CHAPTER-I

NATURE OF RAJASTHANI SOURCES ON URBAN HISTORY 18TH-19TH CENTURY

The archival, non-archival, numismatics, inscriptions and archeological data form the back-bone of the historical research for all the periods. Rajasthan is extremely rich in all the five categories of sources. The State archives at Bikaner possesses enormous material both in Persian as well as Rajasthani. Besides this, the region is also rich in private collections possessed by many business families, Jagirdars and revenue officials. The bardic literature (such as the khyat and baat) is enormous which provide very relevant information.

This vast archival material was first utilized by Syed Nurul Hasan and Satish Chandra¹. The information on agricultural production, food grain prices and rural society was tapped in two subsequent studies on Amber region by S.P. Gupta and Dilbagh Singh². Similarly, the material on Jodhpur (Marwar), Kota and Bikaner was studied by G.D. Sharma, B.L. Bhadani, Masanori Sato, Madhu Tandon Sethia and G.S.L. Devra respectively³. These studies provided a new insight into the agrarian economy of 17th to 19th centuries. They had studied the structure and stratification of the
village and urban society and traced the changes taking place in agricultural production, non-agricultural taxes, revenue demand and prices.

The archival sources provide valuable data on the *qasbas* and cities. The information on them is related to number of houses of different categories of people, taxes, markets, trade and commerce. The information contained in the sources throw ample light on the status, growth and development of towns and cities.

Our study of the urban centers and their population is based primarily on the archival sources such as *arhsattas, yaddastis, chithis, dastur-ul-amals, amal-dasturs, arzdashts, nirkh-bazars, takhminas, khasras, toji-do-varkhi-bajetalke, taqsims, sava-bahis, zakat bahis, kagad bahis and rukka parwana bahis* etc. These records are compiled in the form of *tojis, do-warkhis, natthis and bahis* etc. which are available for Jaipur, Kota, Bundi, Jodhpur, Shekhawati and Bikaner.

A few points may however be made here regarding the use of these documents. They are in Rajasthani and are dated as *Vikram Sambat* (V.S.) though some early documents often used the *hijri* and the *fasli* years. The Persian terms are used profusely in the Rajasthani style. The influence of the Persian on the Medieval
Rajasthan is enormous which demonstrates the synthesis in language and culture in Medieval Rajasthan.

Our documentary evidence is not only large in volume but varied in nature. It may be classified as follows:

(a) Documents giving information of various *qasbas/villages* and their details about area under crops, tax on individuals etc.

(b) Documents providing accounts of incomes and expenditure at the *qasba/village* and *pargana* level.

(c) Agricultural production in *kharif* and *rabi*, land tax, peasants, their number of houses, ploughs and amount of tax collection, and some times the names of the traders.

(d) Non-agricultural taxes under different heads such as; *sair-jihat*, *kholari*, *jamadar* etc.

(e) *Dhuan* (house-tax) and *Jagat* (transit) taxes and the names of individual peasants with their castes.

**Jaipur State Records:**

The Jaipur revenue records are in loose sheets, *farads*, locally known as *toji* and written in local *dhundhari* dialect. The main categories of documents are *arhsatta mujmali*, *arhsatta bhoomi, arhsatta ek-harfi muwazana, Jama-bandi, dastur-ul-amal,*
yaddashti, chthis, arzdasht, nirkh-bazars, takhmina and khasras etc. which are utilized in my study.

The arhsatta mujmils are ledgers of receipts and disbursement maintained pargana-wise. They furnished revenue information to the diwan’s office related to the pargana. This includes number of qasbas/villages, villages in jagir, inam, bhoomi and khalsa, the total assessment for the pargana, income, expenditure and the baqi etc. The arhsatta bhoomi zamindari contains detailed lists of the items of taxes under various heads of the bhoomi and zamindari areas. The muwazana records were compiled in the early 19th century on the basis of information given in the various categories of records such as arhsatta, awarija, Jamabandi, khasra, dastur-ul-amal and chthi. They furnished information on qasbas and villages in the pargana. The pargana level jamabandi records were prepared with the help of the chaudharis and the qanungos. The documents are very useful in ascertaining the magnitude of land revenue (mal) under batai and the incidence of Jihat taxes in a pargana. The dastur-ul-amal and amal-dastur are a body of rules and regulations for the guidance of revenue officials. The yaddashtis (memoranda) were compiled by hereditary village officials (patels and patwaris) and state functionaries. They offer us the number of ploughs and bullocks
held by each peasant in *qasba/village* and also the extent of cultivation in a *pargana* comprised of villages and *qasbas*\(^{11}\). The *chithis* (letters) were written by the *Diwan* of Jaipur state to the administrative officials of the *parganas* such as; the *amil*, *amins* and *faujdars*. The *arzdashts* were written by the *amil*, the *faujdar* and other officials of the Jaipur to their ruler. The *nirkhbazar* were prepared by the *panch mahajan* (association of merchants) of the *qasba*. They recorded the daily market prices of each commodity prevalent in the market\(^{12}\). *Takhmina* and *khasra* documents were compiled by the *Patel* and the *Patwari* of the village. Among the above mentioned documents, the *arhsattas* are the most important documents which helped us in reconstructing the organization and composition of the urban centers. Their evidence on agricultural and non-agricultural taxes under the heads (*mal-o-jihaP, salr-jihal*)\(^{13}\) and *siwai jamabandis*\(^{15}\) is of extreme importance.

Remaining series of documents provided supplementary information related to the topic.

The data contained under the *sair-jihat* are of extreme importance for the study of the non-agricultural sector which essentially indicate the size of the urban sector. The *sair-jihat* consists of various customary fees or taxes collected from the residents of a *qasba/village*, such as transit duties, house taxes and
taxes on animals etc. It also includes certain impositions, allowances or remunerations payable to certain local officials and grain merchants. The arhsattas of the different qasbas of 18th-19th century provide detailed break-up of the sair-jihat. S.P. Gupta counted the items of taxation (both agricultural and non-agricultural) from various documents, whose total reaches upto eighty-eight. While my counting for urban areas comes to twenty-five. For instance; Jhupari, chhaili, kagadsyahi, Khutchaka, kharachsahengi, bhetdasraha, tapdari, oonaghori, charai, chitradatal, rajbatai, chaknijranai, iqtalai, lata-kharach, suganbhet, hisabanau, gharipala moth-mata, kasoorzabti and tasmatseri etc. With the help of these data, we can estimate the composition of a qasba and estimate the number of persons residing in a particular town or city.

Evidence about jhunpri (house tax) is of extreme importance. This tax was paid by the residents of villages and towns. This implies the counting of houses of a locality which can be used to estimated the population. By the comparison between the data of two periods the growth and development of the qasbas could also be traced.
Documents of States of Kota and Bundi:

The records of Kota and Bundi are in Harauti dialect, strikingly akin to the Gujarati script, and provide information about the revenue administration of south-eastern Rajasthan\(^{20}\). A huge collection of these records is available at Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner, and its repository at Kota. These records are arranged in *bhandar* and *basta* chronologically. The nomenclature and contents of these documents testify the efforts of the Kota chiefs to model the administration of their state on the pattern of the Mughal administration. The categories of documents are known as *dovarkhi-parchazat, Kota-mal-hasil, talik bahis, jamabandis taqsims, khasra* etc. *Toji taqsim* covers the period between VS 1711/AD 1654 to VS 1900/AD 1843 and *toji-do-varkhi-baje-talke* between VS 1703/AD 1646 to VS 1928/AD 1871 respectively\(^{21}\). These documents are extremely useful for the study of urban centers of Kota state. Thus a variety of documents appears to have been prepared according to the Mughal standards from 17\(^{th}\) century onwards\(^{22}\). Not only this but hundreds of adaptations of Mughal administrative terms can be seen in various documents\(^{23}\).

The *Talik bahis* carry letters written by the *Diwan* to the various officials at the *pargana/mauza* and *qasba* level carrying instructions on a variety of subjects\(^{24}\). *Jamabandis* provide us with
a detailed account of revenue assessed and realized from a village in a *pargana* from single harvest or both.

The most important documents, related to urban areas are *baje-talke* in the form of *toji-do-varkhi* and *toji-taqsim* which are in profusion. These papers are signed by the *Qanungos* and other officers\(^2^5\). *Taqsim* contain records of the number of *tappas/qasbas* and villages in a *pargana*. They provide information about the newly cultivated land along with the revenue-realized from it and the classification of land under *khalsa, jagir, nalaiq* (unfit for cultivation), *doli* (religious grants), *sasari, chakari* (service grants), *inami* and *baki bigha*\(^2^6\). The assessed revenue (*rekh*) is also recorded in these documents\(^2^7\). The information contained in these documents is useful for urban studies.

Another category of documents called *toji-do-varkhi* (*do-varkhi-parchajat, do-varkhi-jamakharch* and *do-varkhi mal-jihat*) provides details regarding the rate of assessment, the mode of payment, the classification of land, villages and *qasbas*. They offer miscellaneous information on a variety of subjects\(^2^8\).

All the documents offer evidence about the non-agricultural production, merchants and markets. An effort has been made to analyse the data contained in these documents on the composition of the artisan population in the *qasbas* and their wages employed
in the State karkhanas. They also throw light on the merchants and markets and the relationship between the state and the merchants in the region. The study of the role of merchants in the rural/urban areas is of extreme value\(^2^9\).

The *baje-talke-do-varkhi* documents pertaining to the collection of various *birads* in the *qasbas* reflected the composition of the *Mahajans, Brahamins*, artisans and menial population living there and their economic and social status. These documents have been utilized to examine the relationship of merchants with the State and the growth of urban centers and trade network in the region\(^3^0\). They also record the name of the castes (*Brahmin, Banias*, menial castes etc) with their land holdings and houses in *qasbas* for different years of the 18\(^{th}\)-19\(^{th}\) centuries in Kota. Besides these, other records such as *baje-talke, arhsattas, talik-bahis, kagzat barads, mafiyat jagir* etc. too are important for revenue administration and agrarian aspect of urban centres.

In Bundi most of the revenue records are similar to those of Kota. But some of them are different and more informative like *muwazana* records, locally called *tahsil* records of *kotwali chotra*\(^3^1\). The best kept records of Bundi state are that of the *tahsil* records. They contain the history of *khalsa* and *jagir village/qasbas* of the
18\textsuperscript{th} century. Other varieties of records such as \textit{patta talik} and \textit{taqsim parganawar} are useful for the study of urban centres.

**Records of the States of Jodhpur and Bikaner:**

The Jodhpur and Bikaner records are in local \textit{Marwari} dialect. They contain information on revenue, agricultural, non-agricultural taxes, professional taxes in urban areas and on trade and commerce from 17\textsuperscript{th} century onwards. The major documents of Jodhpur state are \textit{hukumat bahi}, \textit{qanungo bahi}, \textit{Jamabandi bahi}, \textit{Jamabandi-qabuliyat bahi}, \textit{hawala bahi}, \textit{sanad parwana bahi}, \textit{khas-rukka parwana-bahi}, \textit{patta bahi}, \textit{haqeeqat khata bahi} and \textit{kharita bahi} etc.

The \textit{Hukumat bahis} and \textit{Qanungo bahis} of Marwar are useful for the study of land revenue administration. The \textit{jamabandi bahis} give details about income and expenditure. They record the land revenue assessment, rate of demand and magnitude of land revenue demand. Other important records are \textit{sanad parwana bahi}, \textit{khas-rukka parwana bahi} and \textit{patta bahi}. In \textit{sanad parwana bahi}, the copies of the \textit{parwanas} sent by the ruler of Jodhpur to the village officials are preserved. They provide information on different type of taxes and cesses, rate of land revenue (\textit{bhog}) demand and various methods of revenue assessment such as \textit{batai} and \textit{zabti}. Besides, the duties and functions of the \textit{pargana} officials
are mentioned in these bahis\textsuperscript{35}. The \textit{khas-rukka parwana bahis} contain the \textit{rukkas} sent by the Jodhpur rulers to \textit{jagirdars} or \textit{pattayats}. They provide information about those village/qasbas which are granted in \textit{sasan} to the \textit{Brahmans} and \textit{Charans}. These grants were given to them in the form of land which was free from all obligations. The grant holders were entitled to collect land revenue and other cesses in their territories\textsuperscript{36}.

The records of Bikaner are also in \textit{bahis} which are available under different designations such as: \textit{hasil bahis}, \textit{jagat (zakat)} bahis, \textit{kamthana bahis}, \textit{sawa bahis}, \textit{kagad bahis}, \textit{zamin-ri-kagdo-ri-bahis}, \textit{chittha-wa-kooch-mukam-ri-bahis}, \textit{habob bahis}, \textit{lekha-bahis}, \textit{jama kharach bahis}, \textit{Vivah bahis}, \textit{patta bahis}, \textit{khata bahis} and \textit{parwana bahis}.

The \textit{Hasil} and \textit{Kagad bahis} provide information about the mode of assessment and collection, the categories of peasants, the relations between the tenant and the landlord in the \textit{Khalsa} areas during the 18\textsuperscript{th}-19\textsuperscript{th} centuries. They contain data on \textit{bhog}, \textit{dhuan} (house-tax), \textit{deshprath} (tax on settled persons at village), \textit{mukata} (lump sum) and \textit{malba} (the name of original tax which the jat community imposed upon themselves). The total number of taxes comes to about fifty\textsuperscript{37}. 

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The *Jagat bahis* contain valuable evidence on the commodities of commercial importance and trade routes in the region. The state of Bikaner occupied a significant position in northern India as a commercial center both on account of its various *mandis* and trade routes. It served as an important link between the commercial centres situated at Delhi, Bhiwani, Nagaur, Phalodi, Pali, Sindh, Multan and Ahmedabad. Some of the important places of the state which were on the known trade routes were Nohar, Bhatner (now known as Hanumangarh), and Anupgarh. On this route, Pugal and Lunkaransar were two other commercial centers. The trade route between Bikaner and Bhatinda passed through Lunkaransar, Mahajan and Bhatner etc. Information about these routes is available in the *zakat bahis*.

The Bikaner state had an administrative set-up for the collection of the commercial taxes (*Jakat*). Its head-quarters at Bikaner was called *Shri Mandi* and its branches were called *mandis*. These *mandis* were located on trade-routes and generally developed into commercial towns like; Lunkaransar, Anupgarh, Reni, Rajgarh, Nohar, Bidasar, Mahajan, Pugal, Rajaldesar, Ratangarh, Churu and Bhadra. To assist these *mandis*, there were *Bahari chowkis* or *Baharli chowkis* (out check post) near the village or towns located on the trade routes. The incharge of such *zakat*
chowkis was called the bhulawariya, who used to collect the transit tax (zakat) and send it to the headquarters. In order to strengthen the zakat administration, zakat chowkis were established by the state at various entry points where traders were supposed to pay Jakat and get a transit permit for their merchandise. After that they were free to sell their goods and move them out of the state. These zakat chowkis were supervised by a Naib Girdawar or a Daroga of the state.

The jama kharch and the sava bahis provide the information about the income and expenditure of the state. The main sources of state income were bhog (mal), dhuan bhanch, zakat, peshkash, jhunpari farohi, nazrana and zurmana etc. New sources of income were added in the 19th century which were court and registry fee, talbana, income from interest and bills of payments, cash collections, and house rents etc.

The sava bahis of Bikaner are useful for the study of urban areas and for the estimation of population of different castes of 18th-19th centuries. The information of dhuan tax is helpful for the estimation of population of qasba. The bahi records the number of houses inhabited by members of various castes or groups with total collection from the dhuan (house) tax. The caste-wise figures of the number of houses enable us to work out the composition of
various groups and professionals such as: Banias, Gujars, Jat, Lilgars, Manihars, Darzis, Khatis, Chhinpas, Rajputs, Rangrez, Kumbhars, Brahmans, Chands, Jogi and Kalals etc.  

Beside these archival records, private records of business family of Churu, Khyat and Bat literature in Rajasthani and Hindi are also utilized to supplement the evidence on the population. Administration and census reports of different periods were employed for the comparison. With their help we were able to trace the changes, if any, in the population of pre-census and census period. The data on caste-censuses of 1931 provide extremely useful information for the comparison of caste composition of the towns of pre-census period. Through this study, we attempted to indicate the castes which disappeared from the urban areas.

The other useful bahis related to Bikaner state are lekha bahis, kamthana bahis, parwana bahis, and habob bahis, which provide information about artisans, towns and taxes.

The records of various states were utilized mainly for the estimation of the population of the towns. In addition, we have also attempted to extract data on the markets and market taxes which may roughly indicate the size of the town and ratio of urban-rural population.
For Mewar and Jaisalmer we could not get archival data but we have utilized the information contained in Tod and other sources of pre-census period.
REFERENCES:


6. Ibid,

7. Different years of Arhasatta Mujmil.

8. Arhasatta bhoomi and Zamindari.


10. Ibid,

11. Ibid,

12. Ibid, p. 7


15. Literally Siwai jamabandi means revenue realized in addition to Jamabandi.

17. Ibid.


19. Part of *Sair jihat* in the *qasbas* in the different years of *arhasatta*.


23. Ibid.


27. Ibid.


31. *Muwazana* records of different years of Bundi State, preserved in the RSA, Bikaner.

32. Ibid.


34. *Jamabandi-ri-bahis* of different *parganas*, RSA, Bikaner.

35. *Sanad parwana bahis* VS. 1844/ AD. 1787 to VS. 1884/AD. 1827, RSA, Bikaner.

36. *Khas-Rukka parwana bahis* VS. 1722/ AD. 1665 to VS. 1856/AD. 1799, Jodhpur, RSA, Bikaner.


38. Information on trade routes is available in the *zakat bahis of Bikaner*, RSA, Bikaner.

39. See, *Sava Bahis* of different *qasbas* especially *qasba* Churu, RSA, Bikaner.

40. *Sawa bahis* of *qasba* Churu, RSA, Bikaner.

41. Ibid.