about the burdensome nature of malba) as well as gharuhalas (alleging harassment over malba) fall in place. It is possible to infer the following sequence – land passed into the hands of gharuhalas, the burden of malba became even more burdensome, the raiyats began complaining and resenting, the state could do little except instructing officials to check the acquisition of land by gharuhalas and trying to get gharuhalas to pay malba on all such land that was acquired from raiyats\textsuperscript{89}, the malba collection if it did not fall in absolute terms became more difficult to come by, Amils and patels tried coaxing and forcing gharuhalas to pay malba and the gharuhalas resented. Though each of these processes is documented, the sequence established is conjectural.

\textsuperscript{86} Chithi to Amil pargana Narayana, Asoj Vadi 14, VS 1814/ AD 1757
\textsuperscript{87} Chithi to Amil pargana Narayana, Asoj Sudi 3, VS 1809/ AD 1752
\textsuperscript{88} Madhavi Bajekal, \textit{Rural Disputes...}, p. 96.
\textsuperscript{89} Chithi to Amil, pargana Maujavadi, Mageshra Vadi 8, VS 1809/ AD 1752; Chithi dated, Chait Sudi 2 VS 1817/ AD 1760; Chiti dated, Chait Vadi 7 VS 1826/ AD 1769; Chithi dated, Sawan Vadi 7 VS 1802/ AD 1745
What is important to note is that caste tensions within the peasant world, mostly did not get expressed in terms of blatant and open caste disputes. I have come across only one document where it is stated that the Rajputs and Meenas of village Taajkhan Ko Vaas in pargana Chatsu, don’t get along and due to “आपस की खेल” between them cultivation has been suffering. The Meenas, in this case, expressed their wish to be settled elsewhere in the village i.e. “स म्हा नै जुदा बसावो तो म्हा की गाँव में रहवो होय”

Misgivings arising out of the caste division, got expressed instead, in conflicts over land, malba, cattle etc.

**Exploitation**

We will now discuss the exploitative relationship between the rulers and the ruled and this will be approached almost exclusively in terms of the demands that the rulers made on the ruled – land revenue, other cesses and various kinds of free services. To understand the pattern of the exploitative relationship between the rulers and the ruled, is to comprehend the nature of the exploitative agrarian system, the tensions generated and the resistance offered to the exercise of power. The stress on the exploitative nature of the state in this section is not to suggest that

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90 Chithi to Sah Mansaram and Sangahi Ajab Singh from Diwan Narayan Das Kripam, Pos Vadi 11, VS 1784/ AD 1727
the state was solely and exclusively an exploitative agent. As we have seen in Chapter III and we will discuss again in Chapter VI, exploitation was always tempered with concern for the well being of the peasants. Exploitation was always contained within boundaries, so as to sustain the entire system.

We have discussed earlier, how neither the rulers, nor the ruled constituted composite and undifferentiated categories (See Chapter II and III). Nonetheless, in this section, we will speak of the rulers and the ruled as two categories and exploitation will be discussed in terms of the antagonisms between the two. In the former category we will include the state, its agents and the dominant sections within rural society. Gharuhalas, paltis, pahis and menials in their capacity as agriculturists, will be clubbed together as those who were ruled. This dichotomous construct between the rulers and the ruled is not without problems. The duality in the position of Patels, Patwaris, bhomias etc has to be noted. The utility of such a construct for a theoretical analysis however remains.

The crux of the problem, the basic contradiction, was appropriation from the peasants, of what was deemed ‘surplus’. It was this act of appropriation which ensured the existence of the state and its entire apparatus. Ordinary peasants parted with nearly half of their produce – one-third as ‘mal’, the basic land
revenue demand and another one-tenth in various other forms. The privileged few paid lesser. Since a substantial portion of the peasant's produce was taken away, the balance between the quantum demanded and the peasantry's capacity to meet the demand, was delicate.\textsuperscript{91} Exploitation by the rulers, their attempts to extract more, must be seen in the backdrop of this already precarious balance which existed. Resistance must also be similarly contextualized.

The following discussion on exploitation is premised on the understanding that the entire system we are discussing was at one level exploitative. This has been discussed at length in Chapter III. So, while the very act of collecting from peasants a sizeable portion of their produce was essentially an act of exploitation, we will here confine our discussion to the attempts by rulers to stretch the limits sanctioned by custom and wrench from peasants more than what was customary. Such attempts assumed several forms – forcing peasants to part with more than what was sanctioned, either in the form of haasil or as various other dues; imposing on them various additional imposts; exacting from them free services not sanctioned by custom; transgressing the customary limit while exacting these services; extending the

\textsuperscript{91} This has been discussed by Dr. Dilbagh Singh in details see "The State...." pp. 113, 116 etc.
area as well as scope of one's jurisdiction – both territorially as well as in terms of powers appropriated; forcing peasants to pay one's own dues etc.

Instances of excessive collection of hasil, from paltis and raiyats are difficult to come by. Raiyatis of Kasba Harsana, pargana Pindayan had been forced to pay an extra amount of Rs. 269 and 50 paisa as hasil in VS 1820/AD1763.92 Similarly, Bahadur Singh Naruka, the jagirdar of several villages in pargana Tonk, had collected an excessive amount of hasil from the raiyats.93 The ijaradar of pargana Tonk is known to have collected hasil over and above ‘dastoor’ in VS 1785.94 More frequent than such instances of excessive realization were attempts to over-assess the raiyati. The Amil of pargana Ajabgarh is known to have assessed a village arbitrarily and given it in ‘ijara’. The raiyats were consequently being harassed by the ijaradar to pay the unrealistic amount their village had been assessed for.95 Undue strictness or “सख्ती” both in the payment of hasil as well as in measurement,

92 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pindayan, Asadh Sudi 1 VS 1820/AD 1763. The patel and raiyati of Harsana complained that the Amil-ijaradar (not clear whether they were two separate individuals) had collected “hasil सिवाय फाजिल” to the tune of Rs. 269 and 50 paisa.
93 This evidence has been cited by Madhavi Bajekal, Rural Disputes..., p. 70; Chithi dated Fagun Sudi 1, VS 1820/ AD 1763.
94 Chithi, Jaith Vadi 4 VS 1785/ AD 1728, pargana Tonk.
95 Chithi to Amil, pargana Ajabgarh, Chait Sudi 2, VS 1785/ AD 1728; This petition was forwarded by the patel and raiyats, who pleaded for a revision of the ijara amount.
assessment etc are well documented. The ijaradar of a village in pargana Pindayan was reportedly doing "सख़्ती" in 'dori' and the peasants were aggrieved.96 The ijaradar of pargana Malpura was also allegedly doing सख़्ती with raiyats.97 Most other complaints of "सख़्ती" were against jagirdars.98 Related to the exploitation over hasil, was harassment over arrears or "बाकी". Arrears had accumulated over the 18th century.99 Harassment over arrears is known to have forced peasants to abandon cultivation and migrate.100 Amils sent task forces i.e तलब to realize arrears from raiyats.101 The consequence of excessive harassment on account of arrears was so self defeating that jagirdars like Bhiv Singh Mahajan102 and Sultan Singh Chuhar Singh103, both of pargana Gazi Ka Thana, reported to the Diwan that their respective villages could not prosper, if pressed so hard to pay up. The attempts to force peasants to pay arrears, was not exploitation per se, in cases where arrears were legitimately due to the state. In all such cases, it was harassment over the time and mode of payment which was

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96 Chithi to ijaradar, Fagun Vadi 8, VS 1785/ AD 1728
97 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Sawan Sudi 12, V.S.1800/AD1743.
98 Chithi dated Asadh Sudi 3, VS 1809/ AD 1752; Chithi dated Pos Sudi 3, VS 1808/ AD 1751; Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Fagun Vadi 55, VS 1809/AD 1752
99 Dilbagh Singh, The State..., p. 203; S.P. Gupta, The Agrarian...
100 Dilbagh Singh, The State..., p.117
101 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Sawan Sudi 8 VS 1810/ AD 1753
102 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Asoj Sudi 2 VS 1816/ AD 1759
103 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Sawan Sudi 8 VS 1810/ AD 1753
reported. We do have instances, however, of unwarranted exploitation over arrears. A Brahman cultivation or mauza Bhuda, prgana Toda Bhim was allegedly being harassed over arrears, which were in fact due from his village, and not him.104

It is important to mention here, that I have not come across a single case of actual collection of hasil over and above what was specified in the datoor, from gharuhalas. All the three cases of excessive collection, were made from raiyatis. The possibility that the term ‘raiyats’ in these documents was used in a general sense and it included the gharuhalas is remote since we have umpteen number of documents whereby gharuhalas petitioned against attempts to force them to pay more than what was sanctioned. It is unlikely therefore that the gharuhalas could be co-erced to pay more, considering especially, their inclination to protest by petitioning. (We will discuss this at length in Chapter V). That gharuhalas could not, by and large, be co-erced to pay excessively, is of course not to say that attempts to coerce them to pay, were not made. There are several instances of gharuhalas reporting that they have been paying hasil according to ‘patti’ and are being

104 Chithi to Amil, pargana Toda Bhim, Pos Vadi 9 VS 1816/ AD 1759. Also see Chithi to Amil, pargana Tonk, Mah Vadi 2, V.S. 1810/AD1753; Chithi to Amil, pargana Lalsot, Chait Sudi 3 V.S. 1819/AD1762.
harassed over shares\textsuperscript{105}. The ones accused of harassing over shares are amils, jagirdars and ijaradars.

Exploitation of raiyats over magnitude of malba was widespread. If the numerosity of chithis can be considered an indicator of the extent to which a particular form of exploitation existed, we can argue that there were more transgressions over the magnitude of malba and other cesses than over the basic land revenue. Patels and patwaris often flouted the customary norms and forced raiyats to pay more towards malba kharch. Within the peasant body, it was mostly paltis who were thus exploited. The patel and patwari of mauza Ajmeri collected Rs. 150/- in the name of malba, from the paltis. The aggrieved paltis complained to the Diwan, who got the extra amount thus collected, returned and fined the patel and patwari.\textsuperscript{106} Similarly, the patels and patwari of mauza Pachali, pargana Fagi collected excessively from the paltis in the name of malba kharch\textsuperscript{107}. The paltis of a village in pargana Fagui deserted their lands due to an excessively unfair demand of malba by the Patel.\textsuperscript{108} Paltis of village Muhi, pargana Bahatri also

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{105}] Chithi to Amil, pargana Dausa, Fagun Vadi 8 VS 1809/ AD 1752; Chithi to Amil, pargana Fagui, Vaisakh Sudi 4, VS 1816/ AD 1759; Chithi to Amil, pargana Chatsu, Chait Sudi 10, VS 1810/ AD 1753; Chithi to Amil pargana Naravana, Asadh Vadi 15, VS 1859/ AD 1802; Chithi to Chakravarti Shri Hare Har Ji, Shah Shri Gulab Chand Ji, Mageshra Sudi 13 VS 1816/ AD 1759.
\item[\textsuperscript{106}] Amber Records, Vaisakh Sudi 2, VS 1803/ AD 1746
\item[\textsuperscript{107}] Roznama, pargana Fagi, VS 1759/ AD 1702
\item[\textsuperscript{108}] Chithi dated Fagun Sudi 7, VS 1820/ AD 1763
\end{itemize}
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deserted their village.109 In various other documents, it is stated that paltis cannot prosper on account of excessive demand of malba by the Patel.110 The Patel of mauza Muhikala was removed from office for having collected an extra Rs. 100/- in malba.111 Though it was mostly patels and patwaris who forced paltis to pay more towards malba kharch, we know of a similar attempt by the jagirdar, Raj Singh Shekhawat, of village Bihajar. He is known not to have been taking malba from raiyats according to ploughs.112 We have discussed, in an earlier section, how gharuhalas were being harassed over malba. We have also noted that when land passed into the possession of gharuhalas, the burden of malba on paltis became more disproportionate than ever. This added a new element to the exploitation of paltis over malba. Exploitation over the magnitude of haasil and malba was accompanied by exploitation over the magnitude of various other cesses. Raiyats were forced to pay an excessive amount as ghughri.113 In one case, the Amil sent several sahnas to collect ghughri from raiyats.114 The Patel and Patwari of mauza Bajhadi, prgana Toda Bhim collected

109 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, VS 1800/ AD 1743  
110 Chithi dated Jaith Sudi 7, VS 1800/ AD 1743, Sawai Jaipur; Chithi dated Fagun Sudi 13, VS 1834/ AD 1777, Sawai Jaipur; Chithi dated Kartik Vadi 3, VS 1799/ AD 1742, Sawai Jaipur.  
111 Arzdashta, dated Mah Sudi 15, VS 1739/ AD 1682  
112 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Sawan Vadi 6 VS 1819/ AD 1762  
113 Arzdashta dated Sawan Sudi 2 VS 1783/ AD 1726, See Haqiqatti pargana Toda Bhim;  
114 Arzdashta dated Bhadva Vadi 14, VS 1783/ AD 1726
vaach in excess.\textsuperscript{115} The jagirdar, Fauj Singh Hari Singh Naruka of village Palikala, pargana Bahatri, collected an excess of Rs. 1300/- in vaav.\textsuperscript{116} The raiyati of a village in pargana Baswa, was reportedly fed up due to the daily demand of viraad.\textsuperscript{117}

Apart from transgression of the customary limit in collection of haasil, malba and other cesses, another form of exploitation which prevailed was to harass those exempted for payment of dues. The patel, paltis and Panch Mahajan of Kasba Narnaul had been exempted from ‘athortra’ by a parwana. In VS 1823 they complained that they were being forced to pay.\textsuperscript{118} A Meena of village Nagal, pargana Sawai Jaipur, who had never been required to pay ‘garhi’, ‘viraad’ and ‘nyoto’ was being exploited over these.\textsuperscript{119} Kanhi Ram Mishra’s exploitation over ‘viraad’ had not stopped even after he produced the ‘sanad’ by which he had been exempted.\textsuperscript{120} There are several instances of individuals of the upper castes being harassed over malba, when in fact, they had never been required to pay.\textsuperscript{121} The barbers of kasba Jobneri were

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\footnotetext{115}{Arhsatta, Toda Bhim, VS 1787/ AD 1730}
\footnotetext{116}{Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Vaisakh Sudi 9, VS 1800/ AD 1743}
\footnotetext{117}{Roznama, pargana Baswa, VS 1742/ AD 1685}
\footnotetext{118}{Chithi to Amil, pargana Narnaul, Mah Sudi 3 VS 1823/ AD 1766}
\footnotetext{119}{Chithi to Shri Gordhar Ji Sah Shri Raja Rai Ji, Sawan Sudi 11, VS 1809/ AD 1752}
\footnotetext{120}{Chithi to Amil, pargana Narayana, Chait Vadi 55 VS 1814/ AD 1757}
\footnotetext{121}{Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Kati Sudi 15, VS 1809/ AD 1752; Chithi to Amil, pargana Chatsu, Jaith Sudi 15, VS 1810/ AD 1753; Chithi to Amil, pargana Niwai, Sawan Sudi 8, VS 1810/ AD 1753}
\end{footnotes}
reportedly being harassed over baith, begar, vaach and viraad, despite the fact that they had been exempted from it.122 ‘Jotas’ of an udik village in Gazi Ka Thana were being similarly harassed over malba.123

Exploitation over free services sanctioned by custom basically assumed two forms. There were attempts by dominant sections to transgress the customary limit and there were attempts to extract services from those who were not required by custom to render. What custom allowed and what it disallowed, varied regionally. This has been well established in a study of extortions from peasants, artisans and menials.124 Jagirdars of pargana Chatsu were entitled to begar from peasants during harvest time, while those of pargana Gazi Ka Thana were not.125 What I would like to add is that this picture of regional variations is made even more complicated when we consider the dimension of time. At various points of time, by way of various sanads, one particular

122 Chithi to Amil, pargana Jobneri, Fagun Sudi 13, VS 1809/ AD 1752
123 There seems to be some ambiguity in the state policy regarding the payment of malba from udik villages. While the ‘jotas’ of an udik village in Gazi Ka Thana had never paid malba and the udiki complained, when the Jagirdar and Patel tried to extract it from the ‘jotas’, (See Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Mah Sudi 3 VS 1809/ AD 1752) when a similar complaint was made by the udiki of village Chhoti Dausa against attempts of the Patel to exploit over malba, the Diwan directed the Amil to take malba from the udiki, only if other udikis were paying malba. (See Chithi to Amil, pargana Dausa, Fagun Vadi 5, VS 1809/ AD 1752)
125 Ibid., p. 232.
section of rural society, could be exempted from some of the customary free services. The case of barbers of various parganas and the demand of baith and begar from them, constitutes a classic example. While the barbers of Kasba Malpura had always been exempted from baith beggar\textsuperscript{126}, those of Kasba Narayana had been exempt by way of a sanad dated Pos Sudi 2, VS 1785\textsuperscript{127}, those of Kasba Jobneri were exempt in VS 1802\textsuperscript{128}, and one particular barber of Kasba Sawai Madhopur was exempted sometime around VS 1823.\textsuperscript{129} Some barbers were exempted only from baith and begar.\textsuperscript{130} Those of kasba Malpura were exempt from ‘paatli’ as well.\textsuperscript{131} Barbers of Kasba Jobneri were exempted not only from baith and begar but also vaach and viraad.\textsuperscript{132} In all these cases, there were attempts to harass and exploit barbers.

\textsuperscript{126} Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Also Sudi 9, VS 1809/ AD 1752. The barbers claimed that “मम ने बैठ बेगर वा पातली वगे की कई खेलत हुई नहीं हमें जो माफ करिए” and the state upheld their claim “हमेशा सौ माफ है तो अब भी खेलत करो मती”

\textsuperscript{127} Chithi to Amil and Faujdar, pargana Narayana, Kati Sudi 13, VS 1811/ AD 1754; The sanad of VS 1785, whereby they had been exempted from baith and beggar, was cited by the barbers in this case, when they petitioned to the state against harassment.

\textsuperscript{128} Chithi to Amil, pargana Jobneri, Fagun Sudi 13, VS 1809/ AD 1752. The barbers reported that they had been exempted from baith, beggar, vaach and viraad vide sanad from the Diwan, dated Chait Vadi 9, VS 1802/ AD 1745 and they complained that the Amil was demanding a more recent sanad.

\textsuperscript{129} Chithi to Amil, pargana Sawai Madhopur, Mah Sudi 2, VS 1823/ AD 1766. The date of the sanad was not quoted in this case.

\textsuperscript{130} Barbers of Kasba Maujavadi, See Chithi to Faujdar and Amil pargana Maujavadi, Asadh Vadi 9 VS 1799/ AD 1742; and also those of Kasba Narayana and Sawai Madhopur.

\textsuperscript{131} Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Asoj Sudi 9, VS 1809/ AD 1752.

\textsuperscript{132} Chithi to Amil, pargana Jobneri, Fagun Sudi 13, VS 1809/ AD 1752.
There are several other instances of this kind. All these corroborate the observation that amongst the menials, barbers were the worst sufferers from exploitation over begar. Exploitation over baith and begar in Kasba Malpura in VS 1809/AD 1752 crossed reasonable limits. In two separate documents, both Malis and Chamars petitioned to the Diwan that they could not survive. Ponis of Kasba Aabhaneri, were pressed too hard over baith, begar, chheli, jhumpari and dand by Lal Singh Gaj Singh Nihal Singh Kilanot of mauza Anatvaada. The Chhipa Ponis deserted the village, as a consequence. Similarly Bhiva Teli, who cultivated land in Kasba Fagi was exploited excessively over baith and begar. From Fagi again, we have an instance of custom being stretched a bit too far. The Patel of mauza Sakarpura demanded from the paltis, a pot of milk and sent it to the Mahajan of Choru. While we know of jagirdars being entitled to milk and curd, sending it to the mahajan of another village, was clearly not sanctioned by custom. Similarly, while cultivators

133 Chithi to Sah Shri Saligram Ji, Sah Shri Raja Ram Ji, Fagun Vadi 11 VS 1809/AD 1752.
134 Harbans Mukhia, "Illegal Extortions..." p. 236
135 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Bhadva Sudi 9 VS 1809/AD 1752
136 Chithi to Amil, pargana Malpura, Bhadva Sudi 9, VS 1809/AD 1752
137 Chithi to Amil, paranan Bahatri, Fagun Sudi 8 VS 1809/AD 1752
138 Chithi to Amil, pargana Fagui, Kati Vadi 4, VS 1809/AD 1752
139 Roznama, pargana Fagui, VS 1759/AD 1702
were expected to provide cots for jagirdars and bhomias\textsuperscript{141}, forcing the mahajan of qasba Chandwai to provide not only beds, but also grass, for the Faujdar's nayab, tapdar, sahna etc., was an act of violation of custom.\textsuperscript{142}

An interesting trend was the exploitation of raiyats by way of forcing them to pay dues that were in fact meant to be paid by the dominant sections. Most such attempts were made by patels who transferred the burden of peshkash on the raiyats. Thus, the patel of village Bagadi, pargana Tonk forced raiyats to pay 'viraad' for his peshkash.\textsuperscript{143} Raiyats as well as the mahajan of village Sahivaad, tappa Chandwa, were similarly forced by the Patel to meet his demand of peshkash.\textsuperscript{144} Besides peshkash, raiyats were often forced to pay for the upkeep of lower level officials. To some extent this was sanctioned by custom. When the raiyats and Mahajan of Kasba Baswa however, were forced to pay viraad for paying the forty men who had been kept by the Amil to take care of the kasba,\textsuperscript{145} it was clearly a transgression of custom. Patels are also known to have forced raiyats to pay for the fines levied on them. The Patel of Jatvaada, pargana Chatsu was fined Rs. 51/-.

\textsuperscript{141} Harbans Mukhia, "Illegal Extortions..." p. 233, FN 7
\textsuperscript{142} Chithi to Sah Shri Saligram Ji and Sah Shri Raja Ram Ji, Fagun Vadi 11, V.S. 1809/ AD 1752
\textsuperscript{143} Chithi to Bhaiya Shyaam Ram and Sah Syo Ram Das Ji, Fagun Vadi 3, V.S. 1784/ AD 1727
\textsuperscript{144} Chithi to Sah Shri Sahib Ram Ji, Vaisakh Vadi 4, Vs. 1785/ AD 1728
\textsuperscript{145} Roznama, Baswa, VS 1741/ AD 1684
To meet this demand, he collected Rs. 400/- from the raiyats.146 We know also of exploitation in the garb of hasil farohi.147

The exploitative unit thus comprised almost anyone and everyone, who had any kind of claim, big or small, in cash or in kind, either on the 'hasil', other dues or even the customary free services. It ranged from the powerful jagirdars and zamindars, across to the highest level pargana official – the Amil, right down to the village headman. The high ranking faujdars were as much a part of this exploitative unit as sahnas and tapdars. The sconce was the state itself. It sanctioned and even enabled exploitation. It contained it as well. The state's attitude towards exploitation was guided by two considerations. Exploitation of the basic and permanent kind was necessary for its survival, but to let go was suicidal. We will discuss this at length in Chapter VI. The transferable jagirdars were less likely to share this concern. The degree of cohesion within the exploitative unit was determined by the extent to which the component's common interests vis-a-vis the exploitative structure clashed with or could be reconciled with their individual greed. How and why two or more components of the unit coalesced to exploit together also depended on various factors. Besides considerations of caste, clan etc., there was also

146 Chithi to Amil, pargana Chatsu, Pos Sudi 6, VS 1785/ AD 1728
147 Faujdars are known to have fined raiyats without justification, especially in cases of Chamchori. See Dilbagh Singh, "The State..." p. 172.
the important question of sheer necessity to connive and collaborate in order to be able to exploit. Patels and patwaris mostly collected excessive malba in conjunction with each other. Similarly, Jagirdars and Patels unitedly tried to extract malba from the ‘jotas’ who cultivated the udik’s land. The fact that components of the exploitative unit were often at loggerheads is well documented. Thus, patels often sided with the raiyats, when Amils and ijaradars resorted to exploitation. Jagirdars objected to the exploitation of raiyats by Amils and patels. Patels complained about to exploitation of raiyats by jagirdars. We have discussed previously, how one component of the exploitative unit stood to lose if the other became ruthless. We have also discussed, how this was a check on the extent to which exploitation could go.

Those who suffered the brunt of exploitation were the menials, paltis and gharuhalas, each with a different place in the caste hierarchy and different resource potentials. The weakest, lowliest and poorest within each section were most susceptible. We

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148 Roznama, pargana Fagu, VS 1759/ AD 1702; Amber Records, Vaisakh Sudi 2, VS 1803/ AD 1746
149 Chithi to Amil, pargana Gazi Ka Thana, Mah Sudi 3 VS 1809/ AD 1752
150 Chithi to Amil, pargana Pindayan, Asadh Sudi 1 VS 1820/ AD 1763; Chithi to Amil, pargana Ajabgarh, Chait Sudi 2 VS 1785/ AD 1728
151 Chithi to Amil, parganan Gazi Ka Thana, Sawan Sudi 8, VS 1810/ AD 1753
152 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Chait Sudi 11 VS 1800/ AD 1743
153 Chithi to Amil, pargana Bahatri, Vaisakh Sudi 9 VS 1800/ AD 1743
will discuss in the next chapter how the strong and the weak within the peasant body were placed in terms their respective capacities to resist excesses. It has also been observed that exploitation had increased in the second half of the 18th C.\textsuperscript{154} If the numerosity of petitions over exploitation is a reliable index my evidence corroborates the fact of increased exploitation in and after mid 18th C.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{154} Harbans Mukhia, "Illegal Extortion".
\textsuperscript{155} Most petitions (in my collection) against excessive harassment are dated VS.1809/AD1752.