CHAPTER VI

THE ZAMINDARS

(A) Zamindari rights and their nature:

The Zamindars formed a hereditary class of superior rights holders. There were a number of local synonyms used to designate the holders of these rights in Awadh. For example, the term satārhi appears in our documents as an interchangeable word for zamindari under the formula, 'zamindari known as satārhi'. In the earliest available sale-deed from Akbar's reign (988/1580 A.D.) we find a group of 13 muggaddams selling jointly their satārhi known as biswi' in the village of Manchankapur in pargana Sandila. In another sale-deed (994/1586 A.D.), the term milk has been used for satārhi so that the right alienated is styled 'milk-dar-imlāk-e-satārhi'. In yet another sale-deed of the 17th century the word milkiyat has been put as an equivalent for satārhi, but the papers from the subsequent century (c. 1763) use the same formula with the addition of a conjunction viz., 'milkiyat and zamindari known as satārhi', thus seemingly making milkiyat

1. Allahabad 310 (1198/1783) and 415 (1198/1783).
2. RAA-1165 (988/1580 A.D.).
3. Allahabad-317 (994/1585) by this deed, some Brahmans had sold their, 'milk-dar-imlāk-e-satārhi & saī' of the ten villages to one Miyan Aman for a consideration of 1560 sikka-e-murādi. The rights and the privileges transferred by way of this deed were numerous.
and zamindāri into two distinct rights. A sale-deed (c.1720) speaks of 'milkiyat rights, in satārhi' and other zamindāri rights as two different things. The Persian word haftdehi (one-seventeenth) is also found as a literal equivalent of the word satārhi during the later period.

Another set of sale-deeds from pargana Bilgram, sarkār Lucknow, give the formula milk-i-khotī (proprietary right in khotī) to designate the superior rights in village. The earliest of these documents (c. 1540) sets out the sale milk-i-khotī of a certain village for 100 tanka 'Adli. These rights included control over trees, streams, ponds and water channels. Again in two 18th century transactions, the term milk had been applied to denote fiscal perquisites. These included rights over trees, streams, ponds, mahat and khaildāri, water and jungle rights (jalkar and bankar).

3. Allahabad-199.
4. Sharaif-e-'Usmani, p.120.
5. The sale-deed (c. 1716) records that the 17 biswa mata' of village Posinda and 15 biswa mata' of village Shaikhpanpur was in hagg-wa-milk of the executants by virtue of the inheretance. These rights were sold in consideration of Rs.650/- only. See Ibid., p.82. While in another deed (c.1741) 6 biswa mata' of village Bhanknapur was mortgaged for Rs. 77/-. The buyer was to enjoy the benefits of mālikana from crops, mehat, khildāri, jalkar and bankar till he gets back the amount of mortgage. Bilgiram-64 (1154/1741).
18th century sale-deeds from pargana Sandila, sarkār Lucknow lead us to infer that milkiyat rights derived from satārhi and other superior rights were quite different from the right to appropriate the land-revenue (hagg-e-akhaz-e-kharāj) as these two rights over the same village could be sold separately. In 1759, one Shah Muhammad Akbar Ali sold his milkiyat rights derived from satārhi and other zamindāri rights over two bighas of land in village Khajurpati, pargana Sandila, for the sum of Rs.6/-. But the right to appropriate the land-revenue over the same land was not sold then. This was subsequently transferred in exchange for a plot of the residential land in 1763. But in the same year this plot of residential land too was sold in consideration of the sum of Rs. 15/-\textsuperscript{1} from these figures we may take it that, assuming these prices to represent the capitalised values, the zamindār's income from his own rights was about 2/5th of the land-revenue. Surely, it was not an insubstantial amount.

1. Allahabad-355 (c. 1759), 439 (c. 1763) and 443 (1763). Of course there are other cases as well, where the zamindāri rights and the right to appropriate the land-revenue were sold separately. But as a result of gaps in the chain of the documents a comparison with the capitalised value of the zamindāri rights could not be attempted. In 1760 one Aīn-ud-dīn sold the zamindāri rights over one bigha for Rs.3/- excluding the right to appropriate the land revenue, which was subsequently sold in exchange of a residential plot of land. See Allahabad-432 (1760) and 444 (1766).
As for the substance of the zamindāri rights the documents from Sandila, Bilgiram and Khairabad established the fact that possession of village ponds, and water channels, including water products such as Shāli-e-abi-khudrau ('self-grown' paddy crop in water) and māhīgīrī (fishing rights) flowed from the possession of superior right over the village. A sale-deed of c. 1580, which we have referred to earlier also, specifically speaks of the sale of the right to collect the self-grown paddy crop in water, along with satārhi rights of village Manchanchapur. Similarly, another sale-deed (c. 1769) records the sale of 'milkiyat-wa-zamindāri known as satārhi,' of the village Tamorkha along with the fiscal claims over Shāli-ābī (water-paddy) and māhīgīrī (fishing). If members of the menial caste trespassed on this perquisite of the superior-right holders, they were obliged to pay some fine in addition to the mālikana perquisites. A ba’inama executed by a group

1. In every deed selling the zamindāri rights in Awadh for these three centuries always contained a recitation regarding the sale of wells, pond, tanks and likewise other things. Indeed in some documents wells, ponds, and tanks are styled as the 'necessary paraphernalia of the village (NAI - 2125) (c.1667).

2. RAA-1165 (c. 1580) In this deed the sale of the 'Wells streams and the paddy crop grown in water' has been listed along with a number of other rights.
of kahārs (c. 1638) of pargana Sandila contains a pledge to pay Rs. 18/- in cash and 35 mounds of Shāli-e-ābi on account of their unauthorised poaching in the Jatar Tank in village Mahsona. They further undertook to pay annually Rs. 7/- and 35 mounds of the said crop to the heirs of the Qazi. In case of default, the heirs were at liberty to evict the kahārs from the pond. Fishermen were similarly required to pay a fixed amount by way of mālikana to the holders of the superior rights in case they made use of the ponds and tanks situated in their villages. A parwana issued to the gumāsha (agent) of the jāgīrdārs of Sandila (c. 1612) records that since the time the village of Mahsona had been made over to Qazi Abdul Razzaq and his brothers, one Sita mehtar along with his group of fishermen had been fishing in the ponds of the said village without paying any amount by way of haqq-e-mālikana to the Qazi. It was ordered that the trespassers be directed to use the ponds only with the permission of the Qazi and should pay him the amount of mālikana for the use of the ponds on the previous occasions as well. From a hukmnāmah (c. 1846), it appears that even a legal remedy was available to the superior right holders against any encroachment upon such perquisites.

1. NAI-1454.
2. NAI-1596.
3. NAI-1398.
At the same time separate proprietary rights over water-use could also exist. Indeed an imperial farman of Shahjahan (c. 1629) forbids the shiqdar of the village pargana Sandila from dismissing one Asi, a kahar by caste, from the office of the muggadami (headship) of the said village. It also purports to recognise the hereditary right of the said muggadam over the village. He was permitted to carry on cultivation of the (water paddy) in the pond-bed on the usual payment of Rs. 30/- . No enhancement in the amount of the salana as demanded by the shiqdar was allowed. In a letter of agreement from Bilgiram (c. 1715) one party gave up every claim of using the tank and its water for all time to come. The claim was recognized as the exclusive right of the other party who was to use it for irrigating his khud-kashtā land. In case the other peasants utilized this facility, they had to pay a fixed rate or hagg-e-dastūr to the zamindār. In a statement of facts presented by the zamindār (c. 1858) it is alleged that a rate of one ser (of produce) per bigha from everyone

1. NAI-1646, Here 'muggadami' had been recognised as, hereditary property' (milk) of the complainants. It is not clear that wether the pond in question was attached to the office of the muggadami or it was in the other hereditary possession.

2. Bilgiram-71 (c. 1715). The parties to the agreement seem to have been members of the religious class. It is quite possible that the tank in question was acquired through some aimma grant.
s selling up a nōva (boat like scoop) to water their fields from the tank of village Panwaria, pargana Khairābad used to had been realized by the petitioning mutawalli.¹

In addition to land-revenue the peasants were required to pay some amount in cash as well as in kind to the superior-right holders under the name of dāmi and satārhi. In a letter of agreement executed by a group of karindās (cultivators) of the village korna (pargana Sandila) (c.1746) it was agreed that 10 sērs (of produce) per bigha and on account of dāmi, 1 fulūs (a copper coin) per bigha would be paid on account of satārhi. The karinda also agreed to deliver 50 mounds of grain and 7 rupees in cash annually to the claimants of these rights.²

Other perquisites of the zamindārs extended to fruit bearing and non-fruit bearing trees. "Orchards, wells, tanks etc." were designated as "the assets of a village"

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2. RAA-442 (c. 1746) The total amount of the grain to be delivered was fixed at 50 mans for the whole year. In the kharif harvest it came to 25 mans; 10 mounds of rice, 10 mounds of millets and mash 5 mounds. Of the 25 mounds to be delivered from rabi crop, the claim from wheat was 7 mounds; gram 8 mounds; and barley 9 mounds. As for cash Rs.7/- were to be paid in the whole year, half of the amount at cash harvest. See also Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p.145.
(lawāzima'-i deh) in pargana Unao in 1667. If a fort or a garhi existed in any village, it also fell under the jurisdiction of these proprietors. We notice in a 16th century sale-deed that a fort was also sold by the zamindārs along with their satārhi rights of a village in pargana Sandila.

The income from these various claims amounted to a fairly substantial sum, so that when a zamindār was bypassed by the revenue authorities, he was deemed to be entitled to some compensation. Thus mālikana was defined as, "a right of the zamindār, when the (authorities) convert his land into sīr, and give him (something) on account of his being mālik. Out of every hundred bighas or every hundred mans of grain." If the zamindārs himself happened to be the revenue payer (and that land was converted into sīr) he was allowed only nānkar instead of mālikānā. The rates of the mālikānā, when made in cash, was 10% of the total revenue collected, and if land was to be allotted on the said account, it came to 'two biswas in every bigha or again 10% of the land.

1. NAI-2125 (c. 1667).
2. RAA-1165 (c. 1580).
3. NAI-1492 (c. 1773).
4. Add-6603, f.79a, also Patna Private ff.110b-111a.
5. Add-6603, f. 61b.
A sanad (c. 1595) records the grant of 29 bighas land to a group of persons on account of malikana, in a village when revenue had been remitted (ma'af) to the grantees.1

The zamindars on account of their rendering service in collecting the land revenue from the peasants and remitting the same to the state treasury, used to get an authorised share known as nānkār. Either the zamindar was allowed a deduction of 10% of the total collection or he was assigned some land revenue-free. Surely such grants would have been made in proportion to the claims of the zamindars.2 The concept of zamindars as Khidmat (service) and nānkār as hagg-ul-khidmat brings the entire right closer to the office of Chaudhari. The latter official too, helped the administration in the same sphere. On this account the allowance payable to the chaudharies was also known as nānkār.3 In a parwana (c. 1650) in pargana Bilgiram, a chaudhari is assigned one village as his nānkār on account of his khidmat. He was further called upon to serve well and be loyal.4

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1. Allahabad-294 (c. 1595).

2. Zamindar addressing a revenue official declares that he is ready for the proper official service, "if the jama of the ta'alluga" was assessed according to the statement of the last ten years with deduction of one tenth as nānkār. "Bekas, f-52b of Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p.174n.

3. Ibid.

4. Bilgiram-49. Since other chaudharis held their wajh-e-nānkār in the pargana Bilgiram, and the present assignee

Contd.......
1731, a parwana was issued to grant one village in nānkār to some Chaudhari. It states that his two nānkār villages had been resumed and included in khālīsa so as to enhance the income of the state. In lieu of this resumption, a fresh grant was being made. Similarly 18th-century documents from pargana Bilgiram contain a number of pawānas making nānkār grants in cash. In a very interesting parwana from sarkār Khairabad (c. 1824) it is recorded that two villages were granted to some Karam Ahmad and Rauf Ahmad as wajh-e-nānkār in al-tamgha. The grant was made in perpetuity. In another parwana (c. 1830) a nānkār grant of Rs.50/- was made as the grantee was a khāirkhwāh (well-wisher) of the state. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah through a royal farman (c. 1848) bestowed an amount of Rs.200/- and 55 bigha of cultivated land in nānkār to a lady named Lado. Again the grant was made on hereditary basis. It is, however, not clear in lieu of what service the grant was being made. There is hardly any need

(Continued from the previous page)

had nothing of that sort. Hence village Pewandi was assigned to him to meet out his nānkār claims.

1. Bilgiram-9. The nānkār villages of Khormi and Pewandi belonging to Sayyed Qubul Alam Chaudhauri were included in khālīsa. In lieu, he was allotted the other villages the Chaudhari was required to get the villages inhabited and to meet out his needs out of its revenues.


3. NAI-1563

4. NAI-1416.
to point out that in 19th century the entire concept of nāṅkār grants had undergone a considerable change in Awadh, often becoming a kind of simple grant.

During the first half of the 19th century, with the weakening of the administrative machinery of the kingdom of Awadh, the revenue-farmers and the big zamindārs increased their power tremendously. They were able to obtain a much larger share of the total land-revenue as their nāṅkār. W.H. Sleeman aptly remarked that: "the (nāṅkār) could be 10%, 20% or 100% upon the rent-roll of the estate." It appears, that the difference between the claim of the mālikana and nāṅkār had practically disappeared, the general designation nāṅkār applying to both allowances; Sleeman says:-

"The nāṅkār is a portion of the recognised rentroll, acknowledged by the rulers to be due to the landholders for the risk, cost and the trouble of the management and for his perquisites as hereditary proprietors of the soil, when the management is confined to another."

2. Ibid.
Sleeman explained how the amount of the nānkār could be manipulated by the zamindārs and the revenue-farmers. He cites an instance from the district of Sandila (c. 1849) where the āmil was weak and the zamindārs very strong. They refused to pay the dues on the plea of a bad season. The man who had to pay Rs. 10,000/- in revenue could not be induced to pay Rs. 5,000/-. He enjoyed an acknowledge nānkār of Rs. 2,000/- upon a recognised rent-roll of Rs. 12,000 and to induce him to pay the āmil increased nānkār to Rs. 3,000/-, and reduced the revenue to Rs. 9,000/-. At another place Sleeman observed that "the amount of nānkār once recognised, remains the same till a new rate is recognised by the government." That is, not the rate, but the sum remained constant, whatever the actual revenue.

During the first half of the 19th century, no sanctity seems to have been attached to the total percentage of the revenue allowed to be retained as nānkār. To quote Donald Butter (c. 1836). "In Baiswara, the largest zamindāri is Dundiapkhera held by Rambaksh Singh and in past sublet by him to his relations. It is in extent, 30 miles from east to west and 20 miles from north to south and pays an annual revenue of 300,000 rupees. In ordinary years, the amount of

1. Sleeman, op.cit., p. 207.
nānkār, or allowance for management is 45,000 rupees. . . . .
but in favourable years, he obtains an additional profit,
amounting to 100,000 or 150,000 rupees. ¹

Sleeman's diary, too, contains a number of specific
instances about the enormous income obtained by the zamindārs
on this account. The returns of pargana Nawabjunge, Munkapur
and Bahnu Paer gave the following figures ²-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pargana</th>
<th>A. Rent-roll</th>
<th>B. Nānkār</th>
<th>C. Government demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nawab, Wazir Gang, Mahadeva</td>
<td>1,08,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Munkapur</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bahana Paer</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again while giving a description of the estate of
Seo Buksh Singh of Laharpur district Khairābād, Sleeman,
says, "Its rent is now estimated . . . . at Rs. 54,640 out of
which is deducted a nānkār or 17,587 leaving a government
demand of only Rs. 37,053. ³" The revenue-contractors and
tālluqādārs were also entitled to nānkār. It is not clear
that in such areas what amount was allowed to the hereditary
zamindāri.

². Sleeman, op. cit., p. 123. These parganas were transferred to the East India Company as per terms of the treaty of 1801, but were retransferred to the Awadh Kingdom in 1816.
Rent-free villages continued to be granted in nānkār claims. One Muhammad Husain Khan of Bharwarā district Khayrabād, "held twelve villages, rent-free as nānkār and pays revenue for all the rest that compose his share of the great estate. The heads of families, who hold the other shares enjoy, in the same manner, one or more villages, rent free, as nānkār. 1" On such nānkār villages the zamindār had apparently no obligation to pay anything to the government.

Apart from the nānkār, another major source of the zamindārs during the 19th century came to be the seer lands. These lands were those which the landholders and their families tilled themselves. Such lands were not entered at all in the rent-roll, and were shared among the heirs as here­ditary possession. 2

It should not be assumed that the administration was just a silent spectature to the destruction of its own income. Attempt were made to put restrictions on the claims of the intermediaries. An order was issued to the revenue officials, directing them not to acknowledge any increase in the amount or percentage of nānkār, acquired after 1814 A.D. the year of Nawab Sa'ādat Ali Khan's death. But the evil was so deep

2. Ibid., p. 199.
rooted that the measure proved abortive:

"The increase to the nāṅkār and the alienation in rent free tenure of lands liable to assessment in 1814, by local authorities and influential persons at court are supposed to amount, in all Oude, to forty lakhs of rupees a year. None of them have been formally recognised by the court, but a great part of them has been tacitly acquired in by the minister and diwan for the time being. They can not enforce the order for reverting to the nankar of 1814; and if attempt to do so, the whole country will be in disorder. Indeed, the minister knows, his own weakness too well, to think seriously of ever making such an attempt."

The things were manipulated by the big land owners in collusion with the mustājīra at great loss to the public treasury. Describing the conditions in the Biaswara district, Sleeman tells us that Dharoopoor yielded Rs. 1,74,000 in annual amount of revenue when the estate was put under the direct management of Raja Durshan Singh as revenue-contractor. A deduction of Rs. 20,000 was allowed as nāṅkār. But in 1849, the government could not persuade Raja Himmat

1. Sleeman, op.cit., p. 199.
Singh, the hereditary owner of the same estate to pay Rs. 1,30,000 as per rent roll, while the deduction by way of nāṅkār was allowed at Rs. 40,000. When the land owner was threatened with royal vengeance, he looks, we are told, at their military force and smiles. This was not a solitary case but these was a general realization on the part of every tālūkugādārs of consequence about their armed strength and of relative weakness of the government. The officials, too, were afraid and hence they behaved very freely in dealing with such potentates. At the same time their cajolery and oppression knew no bounds when they came to deal with a weak or small land-holder.

Apart from the major items of the perquisites and the privileges enjoyed by the zamindārs, we find a number of fiscal dues and obligations claimed by them by virtue of their being superior right holders. The nature, denomination and the amount of these claims varied from area to area. A set of documents from sarkār khairābad show that with in a span of hundred year or so even small milk holders had enlarged their fiscal claims. In 1658, one Shaikh Daim was allotted five bighas of land in village Panwaria as milk for

1. Sleeman, op.cit., p. 143.
2. Ibid., p. 143.
establishing a mosque and Khanqah and for the maintenance of the tombs. \(^1\) Within two hundred years the right had been grossly enlarged. In 1858 his descendant presented a statement of facts with the attestation of the thirty persons of every class of village Panwaria. It was now alleged that he and his predecessors held the zamindāri rights over village Panwaria and hence anyone laying the foundation of his house, was under an obligation to pay one tankā and offer some sweetmeats by way of bhentı to pay dastur-e-hagg-i-zamindāri on cultivable land and a rate of one ser (of produce) per bigha from everyone setting up a nóva (boat like sccep) to water their field from the tank of the village. \(^2\)

Salt and Saltapetre were extensively made in almost every district of Awadh. These were extracted from nitrous soils by a special caste of people known as nuniyas or luniyas. \(^3\) The nitrous soil was found in every locality, and Butter tells us that, "when Luniyas or the salt-manufacturers

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2. Khairabad-9, Iqbal Husain, op.cit.
3. The Chief occupation of the nuniyas or luniyas, was making of the salt and saltpetre. There population in every district of Awadh was quite considerable. W.Groocks, The Tribes and Castes of North Western India, Vol.III, pp. 386-95.
pitch upon a spot where they think salt water likely to be found, they obtained the zamindār's permission to sink a well, by engaging to pay him annually 50 rupees for the water."

Another source of income of the zamindārs was the collections made by them in markets and fairs held within the limits of their zamināris. These places were looked after by the chaudharies, who annually paid a fixed amount to the zamindārs. These Chaudharies in turn enjoyed some concessions from the zamindārs. In 1666 Diler Khan, jagirdār of pargana Pali, issued a sanad to one Maiku, Chaudhari of the market, granting him fifty bighas of barren land as in'am. The grantee was asked to treat the peasants (ri'aya) gently as to attract them to these settlements. Similarly in 1688 the office of the Chaudhari of Dilergunj (bāzār) and its ferries was given over to a new incumbent. The newly appointed person was asked to look at the general welfare of the population, the bankers, the big traders and kāsibs in such a way to enable the population of the place should increase. Butter (c. 1836) says of the hāt (market) of Karahya bāzār, that it was the greatest hāt of the chakla salon, and was

1. Butter, op.cit., p. 73.
3. Ibid., p. 268.
attended by about one lakh people. This hāt was managed by a Chaudhari who resides on the spot and pays Rs. 8000 a year to the zamindār.¹

The zamindāri right was a freely saleable article of property. A number of surviving sale-deeds and mortgage deeds from the various pargana of the province of Awadh are strong evidence of this. A full scale market in zamindāri rights (not property perhaps a land market) had developed here at least from the 16th century if not earlier.

The zamindāri rights were usually represented in terms of biswas or twentieth shares in a village. The share in the zamindāri of a village is thus stated in the number of biswas, the biswa here having nothing to do with the land-measure of that name.

The earliest known sale-deeds of these superior rights from pargana Bilgiram (c. 1542) and pargana Sandila (c.1585) show transfers of rights from one class of persons to another. A group of land owner hitherto unknown in an area, could establish their sway over it by buying up zamindāri. In 1582 a group of Janwar Rajput land owners sold their rights on a village in pargana Bilgiram for a consideration of 300 silver tanka-‘adli to a Qazi or Muslim judge.²

2. Sharaife-Usmani, p. 80.
Similarly in 1585 Brahman zamindārs of pargana Sandilah had sold their proprietary rights over the ten villages for 1560 sikka-e-murādi. It appears that by 1595, the Janwar Rajput and the Brahman proprietors were reduced to the status of the under proprietors in these parganas respectively, for Abul Fazl does not record them as the dominant zamindār caste.

A number of sale-deeds of 18th century from sarkar Khairābad give the impression that even jagirdārs in their al-tamghā or watan-assignments were tempted to acquire zamindāri rights. One Rae Siroman Das son of Alam Chand held on īnām-al-tamghā jagīr in pargana Sandi. It consisted of 30,000 dams, being the revenue of 500 bighas (60 dams per bigha). The grant was made to him with the specific purpose of settling people and archards. The grantee was exempted from all revenue obligations and cesses like begār, khānashumāri and sardarakhti wa zer-darakhti. In the period subsequent to this grant, we find that he had purchased zamindāri rights in a number of villages from Rajput land owners. Thus he came to enjoy an important position in the landed aristocracy of the pargana. The details of his acquisitions are given in the following table:

3.
4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of transaction</th>
<th>Area invalid</th>
<th>Description of the sellers/ castes</th>
<th>Price paid</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 1124/1715</td>
<td>gasba Saroman nagar pargana sirsa, Khairabad</td>
<td>Jeet son of Sultan zamindar of the said gasba</td>
<td>Rs.500/-being Rs.25/- per biswa for 20 biswa</td>
<td>RAA-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 1141F/1737</td>
<td>Village Baqar Nagar, tappa Honsipur, sarkar Khairabad.</td>
<td>Santokh son of Pratap Sahi etc. zamindars.</td>
<td>Rs.271/4 annas for 5 biswa &amp; 10 biswansi</td>
<td>ALL-224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 114F/1740</td>
<td>Village Baqar Nagar and Sarjospur tappa, Honsipur, sarkar Khairabad.</td>
<td>Himmat Singh S/o Har Singh and Maha Singh Sahi zamindar</td>
<td>Rs.546/- for 7 biswas and 15 biswansi</td>
<td>ALL-225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. -do-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Rs.375/-for 13 biswa in various villages.</td>
<td>RAA-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly we find two sale-deeds dealing with the transactions between the Gaur Rajput zamindars of pargana sirrah and Muhammad Sardar Khan, grandson of a well known noble of Aurangzeb, Diler Khan. We know from the other sources that Sardar Khan held a large inam-al-tamgha grant of 7 lac dams in the adjacent pargana Pali (afterwards Shahabad) as
This enabled him to purchase a large number of zamindāri villages from their owners. The details of these transactions are given in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of the transaction</th>
<th>Area involved</th>
<th>Description of the sellers/ castes</th>
<th>Amount of consideration</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 1141/1728</td>
<td>Rampur Ghālib etc. pargana Sirrah, sarkar Khairabad.</td>
<td>Zamindārs of the Rajput Gaur Caste.</td>
<td>Rs.1124/- 12 annas</td>
<td>ALL-228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 1141/1728</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Rs.560/-</td>
<td>ALL-229</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Two sale-deeds from pargana Lucknow record the sale of considerable portions of the superior rights by the hereditary Rajput land owners of Janwar clan to one Sayyid Muhammad Yasin. One transaction involved half (10 out of the 20 portions) of the village Bharasa for a consideration of Rs.581/- in 1694, while the other sale-deed relates to 1 1/2 portion of the same village purchased for Rs. 46/- in 1702.

2. Allahabad-228 and 229. These sale deeds were executed on the same date in 1728 A.D. The earlier one was executed for the sale of 19 portions in the 4 villages for a consideration of Rs. 1124/- by the Gaur Rajput owners, while another deed involved the sale of 16 portions in the same villages by the owners of same caste for a consideration of Rs. 560/-.
3. NAI-141.
4. NAI-143.
suggests the ability of the outsiders to obtain a favourable price once he had established himself in the village for at the latter rate the original acquisition should have cost only Rs. 307. We have seen how Saiyyed Muhammad Arif in pargana Hisampur sarkar Bahraich, purchased from Rajput zamindārs a number of the shares in the Pasanjat group of the villages, all the portions of the village Debidaspur and 1/4 shares of the village Inchapur between the years 1672 to 1688. We know from other papers that originally Arif, was a madad ma'āsh holder, and subsequently he contracted to collect and to pay the revenues of jāgīrs in pargana Hisampur.

Such examples of outsiders entering the zamindar class could be multiplied. But the point at issue is that, to an extent, the saleability of the superior rights in land had been instrumental in altering the general pattern of the land holding classes. The new masters of soil were often former salaried beūmāratīs, revenue contractors and the holders of grants. Holders of tax grants (a'imma or ma'āfi)

1. See the Chapter on The Revenue Grants, Section II.
2. See the sale-deeds of Regional Records Office Allahabad especially numbers, 1196, 1221, 1222, 1224, 1216, 1215 and 1205.
4. RRA-867.
inevitably tended to combine these, if they could, with superior or zamindāri rights. A sale deed from Bilgiram (1723) clubs the muggadami and mālikāna rights with the madad-šāsh rights, all of which had been previously mortgaged. A description of these rights shows that these included the headmen's and zamindāri perquisites such as mehat, khailāri, adhatra, pachotra, mustājiri, along with māhsūl-e a'imma or revenue from the land-grant. Another interesting petition from pargana Sandila shows one Ghulām Haider and others representing before the gāzi of the pargana that the milkiyat-i-zamindāri known as satārhi of the village kōndwa was purchased by their predecessors and that their ancestors also held madad-šāsh rights over the said village. It was alleged that one Shah Muhammad Akbar, a co-sharer of these rights had now mortgaged his share of those rights in view of his poverty, with some Rajput zamindārs for a consideration of 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) mound of cereals. Although the price of the grain had been paid to these zamindārs, they had not returned the mortgage papers of the said village, so far, to the petitioners.

Most frequently the grantees (a'immadārs) sought to obtain mālikāna and muggadami rights over their a'imma lands.

1. Bilgiram-60.
An  iqra‘namâh, executed in 1697 stipulates that an a’imma village having been mortgaged for Rs. 476/- in sarkâr Lucknow, it was agreed that Malik Abdul Karim, the a’immadar, be paid Rs. 48/- and 24 bighâs 7 biswa of land be reserved for him in view of his malikâna and muggadami rights.1 Apparently he had only mortgaged his grant, and not his superior rights. Similarly, the Khairabad documents show that in village Panwarîya Shaikh Dâim held a land grant of 5 bigha for maintaining a khanqah, mosque etc., but after words his descendants Shaikh Aminuddin, claimed that all the zamindâri rights in the said village had been acquired by his predecessors since long and that he too enjoyed all such perquisites.2

Elsewhere the fortunes of the family of the mystics established at Salon had been discussed at some length. They had a humble beginning as holders of the madad-â-ma‘âsh rights over 200 bighas of uncultivated land in 1679, but subsequently their possessions were greatly expanded so that by 1761 they held 44 villages 21 chaks and a substantial number of the bighas of cultivated land. These included the zamindâri, "Lambardari" (sic) as well the madad-â-ma‘âsh rights. The proprietary rights of the establishment were so firmly established that Butter in 1836 was led to conclude that,"he (the head of the family) also is called a faqir, though the malik (proprietor) of Salon."3

1. NAI-144.
2. Khairabad-3 and 9.
3. For a detailed discussion of the rise of this family of the mystics see the chapter on Revenue Grants Section II.
(B) Changes in Composition of the Zamindar class:

Superior rights in land have been linked in Awadh, as elsewhere, with the domination of a particular clan, or caste, over an area. As we have seen these rights could originate quite independently of any royal action. The association of caste with more or less well defined tracts of country was so conspicuous in Awadh that C.A. Elliott was led to conclude that *pargana* boundaries were fixed on the basis of the "possession of an undivided clan." However in so far as these superior or *zamindāri* rights were fully alienable, the territorial hegemony of a clan or caste was open to the dissolving effects of money. It could also be disturbed by the deliberate policy of Government to dislodge a clan from an area and install some other group in its place.

A study of the position of various land-holding clans, their share in the agricultural surplus and the changes which came in their fortunes during the period 1595-1900 can be extremely fascinating. One such study has been attempted by Bernhard S. Cohn for the Benaras region. After comparing the

1. C.A. Elliott, Chronicles of Onao, Allahabad, 1862, p. 149. He argues that since the boundaries of the *mahals* were not fixed in accordance with the physical or geographical features of the country, the only reason, "for their irregular tracing seems to be proprietary rights."
data for circa 1595 with those for circa 1900 he concluded that, "the rise of one group or class did not necessarily mean the concomitant fall of another." A similar study has been attempted by K.K. Trivedi for Western Uttar Pradesh. His conclusions are quite different from Cohn's. He has shown that changes in land holding classes were quite substantial and that a large number of castes recorded in the A'in had been largely eliminated from various localities, being supplanted by others. In most cases the money-lending castes which replaced them are not even recorded as zamindārs in the A'in; but they appear with sizeable holdings by 1900.

The study of the zamindār clans of Awadh must obviously begin with the rich information in the A'in-i Akbari. Abul Fazl has given us a detailed census of the dominant caste in each pargana along with the nagdi (jama') figures assessed upon it. Very often more than one caste are recorded for a pargana. We have therefore divided the amount of nagdi


accordingly in order to determine the share payable by one caste from the pargana in question.

A cursory glance at Table I (prepared with the help of the data provided by A' in)\(^1\) will show that more than 75% of the total jama' of the parganas recorded in the A'in was from lands under the various Rajput clans Bais, 18.50%; Bachhils 5.22%; Ghelots 5.11%; Bachgotis 4.73%; Bisins 4.13%; others 3.42%; undifferentiated, 25.64%. The Brahmans and Muslims trailed for behind accounting for only 6.42% and 10.86% shares in the total jama' of the suba. The reminder was controlled by other minor clans and some which are unidentifiable.

The Bais Rajputs are recorded as zamindārs of 27 parganas in Awadh by Abul Fazl. In the sarkar of Awadh, they are co-sharers in 3 parganas holding 6% of the total nagdi of the sarkar and one pargana each in sarkar Bahraich, Khairabad and Gorakhpur, while in sarkar Lucknow they possessed 15 parganas singly and 6 parganas as co-sharers. In all they controlled 18.22% of the total nagdi of the suba. These mahals formed a contiguous block. The tract acquired the name of Baiswara in the 17th century; the first occurrence of the name appears to be in Shahjahan's time, when the

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recalcitrance of the Bais zamindars caused the creation of a special faujdari jurisdiction of Baiswara,1 "consisting of many mahals, that are the native places of the seditious zamindars of the caste of Bais.2" They supported the rebellion of Bahadur the Bachgoti chief in Aurangzeb's first R.Y.3 and apparently lent aid to the Chauhans of pargana Shahpur in or about 1700 AD. The disturbances were suppressed with some difficulty and Ra'd Andaz Khan, the faujdar of Baiswara reported his successes with much satisfaction.4 C.A.Elliott provides us with detailed information on the settlements of the Bais Rajputs in the Baiswara region from their traditional settlement till about 1860.5 We are told that there were 22 parganas in all, under the dominance of this clan:-----

1. Abdul Hameed Lahori, Badshah Namah, Bib.Indica (1) pp.243, 278. The sarkar of Lucknow and district of Baiswara were under one faujdari; subsequently Bainswara became a separate faujdari; Also see Zahiruddin Malik, "Problems of faujdari jurisdictions in Bainswara" PIHC 1973 (Chandigarh Session). For a note on Bais zamindars see my paper in the cyclostyled papers of the members of the Department of History, AMU presented at 42nd session of Indian History Congress Bodh-Gaya, 1981.

2. Insha-i Roshan Kalam, MS Azad Library, AMU Aligarh, f.7a.


4. Insha-i Roshan Kalam, f. 3a.

District (according to present distribution)           Pargana

1. Rae Bareili                                   1. Dundiakhera
2. Onnao                                          2. Unchgaon
4. Dalmau                                        4. Bar
5. Darbhanga                                     5. Kehengur
7. Pursundan                                     7. Serhapur
8. Pursundan                                     8. Mukrid
11. Pursundan                                    11. Pathan
13. Rae Bareili                                   13. Rae Bareili

15. Satanpur                                     15. Satanpur
17. Maurawan                                     17. Maurawan
19. Asoha                                        19. Asoha
20. Gorinda                                      20. Gorinda
22. Bijnor                                       22. Bijnor

"The Baiswara Nizamat included very little more than the parganas in the above list."  

The Bais zamindārs seem to have extended their possessions in parganas Dalmau and Bijnor, since Abul Fazl has

recorded the former under 'Turkmans', and the latter under the Chauhan Rajputs. On the other hand, after the suppression of the Mutiny some Bais proprietor's lost their possessions. The most notable loser was Raja Beni Madho Singh of Shankarpur whose large estate was confiscated for his involvement in the Mutiny. The final picture with regard to the land holdings of Bais clan suggests that by and large all the mahals recorded in the Ain were kept intact by them but only a few new additions were made to the land holdings of this clan by C. 1900. It appears then that the possessions of Bais Rajputs at least did not, on the balance, suffer any contraction over the three hundred years spanning 1600 and 1800.

The Bachgoti Rajputs are recorded as the exclusive zamindars of 6 parganas and jointly of one in sarkar Awadh where they thus seem to have accounted for 18.85% of the total jama. In sarkar Lucknow they held only a share in a pargana and 2.6% of the total jama. Of the total jama of the suba Awadh their parganas were assigned 4.87%. All the parganas except one, formed a contiguous block of territory

1. Abul Fazl, op.cit., pp. 71-84. However Insha-i Roshan Kalam records the mahal of Bhhor under the Bais zamindars (f.7). They have been called as zamindaran-i zor-talab. While Nevill informs us the pargana of Dalmau was possessed by Bais Rajputs. See H.R. Nevill, District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra & Oudh, (hereafter as DG), Vol. 39, pp. 168-69.
in the south-eastern portion of Awadh in 1595. The Bachgoti zamindārs raised considerable disturbance in 1070 AH/1660 AD. Their leader Bahadur recruited a large number of followers from amongst the local, 'ganwars', the 'turbulent Bais' and other 'bad characters of the area. The banner of revolt was raised in the Baiśwara division. He devastated a considerable area. Such were the dimensions of the revolt then an imperial force was deputed under the command of Bahadur Khan. The rebellion was suppressed and peace restored in the area. Subsequently we hear little of this clan. But they largely retained their zamindāris, and held on to almost all the parganas against which they are entered in the Ain. The famous Khanazad house of Hasanpur (Muslim Bachgotis) and their latter branches of Maniarpur and Gangeo had their large ta'alluqādāri possessions in the present district of Sultanpur and Fyzabad. We know that 5 of the Bachgoti parganas of the Ain lay in Sultanpur district, while one each lay in the districts Fyzabad and Barabanki, the pargana Baktha is yet to be identified. Other notable possessions of the Bachgotis lay in the ta'alluqa of Kurwar, Samrautha and Khajurahat, the Rajkumars had the estates of Dera, Pirpur, Meopur Dharua and

Nanemau. We find that in addition to their old possessions some new estates were also acquired by them. The ta'alluga of Khajurahat was established during the time of Shujauddaulah and the house of Bhiti came into existence during the first half of the 19th century. Most of the villages of these ta'alluga lay in the Ain's pargana of Pachhimrath and Haveli Awadh, where the Bachgotis are not recorded as zamindars.

The Chauhan Rajputs held one pargana each in the sarkars of Khairabad, Awadh and Lucknow. In two parganas of Awadh they are recorded as the co-shareys and so they controlled areas yielding 4.33% of the total jama of the suba. These zamindars had grown strong enough, subsequently, to cause trouble and harassment to the imperial authority at the close of the Aurangzeb's reign. It was reported by the deputy faujdar of the Bainswara division, Sher Andaz Khan, that these troublesome people had collected a force of their kinsmen consisting of about 8 or 9,000 persons and gone into rebellion. The usual allegation, namely, refusal to pay the land revenue was also levelled against them. As a result of the successful operation carried out by the imperial forces against the rebels 12 strong fortress and about 1500 captives captured by the army. Also we come across the recommendation of the faujdar to confer the zamindari rights of the

1. For a detailed description of the rise of these ta'allugas see DG, Vols. 39, 43 & 46.
area over one Syed Muzaffar who helped imperial forces with all possible means.  

Comparing the relative position of the Chauhan possessions between 1595 and 1900, it appears that some of their old possessions had been lost to their powerful neighbours while they had themselves established their sway in areas where they are not recorded in the Ain. The pargana of Daryabad and Sara had almost completely passed out of their hands. Pargana Inhauna was kept intact by Chauhan Khanazads (Muslims). In pargana Rudauli and Bijnor they are only recorded as the inhabitants, but not as the proprietors of the land; they might have been under proprietors for which unfortunately we possess no information. Their new acquisition lay in the District of Kheri. The large ta'allugas of Oel, Mahewa and Kaimahra consisted of 326 villages and 28 pattis, assessed at Rs. 1,89,744. Originally it was a Janwar possession; the Chauhans got it as a 'dowery gifts' since their predecessor had no one to succeed them. The Jangre Rajputs, a branch of the Chauhans also possessed the large estate of Bhur, Isanagar and Ramnagar in Kheri District. Their total possessions consisted of 161 villages and 14 pattis and it was assessed that

1. For a detailed description of the nature and the dimension of this revolt see Insha-i Roshan Kalam, f. 3.
Rs. 1,54,745.1 It appears that on balance the Chauhans did not suffer, though there were some territorial changes.

The zamindāri possessions of Raikwars and Janwars Rajputs display striking similarity with that of Chauhans in 1595, their most numerous possessions lay in sarkar Bahraich, where they held 6 parganas and paid 24.67% of the total assessed jama. In sarkar Awadh, the Raikwar held 3 parganas as co-sharers with 19.34% in the total jama. One pargana belonging to the Janwars, lay in sarkar Khatrabad. In the jama of the suba their share amounted to 7.10%. A comparison with the relative size of their land-holdings in 1900 suggest that the Raikwars had lost a good deal of their possessions while some of the Janwar houses had acquired very large estates in those areas where they are mentioned as zamindār caste by Abul Fazl.2

The Raikwars lost hold of the parganas Gumarich and Daryabad; the parganas of Siluk was kept in tact by them. In pargana Fakharpur and Hisampur they retained at least some landed possession. The Janwars also lost some of their old possessions. First of all, the entire pargana of Rajhat and large tracts in pargana Sujauli and Sultanpur were transferred to Nepal in 1860. From the pargana Sadarpur they were expelled

during the Nawabi period. Pargana Dangoi was included in the ta'alugās of Ayodhya and Nanpara. As against these losses, the new estates acquired by them are of some interest. The estates of Balrampur and Payagpur were now owned by Janwars while Mallanpur and Ramnagar constituted the possessions of the Raikwars. By taking into account their ta'allugādari possessions and revenue obligations, some idea can be formed of their position about 1900. In 1900, the Janwar possessions in Gonda and Bahraich districts consisted of 1189 villages and pattis 52, assessed at Rs. 8,47,388, while the Raikwar possessions in these districts consisted of 413 villages and 126 pattis, assessed at Rs. 3,37,089.¹

The Bisin Rajputs were the most dominant clan in the Gorakhpur sarkar. They were zamindārs in 9 parganas forming a contiguous block of the territory in the south-western portion of the sarkar, and these parganas accounted for 45.66% of the total jama¹. In sarkar Khairabad they were co-sherers in two parganas while one pargana each of their zamindāri lay in sarkar of Bahraich and Lucknow. In the total jama¹ of the suba their share amounted to about 4.13%. Comparing these data with 1900, it appears that there had been quite drastic changes in the fortunes of this clan. With the close of the tenure of one Qazi Khalilur Rehman

¹. DG, Vols. 44, 45.
(1680-1707), there was a spontaneous rise in the power of the local chieftains. There were constant conflicts among local zamindārs. During the 18th century the Banjaras acquired considerable power in the north-eastern regions in the sarkar of Gorakhpur. In course of time, they became a scourge to almost the entire area. No individual chieftain was able to withstand their onslaught. These conditions came to an end with the cession of this territory to the domains of the English East India Company in 1801.

It seems that during the 18th century owing to these conditions the position of Bisin land-holding in this sarkar underwent complete change. Not only this, in the other four parganas of sarkar Bahrāich, Khairabad and Lucknow, they are not even mentioned as the superior right holders of land. In the Gorakhpur sarkar, there were only a few Bisin estates with considerable land holdings. The prime family was of the Raja of Majhaulī. In 1900, it held 152 villages, assessed at Rs. 67,756. Their possessions were quite large, but in order to meet the threat posed by Anjara depredators, they abandoned a large portion of his estate to newly established estates of Tamkuhi and Padrauna. This created a powerful buffer zone between Majhaulī and eastern portions of the

1. This information is from the Gorakhpur Gazetteer, pp. 180-2. There is no contemporary documentary confirmation of this. Qazi Khalilur Rahman was probably the amīl or revenue-collector.
sarkar, notorious for Banjara deprivations.

The estates of Sarnet Rajputs may also be dealt with here. The great Sarnet house of Bansi Raj was established as a result of a dowry gift received from the Bisins of Majhuli. In 1900 A.D., the Bansi Raj was extensive enough to merit an assessment of Rs. 1,21,685.

A precise comparison of the individual parganas held by Bisins in 1595, with their possessions in 1900 can not be attempted, but they seem on the whole to have declined. Muslim Pindari chiefs and Europeans also received estates during the British period, which reduced their relative position.

The Ain places most of the possessions of the Surajbansi and Sombansi Rajputs in sarkar Gorakhpur. Their share in the total jama' of the sarkar amounted to about 22.03%. The Sombansis held one pargana each in sarkars of Awadh and Khairabad. These two clans jointly controlled barely 3.49% of the total jama' of the suba. For the same reasons as far the Bisin, their position declined in sarkar Gorakhpur. However in some adjacent areas, where they are not recorded as zamindārs in the Ain, they come to possess large ta'allūgadari estates. In 1900 A.D. the Sombansi estates contained 80 villages and 8 pattis assessed at Rs. 41,766, while the

1. DG, Vol. XXXI & XXXII.
estates of Surajbansis consisted of 206 villages, 35 pattis, and accounted for Rs. 1,84,282. In most of their parganas in Gorakhpur sarkar Europeans received large grants in the British period. However in these areas as well as in many other places the Kalhans Rajputs are mentioned quite frequently with the Kalhans Rajputs. The Surajbansi as well as Sombansis had matrimonial ties. In pargana Sandi sarkar Khairabad, the Sombansis held 55 villages out of 140 in 1900.

In the Ain's tables, the Ghelot Rajputs held jointly with Bachhili Rajputs the parganas of Sandila and Pachhimrath, while they held the exclusive zamindari of pargana of sarkar Lucknow. Their share in the total jama of the suba amounted to 5.22%. Similarly the Bachhils, apart from the parganas where they were co-sharers with the Ghelots, had zamindari rights in four parganas of sarkar Khairabad. Their revenue obligations in the total jama of the suba amounted to 5.11%. They appear to have lost their position subsequently and have been relegated to the position of under proprietors. Their most conspicuous loss was in pargana Sandila, where Muslim zamindars were able to establish their large ta'ulluga-dari 'estates'. In modern times we get little or no information

1. W. Crooke, 'The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India', Calcutta, 1896. See S.V.Surajbansis and Sombansis in Vol. IV.

2. DC, Vol. 41, pp. 245-49.
about the fortunes of either of the two clans in the localities where they were holding in 1595.

The Bandalghoti Rajputs are recorded in the Ain as co-sharers in pargana Garh Amethi (sarkar Lucknow) and accounted for barely 1.11% of the total jama' of the suba. They have however succeeded in maintaining their position in this area. The Bandalgoti ta'alluga of Amethi and Shahgarh in the present district of Sultanpur have seen quite fluctuating fortunes, still in 1900, Bandalghoti possessions were consisted of 334 villages and 5 pattis, and the total assessment on them amounted to Rs. 2,38,590.1

The other Rajput clans of Gaurs and Tomars are shown in the Ain as jointly holding two separate pargana in sarkar Khairabad and Bahraich respectively. Together they accounted for 2.33% of the jama' of suba. They are not prominent now.

Apart from the above major zamindar clans, there are many other castes recorded in the Ain with small shares in the total revenue of the suba. Such are the Chandels (1.5%), Amins or Ahmins (1.97%), Ahirs (1.77%), Kumbi (0.49%), Jats (0.08%) and the Kuhnas (0.23%). The presence of Jats in the province of Awadh seems quite curious. In the 19th century there were only some scattered Jats settlement in the districts of Gonda, Bahraich and Kheri, but by and large they

were tenants or sub-proprietors. Similar was the status of the Ahirs and the Kumbis.

'Unspecified' Rajputs clans held the largest zamīndāri possessions in Awadh. Abul Fazl record them in almost every sarkār. In sarkar Awadh they were only next to the Bais Rajputs with a share of 23.43% in the total jama', in sarkār Gorakhpur they followed the Bisin and had 16.87% of the total jama' as their share. In sarkar of Bahraich and Khairabad they formed the most dominant group of zamīndārs with 47.07% and 43.05% of the total assessment. In sarkār of Lucknow the position was different. Here they trailed behind the large zamīndāris of the Bais Rajputs and the Muslims of various clans. In the total jama' of the sūba their share amounted to a quarter (25.64%).

A study of the zamīndāri possessions in the modern sub-divisions of Awadh belonging to Rajputs other than the clans specifically recorded in the Ain presents some difficulties. In the District Gazetteers the ta'alluqa possessions are often recorded under ownership of a clan which does not appear in the Ain'. It is quite possible that in the reign of Akbar their sub-divisions might not have acquired such importance as to merit separate mention. But even if some individual Rajput clans escaped Abul Fazl's notice, the large

It assigns to unspecified Rajputs when combined with the zamindari possessions or named Rajput clans give us a very impressive size of the aggregate Rajputs possessions in Awadh. This position is largely confirmed by the District Gazetteers. Hence there is no reason to believe that Rajput zamindari possessions as a whole declined in the province, except perhaps for marginal decline affected by the post-Mutiny confiscations. Lalji in his Mirat-ul Auzâ (1850) tells us that, "among all the castes of the Hindu inhabitants (of the kingdom of Awadh) the Rajputs are most numerous and a large number of zamindaris and ta'alluqadaris are possessed by them (the Rajputs). Next to them were the Muslim owners --- this fact", says Lalji, "had made them so that they had grown quite contemptuous towards them (priestly class) of Brahmans."

The Brahmans are recorded as co-sharers in two parganas of sarkâr Awadh and they controlled 3.80% of the total jama of that sarkâr. In sarkar Khairabad their presence is recorded in four parganas, but they controlled as much as 17.73% of the total jama of that sarkâr. In sarkar Lucknow they are entered in 8 parganas and held 4.73% in jama. Of the total revenue of the sūba, the Brahmans as a whole paid 6.42%. Comparing this date with those of circa 1900, it appears that they made considerable inroads in other areas. While the mahâls recorded in the Ain continued to be held by them in

1. Lalji, op.cit., ff. 74b-76a.
tact, they seem to have established their hold over an extensive area in sarkār Gorakhpur, where the Ain does not enter them at all. Ghulam Hazrat (c. 1810) informs us that "most of the villages (in sarkār Gorakhpur) were in the zamīndārī possessions of the Rajputs and Brahmans, while the Muslims and others (castes) had only a quarter share (in zamīndārī)."

Most of these changes, it appears, were affected during the period of 17th century, for, "since the introduction of British rule (1810 A.D.) there had been no great change in the relative position of the different castes in this respect (proprietary tenures), with the exception of the alterations affected by the confiscations of estates for rebellion during the Mutiny."

In the modern districts of Gorakhpur and Basti the Brahmans were the leading land-holding caste having 26% and 34% of the entire area respectively. In sarkār of Bahraich, they are not recorded as zamīndārās in the Ain but by the close of 19th century, they had acquired quite considerable landed possessions. The ta'allugadārs of Singha Chanda and the Raja


4. For the spectacular rise of this family see Derogha Haji Abbas Ali, An Illustrated Historical Album of Rajas and ta'allugadārs of Oudh (hereafter referred to as Album) Allahabad 1880, p.22 and DG, Vol.44, p. 102.
of Ajodhya¹ owned large possessions in the district of Gonda, owing to favours from the Nawab Wazirs. The former held 325 villages and 78 pattis, assessed at Rs. 2,09,760² while the latter had 669 villages and 124 pattis, assessed at Rs. 4,79,348 as land revenue³. The estate of Sisandi falling under the limits of the modern districts of Unnao and Lucknow (and falling within sarkār Lucknow in Akbar's time) was actually obtained in theka or revenue farm in 1226 Fasli (= A.D. 1817) but was subsequently converted into a hereditary possession.⁴ Since a comparison of their revenue paying capacity is not possible on the basis of the data provided for c. 1900, no exact impression can be formed of changes in their position between 1595 and 1900. But it can be observed from the total number of the Brahman ta'alluqadars and their vast possessions in various districts by 1900, that they had become much more important an element among the landed proprietors of Awadh than they were in 1595.

The Muslim zamindārs accounted for roughly 10.86% of the total revenue of the suba of Awadh about 1595. The Afghans are recorded as the exclusive zamindārs of the pargana Utraula, sarkār Gorakhpur, while in pargana Sidhaur, sarkār Lucknow, they are recorded as co-sharers. Ansaris

1. See Album, p.4 and DG Vol. 43, pp. 79-80.
2. Album, p.22.
3. Ibid., p. 4.
4. Ibid., p. 22.
were in possession of the contiguous paraganas of Ibrahimabad and Satrikh in sarkar Awadh and the paragna of Amethi in sarkar Lucknow. Sayyids only held the paragna Bilgiram and Unam, while the Shaikhzadas were co-sharers with them in the paragna Fatehpur and Haveli Lucknow in sarkar Lucknow. The zamindars of the paragna Inhauna and Satinpur in sarkar Awadh, were converted Rajputs of Chauhan and Bachgoti clans. It appears that by 1900 the position of Muslim land-holdings had undergone a drastic change. For onething, deliberate attempts seem to have been made by the Government from time to time to create Muslim zamindaris in the midst of recalcitrant Rajput chiefs. Sher Andaz Khan, the deputy Faujdar of Baiswara at the close of Aurangzeb's reign, specially recommended the creation of Muslim zamindaris in paragna Shapur and Hadha after the revolt of the Rajput zamindars of these paraganas. The recommendations were made in favour of those officials who had led successful operations against the rebels.¹

The Afghans have acquired large estates in many parts of the suba in addition to their continued hold over the paraganas in which they are recorded as the zamindars in 1595.

¹ Insha-i Roshan Kalam describes the rebellion of the Chauhan Rajputs of the village Khanjura, paragna Shahpur and its suppression by one Syed Muzaffar Mohani, who was recommended for the zamindari rights of these villages. While the creation of the zamindari right of the paragna Hadha for one Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin, who might prove useful in suppression of the revolt of the Rajputs. See ff. 3a and 7b.
In sarkar Gorakhpur they held pargana Utraula and they retained it in their house till 1903 with a brief interruption caused due to seizure by the Janwar Rajputs of Balrampur in 1830. Soon afterwards they were restored to their lost possessions and by 1903 they held 73 villages and 5 pattis assessed at Rs. 44,977.\(^1\) The estate of Nanpara was a creation of later times. The founder of this house is said to have been appointed as Qiledar of sarkar Bahraich by Emperor Shahjahan. During Nizamat period Shujauddaulah bestowed upon this house the title of 'Raja' and granted the jagir comprising Sangha, Bahraich and Kaluapara. In 1903, the ta'alluga had grown considerably and it included 333 villages and 9 pattis. The revenue paid by them amounted to Rs. 2,48,500.\(^2\)

In the district of Lucknow one Faqir Muhammad Khan, an Afridi afghan, was granted a piece of land by Nawab Shujauddaulah. "In 1827 he obtained the land of the pargana (Malihabad) and held it till 1843, in the meantime acquiring several villages by default." He also obtained a lien on several other lands and thus founded an estate known as Tharri-Fatehnagar.\(^3\) Later on the estate was divided between his two sons, becoming known as Sahlamau and Kasmandi Khurd. As a whole it consisted of 26 villages and 12 pattis assessed at

\(^1\) DG, Vol. 44, pp. 263-5.

\(^2\) DG, Vol. 45, pp. 75-76; see also Album, p. 15.

\(^3\) Album, pp.59-60 & 65; see also DG, Vol.37, pp.92-3.
Rs. 39,342. Another noticeable possession of the Afghans lay in the district of Hardoi, this being the estate of Basitnagar. It was bestowed upon Dildar Khan, the son of Diler Khan, (founder of Shahabad) as jagir by Emperor Aurangzeb. The grant was resumed by Nawab Sa'adat Ali Khan but the successors of Dildar Khan managed "by means of purchase, mortgage, and other well-known means to acquire about 40 villages. About 1903 the family possessions consisted of 29 villages and 6 pattis, and the total revenue demand was Rs. 22,270.

The Shaikhzadas (or Shaikhs) seem to have lost only their small possession of pargana Lucknow Haveli to Burhan-ul Mulk Sadat Khan in 1722 A.D., while their other possessions remained in tact with many more additions during the subsequent period. The holders of the large ta'alluqadar estates of Mahmudabad, Bithara and Bhatwamau were actually the descendants of the Shaikhzadas of pargana Fatehpur. Their original possessions were enlarged as a result of the post-Mutiny confiscations of some Rajput estates; they obtained the large ta'alluga of the Bisin Raja of Mithauli consisting of 68

1. Album, pp.59-60 & 65; see also DG, Vol. 37, pp.92-3.
2. DG, Vol.41, pp. 88-9; see also Album, p.25.
3. Ibid.
villages and assessed at Rs. 46,600. As a whole they now possessed 306 villages and 43 pattis for Rs. 2,67,024 in 1903. The estate of the Qidwai Shaikhs, Jahangirabad, dates back to the days of emperor Jahangir, in whose name it was founded. They purchased the Bisin estate of Simranwan, a portion of Usmanpur ta'alluga and some other villages. The more significant additions were made in this estate only during the last quarter of the 19th century. In 1873 they held just 65 villages and 30 pattis, while in 1903 this ta'alluga comprised 94 villages and 67 pattis. The Government demand was fixed at Rs. 1,32,547. A branch of the Jahangirabad family was settled at Ambhapur in Bahraich district. Their possessions comprised a village and 25 pattis, all of them situated in the parçana Hisampur. It was through matrimonial alliances that the Qidwais were able to acquire possession of this ta'alluga from the qanungos of Hisampur. The Tipraha ta'alluga of Khairati Shaikhs originated in quite a peculiar manner. It was established by a local tahsildar and flourished under his successors. But as a result of the post-Mutiny confiscations it dwindled to only 15 villages and 4 pattis, the total assessment being Rs. 9,200.

3. Ibid., Appendix, pp. 39-41.
There were many Shaikh families possessing large estates in the districts of Barabanki and Hardoi. Their traditional account suggests that they had settled at an early date, but they came into prominence only during the 17th century and in the Nizamat period with their appointments as petty revenue officials. In the subsequent period they acquired superior rights over large tracts of land by using methods 'too well known' in Awadh. The ancestors of holders of the Bhilwal ta'alluqa are said to have been appointed Chaudharis by Shahjahan in 1616 in pargana Subeha. In course of time they enlarged their possessions to the extent that in 1903 they were the owners of 30 villages and 13 pattis assessed at Rs. 32,569. The ta'alluqa of Kakrauli owes its origin to Shaikh Firoz, who was appointed Chaudhri by Akbar. The family held this title during the Nizamat period, when their rights and privileges were assessed for Rs. 10,000 with the absolute gift of certain villages as Nankar. In the later period, many members of this family worked as chakledars of the Awadh administration. About 1900, this estate comprised 91 villages and 7 pattis assessed at Rs. 89,140, including the confiscated property of the Unao zamindars. The Shaikhs of Gopamau are said to have been appointed Chaudharis by Humayun (1) and

had retained the title till the Annexation. Subsequently, they acquired two rent-free villages and a cash nankar of Rs. 1600. Many other villages were obtained by purchase. Around 1900 their possessions were large enough to be assessed at Rs. 17,798.

The Ansaris and Sayyids are recorded in the Ain as the zamindars of pargana Ibrahimabad and Satrikh in sarkar Awadh and pargana Amethi in sarkar Lucknow in the Ain. They seem to have retained their possessions of Ibrahimabad and Satrikh intact for the succeeding three centuries. By 1900, 60% of the pargana was held by these proprietors in ta'allugadarı tenures. In pargana Amethi, they seem to have continued their hold till 1900. The large estate of Salempur and Adampur Bhatpur, consisting of 30 villages and 2 pattis assessed at Rs. 48,566, was held by scions of the old family.

The Sayyids are recorded as the exclusive zamindars of the parganas of Bilgiram and Unam in sarkar Lucknow by Abul Fazl. During the period of the nizamat they had acquired landed possessions in other parts of suba Awadh as well. In district of Fyzabad the ta'allūğa of Pirpur was established

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3. Ibid., p. 113.
by one, Mirza Muhammad Ali Beg during the reign of Shuja-uddaulah. Subsequently the neighbouring ta'alluqa of Saidanwan was also amalgamated in it. About 1900, it comprised 130 villages and 108 pattis assessed at Rs. 1,26,898. There was a spectacular rise similarly in the fortunes of the ta'alluqa of Samanpur. The family had originally three revenue-free villages, but between 1759-63, one Malik Nurullah rose to influence and obtained engagements for 50 villages. Subsequent additions were made in the ta'alluqa in course of time and about 1900 the estate consisted of 165 villages and 34 pattis, the revenue standing at Rs. 1,05,284. The traditional Bilgram Sayyids account of the connects them with the celebrated house of the Barha Sayyids of Muzaffarnagar. During the Mughal period the place had attained a great name for the learning of its Sayyid inhabitants, a tradition which continued during the later period as well. Many persons of this place obtained high posts in Mughal service, a fact which might explain the continued ownership of land in pargana Bilgiram and its vicinity from the time of Ain to 1900. The old Sayyid families had two ta'alluqas namely Bhogatapur and Asafpur, jointly consisting of 52 villages and 3 pattis and assessed at Rs. 49,940. In pargana Unao the old Sayyid family retained

1. DG, Vol. 43, pp. 97-100.
2. Ibid., pp. 100-102.
their landed possessions, and about 1900, they were the
chief ta'allugadars of the pargana and held 9 out of a total
36 villages assessed at Rs. 10,628 in addition to their posi-
tion of chaudhari and zamindar. ¹

The holders of revenue-free grants also enlarged their
possessions with full fledged proprietary rights in land,
often with the connivance of the Government. There are ins-
tances when the old hereditary owners of land were disposs-
essed, on the pretext of rebellion coupled with the allegation
of their refusal to pay land-revenue, in order to settle
Muslim divines. On occasions these grants were made in hitherto
barren land, expressly with the purpose of extension of
cultivation and settlements. Such grants could have had but
little effect on the over all position of land holdings of
various clans. But some individual cases might be mentioned.
The ancestors of the family of mystics established at Salon
were granted 200 bighas of waste land by Aurangzeb in :his
19th RY/1676 A.D. ² Subsequently a son of Shah Pir Muhammad
was awarded the revenue-free grant of the village Ashrafnagar
Singhol 1679 A.D. Subsequent additions were made by later

² For the translation & a notation of the farman issued by
Aurangzeb in 1676 & 1689 for revenue grants to the mystics
of Salon. See my paper, 'Two Madad-e-Ma'ash farmans of
Mughal Emperors, such as Bahadur Shah I and Shah Alam II. During the Nizamat period a number of villages were added to the already existing grant. Asafuddaulah, is said to have paid a visit to the shrine at Salon and had granted 12 revenue-free villages in perpetuity by expelling the old clan of proprietors who were Kanhpuria Rajputs for their alleged 'contumacy or rebellion', these villages yielded annually Rs. 25,000.\(^1\)

Grants of a similar nature existed in Gorakhpur. The Sabzposh family received some madad-e ma'ash grant from Babur, but in course of time their possessions were enlarged to such an extent that in the time of Asafuddaulah it consisted of about 49 villages and in 1900, the whole grant was assessed at Rs. 14,778.\(^2\) The house of Miyan Saheb Gorakhpur traces its origins to the later days of Muhammad Shah. Their Shia'yte leanings brought them a revenue-free grant of 15 villages during the period of Asafuddaulah. Their loyal conduct during the Mutiny proved still more benificial to them; they were rewarded with the grant of more villages. By 1900 the family possessions consisted of 61 villages at a light assessment of Rs. 8,889.\(^3\) Here it is not possible exactly to

determine as to which clans of land-holders suffered due to these new allotments. Large Muslim Pindari estates were created in the present district of Gorakhpur by the officials of the East India Company in order to avert the possibility of further disturbances by setting some of the Pindari leaders in remote ports of the country. Their large possessions included the confiscated property of the Raja of Barhiapor in satisfaction of the arrears of revenue. It consisted of no less than 145 villages, but the revenue assessment was purposely fixed at the low figure of Rs. 7,105.1

In the Ain-i Akbari, there is no entry under the zamindari column for the money-lending classes such as Banyas and Khatris, in suba Awadh. The extension of the landed possessions of these classes particularly the kayasths and the khatris in Awadh during the 19th century was not as substantial as in the Doab.2 Awadh did not undergo the same turmoil in landed possession as the areas subject to the notorious Mahalwari system. During the time that this system was in operation at its highest pressure, Awadh (not annexed until 1856) remained immune from its inequities. Since fewer estates were put on sale there was smaller opportunity for the mercantile and bureaucratic inroads into land-ownership.

The total landed possessions of Kayasth in Awadh (excluding

---

Gorakhpur division) consisted of 156 villages and pattis assessed at Rs. 208,361, while the Khatri estates contained 103 villages and 72 pattis assessed at Rs. 1,00,665. In Gorakhpur division ceded to the British as early as 1801 the position of these classes was much better. The Agarwals and Kayasths together held 136 villages assessed at Rs. 24,693 in Gorakhpur district alone, while in Basti district the Kayasths possessed 7.1% of the total area. It is possible that insecurity too had some role to play in the absence of land-purchases by financiers in pre-1856 Awadh. Lalji says that, "the bankers and the merchants of (the Awadh Kingdom) do not keep their capital at one place due to the fear of the depredations of the ta'alluqadars and zamindars --- illegal revenue demands of the amils and tahsildars --- there are many who are the owners of the property worth two lacs of rupees and have purchased zamindaris and villages in British dominions."

The establishment and the subsequent rise of the Sikh 'estates' in Awadh was also purely a post-Mutiny phenomenon.

1. The total of the ta'alluqadar possessions of these castes is obtained from the list given in the end of the volume of the District Gazetteers of Awadh. In the post-1856 Awadh Districts, their most numerous possessions lay in Sitapur, Kheri, Rae-Bareili, Unao and Barabanki.


The large estate of Kapurthala came into existence by a deliberate act of Government in order to reward the 'loyalists' for their role in the Mutiny. As a result many old hereditary land owners were dispossessed of their zamindaris. The estate of Kapurthala consisted with 504 villages and 49 pattis, assessed at Rs. 2,73,567.

In Awadh, then, the superior land-holders appear to have maintained their composition broadly unchanged between the end of the 16th and of 19th centuries. The ta'allugadari tenures introduced some new elements, but even here the clans already possessing zamindaris seems to have dominated. The big zamindars appear to have had the earliest access to ta'alluğa engagements in the Awadh kingdom and this remained so under the British. On the other hand where some zamindar caste recorded in the Ain-i Akbari escapes notice in the District Gazetteers, this may well be due to their conversion into under-proprietors under the ta'allugadari system. It may well be, as we have urged in the case of the money-lenders and bureaucrats, that the stability of composition of the zamindar class was due essentially to be the late date at which Awadh was annexed. Otherwise the story of its zamindārs might have been the same as those of Western Uttar Pradesh.

### TABLE - I

**Zamindar castes in Awadh in C.1595**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zamindar castes</th>
<th>AWADH</th>
<th>KHAIRABAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Rajputs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bais</td>
<td>36,35,070</td>
<td>8.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaur</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachgoti</td>
<td>77,21,766</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surajbansi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sombansi</td>
<td>13,60,753</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gehlots</td>
<td>14,15,701</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janwars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachhils</td>
<td>14,15,701</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raikwars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauhans</td>
<td>41,41,078</td>
<td>10.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajwars</td>
<td>79,24,908</td>
<td>19.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>96,98,537</td>
<td>23.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

| Rajputs | 3,73,13,514 | 91.07 | 2,60,83,622 | 59.28 |

(B) Other Castes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes</th>
<th>AWADH</th>
<th>KHAIRABAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmans</td>
<td>15,57,763</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syeds</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghans</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ansari</td>
<td>15,71,712</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Contd........
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumbis</td>
<td>10,04,183</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahirs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35,66,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>3,08,788</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>12,21,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,57,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>44,42,446</td>
<td>9.93</td>
<td>1,68,46,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Ain-i Akbari: The figures are the result of a comparison of the texts of the following MSS. Br. Museum Add. 5645; Add. 6552.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LUCKNOW</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>BAHRAICH</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>GORAKHPUR</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,29,96,750</td>
<td>28.49</td>
<td>13,15,051</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>6,76,792</td>
<td>5.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,04,023</td>
<td>2.60</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10,67,385</td>
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<td>91,13,997</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15,60,294</td>
<td>13.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53,11,950</td>
<td>6.57</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12,11,843</td>
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<td>43,56,254</td>
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<td></td>
<td>47,40,221</td>
<td>19.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,05,047</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,66,539</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,67,72,057</td>
<td>20.77</td>
<td>1,05,64,180</td>
<td>43.79</td>
<td>20,12,533</td>
<td>16.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL

Rajput

6,31,60,078  80.00     2,03,80,179  84.46     1,04,77,825  87.83

(B) Other Castes

38,27,339  4.73     -        -         -        -
45,74,428  5.66     -        -         -        -
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>8,46,240</th>
<th>1.04</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>13,97,367</th>
<th>11.7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52,39,457</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21,40,858</td>
<td>8.87</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16,19,480</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>51,100</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,44,87,464</td>
<td>19.91</td>
<td>37,60,338</td>
<td>15.58</td>
<td>14,48,467</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(c) **Armed Power of the zamindārs:**

It has been shown in the previous section of this chapter that the superior proprietory rights in land had an intimate connexion with the domination of particular clan over an area. We have also seen that the major clans were able to maintain their hold broadly unchanged between 1595 to the annexation of Awadh. Although we have argued that such stability was essentially due to the late date at which Awadh was annexed by the British, one should not forget that such an uninterrupted possession of their rights also depended upon the capacity of that particular clan to maintain its hold with the help of armed power. "Armed force appears as the first historical pre-requisite for the establishment, as well as the retention, of zamindāri rights."

Use of armed power by various clans to keep their possessions intact and/or to acquire new possessions had been a continuous process in Awadh throughout the medieval period. The traditional account of the Chakla Gorakhpur bears testimony to this fact:

"In ancient times the dominion and raj of the neighbourhood of this city belonged to the caste of Domes. Thus remains of their forts at Batyalgarh, Ramgarh, Bhindiagarh, Domangarh etc. in the area adjoining the city are found to this

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1. Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, p. 163.
day. And in the villages the caste of Tharus, i.e. the hillmen of the race of those who are now settled at the foot of the hills, had their settlements. The markets of Batwal for the sale of goods from the hills was held in Gorakhpur. From the time of the establishment of the rule of the Muslims, the markets and settlements of the Tharus gradually disappeared and exist now only in the tezai. Some Srinet Rajput natives of Srinagar having extirpated them, established their power and are up till now known as Raja Gorakhpuri. Thus their descendants hold the zamindāri of some of the villages of Silhat and of the pargana of the environs of Gorakhpur and Silhat hold (their lands) in accordance with the deeds of the Gorakhpuri Raja. Afterwards in the time of Akbar, the ancestors of the ta'allugadār of Kachhar, formerly residing in the pargana of Bhauwapora with their kinsmen seized the zamindāri of the environs of Gorakhpur and Silhat which till now is in the hands of their descendants.\(^1\)

Apart from such traditional accounts, Abul Fazl has given detailed statistical information in the Account of the 'Twelve Subas' about the military resources of the

\(^1\) Mufti Ghulām Hazrat, Kwaif-e-Gorakhpūr, f.7a-b. The translation of this passage is given in Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p. 160.
Bundyās or zamindārs, viz., cavalry, infantry, number of elephants in each pargana. The sarkār-wise information is tabulated below:

**TABLE I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarkārs</th>
<th>Elephants</th>
<th>Cavalry</th>
<th>Infantry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sarkār Awadh</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>30,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sarkār Bahraich</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>14,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sarkār Gorakhpur</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sarkār Khairabad</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>27,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sarkār Lucknow</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2,680</td>
<td>77,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,360</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,71,550</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all the parganas of the suba possessed cavalry, and infantry. This makes it almost certain that every land holder of consequence maintained armed retainers. By the 17th century they invariably had built mud forts (garhīs or qilacha) in the villages of their zamindāris to station these retainers.

An interesting petition from pargana Hisampur, sarkār Bahraich, reports a night attack by certain malactors on a village included in the zamindāri possession of one Saïyied Muhammad 'Arif. He speaks of a qilacha he had built to protect...
his possessions. In another document a reference is made to the razing of a chilacha by some usurpurs and it was ordered that the same be rebuilt by those who had destroyed it. In the Inshā'-i-Roshan Kalām a number of expeditions against such forts of recalcitrant zamindār are mentioned. Rad Andaz Khan as well as his deputy Sher Andaz Khan boasted of their services in destroying and capturing various garhis of the zamindār of Bainswara. In one 'arzdasht it is said that the Chauhan zamindārs of pargana Kanjura had refused to pay the land-revenue and with the help of 8 or 9,000 men had attacked pargana Shahpur. In retaliation, a number of their forts (garhis) were captured and many of the rebels were put to the sword. Finally they agreed for peace and agreed to pay the land-revenue to the agents of the jagirdārs. In the similar manner rebellious zamindārs of pargana Bijnore and Zaidpur were suppressed. A number of their forts were taken and handed over to the agents of the jagirdārs in lieu of arrears of land-revenue.

Any zamindār of consequence always tried to keep his hold over his fortresses, and seize those of his weaker

3. Inshā'-e-Roshan Kalām, ff. 2a-4a, 6a-8a.
4. Ibid., 'arzdasht No.1.
5. Ibid., 'arzdasht No.2.
neighbours. The rebel zamindār of pargana Harha had captured the fort of Murtazanagar from its Sayyid owners based in Unao. Later on its possession was restored to the owners with the help of the imperial forces. Similarly new forts were built by zamindārs at places of strategic importance with the help of professional soldiers. Kharsen, the zamindār of pargana Jajmau, employed Salim Afgān and building a fort named it Salimgarh. But the Mughal forces stormed the fort, and a number of soldiers, including Salim Afgān, were killed. Fortified houses situated alongside the highway were also used by the zamindārs to block the passage of the imperial troops. The capture of such places and their control by the imperial officials was thought to be very necessary for establishing control.

A number of the mahzars seeking redress against the wrongs suffered by the petitioners and imperial orders containing a recital to the same effect also provide important clues to the strength and the use of armed power by the local zamindārs. It seems that established hereditary zamindārs usually resented the induction of any new element, such as land grantees, within their territory. During the

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 'arzdasht No. 3.
reign of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, the holders of the madad-e-maǎsh grants were therefore often faced with harassment from local zamindārs, who enforced a non-payment of the land-revenue to the grantees or ensured a refusal of payment of the revenues by the peasants (ri'āya).¹

Two farmāns of Aurangzeb from pargana Sadarpur sarkār Khairabad direct the officials to investigate the allegation of the petitioners and report accordingly. It was contended that one Samar Singh zamindār of Mahauti, pargana Fakharpur had a number of mounted and foot soldiers, and had became a freebooter. He raided and burnt the villages of the petitioners, mosques, and tombs being raised to the ground. A number of inhabitants were killed; money amounting to Rs. 8213/- and 6376 heads of livestock had been taken away.² Similarly, the madad-i-ma'āsh holders of a village in pargana Hisampur, sarkār Bahraich presented a mahzar in 1125 AH/1717 complained that the residents (zamindārs?) of the neighbouring villages had attached their aimma (grant) villages with the help of 500 persons. In the raid many inhabitants were killed, their property looted and destroyed, while the women had committed jowhar, even the corpses were not allowed to be buried. Moreover, the family grave-yard of the petitioners was brought under the cultivation by the malefactors.³

¹. Ibid.
². RAA-287 and 290 (4th Ry of Aurangzeb).
³. RAA-1315
Similarly the zamindārs of pargana Fatehpur Devi and of pargana Sahali in sarkār Lucknow had attached and killed the representatives of what later came to be the house of Firangi Mahal, Mulla Qutubuddin. The incident occurred in the 35th Ry. of Aurangzeb.¹

Often the zamindārs defied the administration by refusing to acknowledge the authority of the Local ḡāzīs. It seems that the holders of the religious offices and a'imma-holders were most vulnerable to the armed power of the zamindārs since they had no force to back their claims, hence their existence in any area depended upon the help from the military officials of the area. A petition by the family of the ḡāzīs posted in Baiswara especially mentions the tussle between their ancestors and the Bais (zamindārs) of the area which was going on for the Last 80 years. The ḡāzīs had all the 21 pargana of Baiswara under their jurisdiction, but due to the hostility shown by the inhabitants, they have been driven away from 15 parganas and now only 6 pargana actually remained within their judicial jurisdiction.²

1. FM-185 (35th RY of Aurangzeb).
2. NAI-2618 (4th RY of Aurangzeb). I owe this information to Mr. Zakir Husain, Archivist, National Archives of India, New Delhi.
During the first quarter of the 18th century, the local chieftains and the zamindars had acquired much power and were in possession of considerable resources. When Sa'adat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk was appointed the subedar of the province, he had to fight a number of battles with these chiefs in various parts of the province. Prior to his appointment as the governor of the suba, these chiefs and the zamindars were strong enough to undermine the authority of the nazims and the agents of the mughal jagirdars as to make the work of revenue collection nearly impossible. But Sa'adat Khan dealt these refractory elements with such firmness that in the very first year of his tenure, the total amount of collection increased from barely 70 lacs to 107 lacs of rupees. On realizing his ability and competence these mughal jagirdars too leased out their jagirs to him on ijara tenures. In the next two years, the total collection reached two crores. ¹

The traditional account of the capture of Lucknow from the hands of the Shaikhzadas may well contain a considerable amount of exaggeration. However, from our point of view the importance of the episode lies in the fact that even the newly appointed governor had to resort to dubious methods to reach the provincial capital which happened to be

¹ Ghulam Husain Khan, 'Imadus-Sa'adat, pp. 7-8.
in the hands of local zamindārs. Or one may think of the power gained by the Kanhpuria chief of Tiloin, Raja Mohan Singh, by plundering the Saiyad owners of Mustafabad and the Bais chieftain of Khajurgaon. When Burhanul Mulk decided to end the growing pretensions of the chief battle took plea. Mohan Singh was killed and all his possessions which lay in the jurisdiction of suba Awadh were seized.

Burhanul Mulk was able to keep the recalcitrant elements of the province in check, but with his death the local chieftains began to reassert their power. The successors, Safdarjung's letters to Muhammad Shah are full of references to the rebellions and of the zamindārs. It was alleged that with the help of their strong forts and numerous armed retainers, they refused to pay the land revenue and undertook depredations all round. The nawab-wazir had to be throughout on the march; and the nawab wazir offered this as an excuse for omitting to heed urgent summons from the imperial court.

2. 'Imadus Sādat, pp. 7-8, FTNA, pp. 35-7.
4. Ibid., pp. 4-6; pp. 38-40.
In Safdarjung's letters addressed to wazir Qamaruddin Khan, it is stated that due to the rebellious attitude of the chieftains, additional troops are to be maintained in order to carry on the work of revenue collection and keep the malefactors under the effective control. This had enhanced expenses while the actual income (from the jagirs?) had fallen, and the Nawab-Wazir had claims outstanding for which he had no jagirs. At another place he says that he had instructed his wakil (at the imperial court) to be present at the time when new jagir assignment orders were issued for the province of Awadh, so that he may invite the attention of the wazir towards the acute problem faced by the nawab-wazirs in administering the turbulent province of Awadh.\(^1\)

The zamindars and local potentates were always prone to take to banditry. Roads and the highways were considered to be quite unsafe, and it was always considered necessary for heavy armed escort to accompany the treasures passing through the territorial limits of Awadh.\(^2\)

Among the major rebellions by the zamindars during Safdarjung's reign, was a fresh one by the Kanhpuria chieftains of Tiloin. He had collected together a numerous body

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1. Ibid., pp. 46-7.
2. Ibid., pp. 7-8; pp. 14-16; pp. 17-18, 42.
of armed retainers and possessed a very strong fort. It was
sorrounded by a deep ditch and sorrounded by the extensive
belt of dense and thorny jungle. But the forces of Nawab-
wazir were strong enough to xdefeat the Rajput forces and
to caputre the fort in (1739). Another important uprising
was that of the Gaur zamindārs of sarkār Khairābād. It
appears that they had refused to pay the land-revenue
and took banditry. Safdar Jung, through forced marches reached
their strongholds, of the fort of Nabigarh and Katesar.
These forts fell after a siege of eleven days and with some
difficulty the Rajputs were defeated and the area was brought
under control.

After the battle of Buxar Shuja-ud-daula was forced
to reduce his regular army, and strong exception was taken
by the company officials at the reported attempts of the
nawab to re-organize the army. As a result of revenue
collection could proceed only with the help of the British
forces. Such help was always available to the local officials
of the nawab-wazir as the company was entitled to receive

1. Ibid., pp. 30-31; In a letter addressed to Nawab Ishaq
Khan (?) Safdar Jung conveyed him the news of his victory
over the rebels of Tiloi. Their forts were captured
and a number of Rajput chiefs were put to sword. Ibid,
ff. 77-8. See also FTNA pp. 92-4.

2. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
large sums of money out of these collections. Indeed, the English looked askance at the zamindārs refusal to pay revenue for the amounts so withheld were sure to be "expanded on those numerous forces which the zamindārs raise and (?) up only to support them in their resistance to Government."

The revenue contractors, had constantly to face armed resistance of the zamindārs in their respective jurisdictions. Often they were ruthless in suppression of the uprisings. The atrocities committed by Almas Ali Khan against the zamindārs of Doab were reported to Middleton in 1778. However, in whatever he did he obtained the help of the British forces. But it was thought that the destruction of the forts of the zamindārs in Doab, "will have many ill consequences and accordingly the nawab-wazir was advised to adopt, "more conciliatory mode of proceeding" when using British forces against such element."

In the early years of Asaf-ud-daulah's reign, the zamindārs of Gorakhpur went into rebellion. The intensity of these disturbances was such that nawāb-wazīr had to proceed

1. FASC, 12 Jan., 1778, NAI
2. FDSC, 8 Jan. 1778, NAI
3. FDSC, 8th Jan. 1778, NAI. For a later account of Almas Ali Khan, when he was around 80 years old, see J.V. Valentia, Voyages and Travels in India Cyclone, the Red Sea, Abyssinia and Egypt 1802-6, 3 vols. London, 1809; Sec. Vol. I, pp. 136-7.
in person to suppress the rebellion. A group of bandits made a night attack on the royal treasury, when it was going to Lucknow from Baiswara. A good number of company sepoys accompanying the treasury were killed. Obviously such an attack could have been made only with the help of local zamindārs.

The death of Aṣaf-ud-daulah in 1797 marks a watershed in the history of Awadh, it offered an opportunity to the Company to conclude new treaties with his successors first with Wazir 'Ali and then with Saʿādat 'Ali Khan (1798-1814). Now the subordination of the kingdom of Awadh to the company was complete in every respect. The army had to be disbanded and even the work of the revenue collection was to be done only with British help. The help had mixed results. It was alleged that the, "country was pillaged under the sanction of the British name and under the terror of sepoy bayonets" and also, "the more parties (of the sepoys) were sent out in support of the amin, the more were called for." To remedy such a situation, it was suggested by the Resident that the 'crown dues' be leased out to the zamindārs for a number of years instead of being collected by amins. Under

1. FSC, 26th Feb. 1777 (c) and 21th April 1777(D), NAI.
3. Heber, pp. 84-5.
this system 'proofs' were to be furnished by the king for the outstanding dues against the error zamindārs before military help was given by the British to coerce them into making payments. Such a tedious process could only further encourage the zamindārs. The king, accordingly remonstrated that, "all his difficulties have arisen from his entire confidence in the friendship of the company. That this induced him and his ancestors to disband an excellent army and thus they have became unable, without help to enforce payment of their ancient revenues. Under these circumstances the zamindārs had acquired such power as to make the king plead for his own survival, "from the only enemies he has or is likely to have, his rebellious zamindārs." The 'judicious care and 'scrutiny' of each and every case by the Resident, before the requisition of the king for sepoys was met, had adversely affected the fortunes of the kingdom. The king was unable to face the rebellious zamindārs, as they had driven away many of his officials from their areas and in this process, "the chief actual sufferers at the present movement are the king, who gets little or nothing even of his undoubted dues, and the traveller, who unless he has such a guard as I have had better sleep in a safe kin on the other side of the Ganges."

1. Ibid., p. 85.
2. Ibid., p. 86.
3. Ibid., p. 87.
4. Ibid., p. 88.
The zamindārs were able to multiply their armed retainers, forts, cannons and guns after the death of Sa'adat Ali Khan (1814). This became possible as the king was unable to check their activities, and the British help too was not forthcoming to the king in his attempts if ever made to punish a rebellious zamindār. It should not be assumed that they were simply 'invincible' or Awadh government was in any way less competent to control the situation. Sleeman describes how the Kanhpuria Rajput chiefs of Nain were suppressed by Raja Durshan Singh and Bukhtawar Singh during their term of nizāmat of the district Salon (in which lay the Nain estate). But when the affairs of this place were entrusted to a court favourite, Hamid Ali, the situation undergone a change. Thereafter, "the Kanhpuria have recovered all the lands they had lost, restored all the jungal that had been cut down, and they are now more powerful than ever. They have strengthened their forts, and built some new and added greatly to the number of their armed followers, so that the governor of the district dares not do any thing to coerce them into the payment of just demands of government or to check into their usurption and outrages." The Gaur zamindār of Banthar in Bainswara named Kesri Singh paid Rs. 1,50,000/- annually in revenue, but thought it expedient to maintain 1000 matchlockmen. With these forces he defeated and slew a chakledār Sobha Ram and faujdār, Shaikh Karim Buksh.  

2. Butler, p. 100.
Such defences could have been broken very well, but the army employed to bring down these zamindārs was never given adequate supplies as to carry any long siege of the garhīs, most of which were situated in midst of thick bamboo jungle. On the other hand the supply line of the besieged rebels could not be successfully broken, as the neighbouring zamindār, always entertained a strong sense of fellow-feeling for them. Although the total strength of Awadh forces was said to have been 54,000, it was, "an ill paid, disorderly multitude employed in coercing the zamindār under the orders of the chakledār." It was thought of it to be, "useful only to the enemy, it in dangerous to the well being of the state, utterly useless for war, most mischievous during peace." The number of the retainers kept by the zamindārs was computed at 100,000 men, and they were mostly drawn from the caste of the zamindārs.

The country was dotted with innumerable fortresses, surrounded with dense forests, carefully rendered inaccessible for state forces. All the zamindārs invariably kept cannons and big guns for the defence of their forts. A combination of all these factors always proved more than a match for

1. Thornton, p.36.
2. CR, 1845 (111), p. 388.
3. Thornton, p.36.
the "royal forces." Sleeman estimated that some 250 mud forts and about 500 pieces of cannon were deployed in their service.¹

It seems the British officials had no clear idea of the actual strength of the zamindārs, and whatever they guessed was a gross under-estimate. The actual position came to light only after the Rebellion of 1857 was over, and the British officials started some sort of combing operations in the province. As a result 1575 forts were destroyed and 720 pieces of cannon were seiged.² In addition to these general statements, we possess a statement showing the armed strength of 149 land holders of southern portions of Awadh. It was prepared by the deputy commissioner of Salon (then a large administrative division of southern Awadh) in 1858. We find that every land-holder invariably had a kacha or pucca fort and a number of armed retainers. Even small land holders having two villages, maintained a fort. The statement gives us the following statistics:³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forts</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Guns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>Cavalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>78,211</td>
<td>3,313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. CR, 1860 (XXXV) pp.132-3 Cf. PD Reeves Sleeman in Oudh Cambridge 1971 see the introduction, p.22.
3. Board of Revenue Lucknow File No. 395/1858 (Oudh General).
Although details regarding the other parts of the kingdom are not available, still one can have an idea as to what the actual strength of the land holders was on the eve of annexation.¹

As a necessary corollary, the British Government carried a systematic campaign to disband the retainers, confiscate the guns and destroy the forts of the land holders after the fall of Lucknow. We have an interesting lease-deed (patta) executed in 1265 F/1858 in favour of a revenue grantee. It was stipulated that the lessee should have surrendered all pieces of cannon and guns to the government officials. All the forts situated in his area should have been destroyed, the forests cleared and the ditches filled. If any other land-holder in his area had concealed any guns or cannon, the matter be immediately brought to the notice of the government. In failing to discharge these duties, stern action would be taken including the forfeiture of the lease itself.² Other confirmatory sanads issued to recognise the previously existing allodial rights of the ta'āllugādārs.

1. The total number of the forts in Awadh belonging to the land-holders were said to be around 633 at the time of the annexation. Foreign consultation No. 136/53 dated 31st October 1856. NAI-Delhi (Letter No. 340 dated 18th August 1856 from Judicial Commissioner of Awadh to Secretary to the chief Commissioner) Cf. AA Azmi, Position of Ta'allugādārs in Awadh, p. 18.

2. Khairabad-10.
the zamindārs and the revenue-grantees invariably carried a recitation to this effect.

Lālji laments on the fact that, "among the Hindu inhabitants of the country (Awadh), the most numerous are the Rajputs. Most of the large zamindāri and the taʿāllugādāri of the kingdom belong to them. The fact that they possess large body of the (armed) retainers and forts, had made them arrogant and hence they had became disrespectful towards the others. Some of these idioξs show no consideration towards the priestly class of the Brahmans .... and openly defy the religious customs." Apart from this, the government annually incurred heavy loss to its income, as these land holders tried to get the maximum concession by way of nānkār. The actual machinism as to how the nānkār was increased has been discussed elsewhere. The additional income so gained was again invested by the zamindārs in raising the number of the retainers, forts and cannon.

In many ways the increase in armed power of the zamindār was a direct consequence of the British interference in day to day affairs of the kingdom. No doubt the zamindārs

1. Lalji, Mirāt-ul Auzā, ff. 74a-76b.
2. See Section I of this Chapter.
3. Lalji, op.cit., p. 91.
had always kept a number of the retainers maintained forts, rebelled or taken to banditry under Mughal rule. But by and large, they seem to have been kept in check till the reign of Shuja'ud daulah. But after Buxar a sort of 'dyarchy' was introduced in Awadh and interference was attempted at all the levels without any recognised system of policy. The Awadh administration became a prey to changing policies of the British Governor. -Generals "Everything ..... mere guess work and experiment. One governor general, or one Resident had adopted one plan; next had tried some thing wholly different." On occasion, company sepoys were deployed immediately to crush rebellions of zamindārs, while on other such occasion, help was refused even on the requisition of the king himself. Such a situation could not but greatly encourage the zamindārs to take up arms against the government as well as against their fellows.

1. CR, 1845 (111) p. 421.