

**FINANCING THE STATE: THE 18<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY MARATHA DOMINION AND THE  
BANKING COMMUNITY**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
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SUNIL KUMAR SINGH

CENTRE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067  
INDIA  
2000



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "FINANCING THE STATE: THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MARATHA DOMINION AND THE BANKING COMMUNITY" submitted by SUNIL KUMAR SINGH in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.Phil) of the University, is an original work and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this University or any other University.

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PROF. DILBAGH SINGH  
SUPERVISOR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dilbagh Singh', is written over the printed name and title.

PROF. DILBAGH SINGH  
CHAIRPERSON  
CHAIRPERSON

Centre for Historical Studies  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067

The material objects perceived by the senses have their beginning in the elements of nature and finally they dissolve in these elements. He who knows the 'Atman' which transcends matter, nevermore comes to grief.

- "Katha Upanishad"

Dedicated to my parents  
and  
to the memory of Rev. Fr. Van Troy

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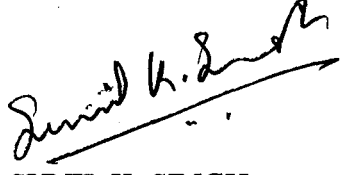
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Monsoon

  
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# **INTRODUCTION**

"Go roaming about wherever you like but bring money somehow or other" - was the Peshwa Bajirao's orders to his brother Chimaji Appa during the latter's expedition in Malwa during the year 1728-29. The shortage of cash, however, remained one of the grave problems which the Maratha leaders, in the course of the 18th century, had to cope with. The decade of 1720s was the initial phase of Maratha expansion into northern India and one of the chief motives for this enterprise grew out of the urgent need of ready cash and other dues 'in order to pay off Chatrapati Shahu's debts incurred in the recent struggle with the Nijam and to pay salaries to the army'.<sup>1</sup>

Even in the later half of the 18th century the expansion of the Marathas, in territorial terms, aimed at realising the chauth and tributes, was linked with the urgent need of money felt by the Peshwas and the Sardars, the prominent among them included viz., Gaikwads, Holkars, Bhonsles and the Shindes, to pay off their huge loans due to the bankers or savakars. And it is precisely this issue which the present study seeks to deal with, i.e., it would be an attempt to comprehend the causality of the relationships that developed between the Maratha dominion and the banking community in the 18th century. It seeks to explore those causative factors in the 18th century Maratha dominion, which contributed in establishing the inter-relationships between the Maratha leaders and the bankers. In this connection the



study would emphasise upon two crucial aspects, relating to the 18th century Maratha dominion. Firstly, the irregularities and demerits existing in the land revenue collection and remittance and secondly, the skewed nature of relationship shared among the Maratha Sardars, the Peshwas and the Chatrapati, especially in matters regarding sharing the dues, which cast a negative impact on their monetary conditions. And, it were these contextual set ups which created the conditions for the Marathas to rely upon the bankers as a perennial source of finance. Hence, apart from the various factors (as pointed out by the scholars, which would be taken up shortly) which facilitated the expansion and intensification of the banking activities, especially in the 18th century Maratha dominion, the present study goes a little beyond such analyses and would propose that the overall politico-administrative structure of the Marathas was no less responsible for the expansion of the banking activities in the Maratha dominion.

Further, the study would be is an attempt to study various aspects of the relationships between the Maratha 'state' structure and the banking/moneylending community and studying it in the the larger theoretical formulation of the 18th century termed as the period of healthy commercialisation by the new generation of scholars chiefly among whom included Frank Perlin, David Washbrook etc. A quick look at their propositions here seems imperative.

Washbrook pointed out that in South Asian Region especially from the later 17th century the money-lenders, merchants and revenue officials 'participated in productive investments and shared in the profits of commodity production partly as direct investors and partly through the indirect means of being major holders of land rights'. He further, opined that the growth of 'state fiscalism its penetration and takeover by merchant and banking capital remained a hallmark of the south Asian history especially since the later 17th century.<sup>2</sup> Further, Karen Leonard while characterising the 18th century, as a period of 'expansion and diversification for banking firms and merchants', believed that 'the position of the bankers in India was that of an allied support group, one which provided essential resources to the state and had a good bargaining position with respect to it'.<sup>3</sup>

Taking a cue from these studies more recent studies have endeavoured to situate the 18th century Maratha politico-economic structure within this new paradigm and have brought out several factors which facilitated the commercial vigour. For instance, Stewart Gordon has dealt comprehensively with the mechanism of administration and revenue collection in the Maratha dominated areas in the 18th century and is of the opinion that, 'the pressure for cash to pay the troops generated an increasing monetisation throughout the countryside and that cash needs of the Marathas in the 18th century were possibly even greater than the Mughals because a much higher percentage of the army was paid directly in cash'.<sup>4</sup> He,

however, shows that there was active participation of the bankers-moneylenders in the revenue administration for it were these moneylenders or savakars who lent a huge sum to the revenue collectors i.e., the Kamavisadars or mamlatdars, for remitting the estimated revenue in advance to the treasury. However Gordon, except pointing out the factor of monetisation, does not specifically examine as to what made banking a stable and permanent business vis-a-vis the revenue collectors. As is shown in the subsequent chapters, that it was the element of lucrativeness attached to the revenue administration which must have induced the bankers to come into play and subsequently contributed to their expanded network.

Laxmi Subramanyan's study however seems closer to the line of argument which the present study has chosen to follow when she points out that 'the factors which gave importance to the banking community which guaranteed support to the government and sustained the flow the revenue were, growing costs of warfare and overall financial stringency'.<sup>5</sup> However, she does not study or enquire into the factors responsible for this overall financial stringency.

A.R. Kulkarni's work lets us know that even in the 17th century Maharashtra, the activities of the banking families were well organised and even at that time the Marathas used to borrow loans from the Sahukars to meet their own requirements, particularly at the time of war. However, in his opinion, in 18th century the political

expansion led to urbanisation of some places and the consequent rise of a class of Sahukars.<sup>6</sup> He also points out that 'though the expansion of the Maratha power brought some wealth to the Maratha country but they remained in debt and the Peshwas and the Sardars had to borrow from the indigenous bankers for carrying out their military activities. Kulkarni's study is insightful enough to get an overall idea of the network of the bankers - trading communities in the 18th century Maratha region. He opined that in the 18th century the political expansion of the Marathas led to urbanisation of some places and the consequent rise of a class of moneylenders and traders'. True, the urbanisation of some places was certainly the factor which helped expand the moneylending/banking activities but as would be shown later that the overall Maratha politico-administrative structure must be given its due for being equally responsible for giving an encouragement to the banking/money-lending network, a point which both L. Subrahmanyam and Kulkarni seem to have missed out.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam and C.A. Bayly however, prefer to use the term 'portfolio capitalists' for those merchants who not only undertook trading activities but also assumed political role and a direct participation in state finance.<sup>7</sup> Their study which is mainly focussed on the northern and southern India but largely excludes medieval Deccan, points out some cardinal features of such 'portfolio capitalists' of the 18th century north India, namely, (a) that they were more volatile

and more dependent on political favours and persisted through buying or fighting their way into land rights, and (b) that most of these portfolio capitalists were of military or administrative origin and were beginning to intervene in agricultural production together with their attempt to control labours and trade'.

Their line of thought, however, finds some resonance with that of V.D. Divekar, who though does not use the term 'portfolio capitalists', but holds that 'the emergence of a new class of indigenous sahumars was a significant outcome of the 18th century Maharashtra. However, this new class of Sahumars, as he believed,<sup>8</sup> depended mostly on the prevailing political situation and the Maratha system of war-finance'.

However, Divekar's proposition that the merchant - bankers mostly depended on the political favours of the Marathas does not wholly fit into the present framework of the study. He seems to have underrated the point that, it were not these bankers - moneylenders who were 'dependent', so to say, on political favour rather as the present study would attempt to propose that it was the other way round i.e., it was the overall glitches in the revenue collection and the acrimonious nature of relationship - especially in the case of tribute distribution - between the Peshwas, the Sardars and the Chatrapati which 'compelled' them, as it were, to borrow loan as an alternate source of income from the big bankers, who - as Kulkarni showed - had

had a sound network of ancestral trade and banking business in the 18th century and even in the preceding century. Secondly, drawing an analogy here between the 'portfolio capitalists' (as observed by Subrahmanyam and Bayly) and the bankers of the 18th century Maratha region remains out of question since none of the characteristics typical of the 'portfolio capitalists' finds its counterpart in the area and period of the present study.

However, it is not to suggest that the absence of a regular flow of revenue and tributes, the shortage of ready cash and the consequent dependence on the bankers - moneylenders was an easy way out from the financial predicament as faced by the Marathas. Nevertheless, borrowing from the bankers greatly helped the Marathas but as mentioned earlier, paying off the loans and dues of the bankers was one of the moving forces for launching territorial expeditions. Secondly, since the study has not gone through the statistics of the entire revenue records of the 18th century Maratha dominion - which are compiled and preserved in large numbers of 'Rumals' and coded in the Modi script; the study does in no way attempt to propose that the Maratha revenue administration was flawed. Nevertheless, the documents which have been consulted support the possibility of cash shortage for the Maratha leaders. The two factors, therefore, which contributed towards relying upon the bankers were the problems and irregularities in collections of revenue from the Kamavisadars and secondly, the irregular distribution of tributes and dues among the

Maratha sardars and the Peshwas as well as the Chatrapati. All these issues, however, will be discussed more specifically, in the first and second chapters. But here at this stage, it is pertinent to take an overview of the nature and content of the sources of the present study.

The primary sources which have been consulted may be divided under three heads - (1) published Marathi records which are mostly in the form of private account and papers of the banking families. These papers were originally recorded in the Modi script but have been published in the Devanagari script. In this connection, the documents compiled in N.G. Chapekar's (titled 'Peshvaichyaa Saavaleet') are of paramount importance which, inter alia, show the money borrowed in large amounts by the Maratha sardars and the Peshwas from different banking houses like chiplunkars, Tulshibagwales, Kalyan Subedars, Khasgiwales etc. Secondly, it also shows through the accounts of the bankers, the widespread networks of 'hundi' or promissory notes and conversion of distant region's money into local currency by these money lending families, apart from the nature of privileges given to them by various Maratha leaders.

Documents edited by D.B. Parasnis are too useful to assess the state of financial crunch which the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao and the various Sardars were

facing and which they divulged to their religious guru Brahmendra Swami through letters addressed to him.

V.K. Rajwade's edited Marathanchya Itihasachi Sadhanen, Vol. 13, shows various facts of political conditions and financial problems faced by the Peshwa Madhav Rao and the sardars like Holkars etc.

Shankar Laxman Vaidya's (ed.) (Vaidya Daftarantun Nivadlele Kagad in 6 parts) shows the various shades of relationship between the Bhonsles and the Chatrapati Shahu, and the influential role played by the banking family of the Vaidyas in bringing conciliation between the two. It also shows the various problems the Maratha sardars faced in collecting revenue from their respective areas. Further the papers relating to the banking house of the Tulshibagwales edited by Sadashiv Athavale and published in the BISM Quarterly is also a valuable source. (2) The second category of primary sources which have been consulted, were also recorded in the Modi script but have been edited and published in the Devanagri. In this category comes G.S. Sardesai (ed.) Selections from the Peshwa Daftar - 45 vols., and G.C. Wad, D.B. Parasnis et.al., (eds.), Selections from the Satara Raja and Peshwa Diaries, 9 Vols. The Selections from Baroda State Records also come in this category which elucidate the complexities and irregularities in the revenue



collection' in the area of the Gaikwads, their issues of disputes with the Peshwa and their loan agreements with the bankers.

(3) This category of primary sources includes the contemporary or near contemporary English records and reports. It includes J.G. Duff's account (History of the Mahrattas, 3 vols., first published in 1826) and Mountstuart Elphinstone's reports (titled Territories Conquered from the Paishwa: A Report) which give details regarding the revenue administration as practised under the Maratha areas in the 18th century. Besides Thomas Broughton's (Letters from a Mahratta camp) and John Malcolm's 'A Memoir of Central India' also give useful information about the revenue administration.

As regards the chapterisation scheme is concerned, the whole theme of the study has been divided into 3 chapters excluding the introductory and the concluding section. The first and the second chapters would undertake a purely contextual study attempting to situate the expansion and penetration of the banking/money lending communities within the overall revenue and politico-administrative structure of the Marathas in the 18th century. The central thrust put forward in these two chapters would be to deeply study the contexts or conditions which made the Maratha leaders, Peshwas and the Chatrapati resort to loans from the banking families.

The first chapter would undertake the contextual study at the lower level of administration, i.e., at the suba and Pargana level and would invariably, deal with various nuances of the revenue collection, the demerits inherent in it and the various problems faced by the revenue collectors i.e., the Kamavisadars or the mamlatdars and would argue that it were due to such instances of glitches in the revenue collections and remittance that the Marathas introduced, in the course of the 18th century, mechanisms to ensure the regular flow of revenue. Firstly, the introduction of the system of taking a part or the whole of the estimated revenue of the Kamavisadars' area in advance from him and secondly, the introduction of farming the land revenue. It were, thus, these two major factors combined with the elements of lucrativeness attached to them, which, as the chapter, would show, induced the bankers to come to the fore.

The second chapter would undertake the contextual study at the upper level of the Maratha dominion where the irregular partition and distribution of chauth and other dues namely, 'Ghas-dana', 'Sayar' etc. among the sardars, the Chatrapati and the Peshwas caused grave financial crunch and which compelled the Marathas to rely on the bankers to provide loans. The chapter would begin by outlining (through citing various instances) the distorted aspects of the relationship, mainly political and economic, shared among the Maratha sardars with the Chatrapati and the Peshwas

and even among themselves. These instances would show that there existed hardly any well-defined criterion of parting with the tributes and dues. Under these circumstances therefore, taking refuge to the bankers by the Peshwas, the Chatrapati and the Sardars is not very difficult to contemplate.

While the first two chapters would deal with the contexts or spaces which saw the active financing by the banking families, the third chapter would entirely focus on the banking network and the various privileges and positions occupied by the bankers of the 18th century Maratha dominion. Here would be shown, firstly, the enormous amounts of loans which the Peshwas and other leaders borrowed from these bankers either in cash or in kind in every matters ranging from paying salaries to the army, financing the battle expedition, procuring articles for the royal kitchen etc. secondly, the chapter would discuss that, though there were some instances of repayment in cash of loans by the Peshwas and the sardars to their bankers but many instances show the repayment through numerous mamlat or revenue collecting rights of either some villages or a pargana - depending upon the sum of the amount borrowed - to enable the bankers to collect their dues out of the revenue yield of the area. Besides the big banking families namely the Tushibagwales, the Vaidyas and so on were offered various privileges in the form of being appointed as advisors, especially at the Sardars' Courts and were assigned Inam or revenue free lands,

saranjam rights, vatan i.e. patrimony rights, governship or subedari of provinces and so on.

This overview of the scheme of chapterisation brings us to end the first section of the introduction. The next section discusses the depiction of the Marathas, in the prominent historical writings.

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The treatment which the Maratha history has received, in historical writings, since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, is that of changing dimensions and varying images in direct response to the respective contexts, approaches and objectives which these historical writings reveal in an obvious manner. Here, have been picked up four monographs whose voluminous studies on the Maratha history in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries represent four different generations of historians who perceived the history of the Marathas in pursuance of different objectives backed up by varying approaches and contexts. These include James Grant Duff's 'The History of the Mahrattas, Vols. I,II & III', M.G. Ranade's 'The Rise of the Maratha Power', G.S.Sardesai's 'New History of the Marathas and Andre Wink's 'Land and Sovereignty in India-Agrarian Society and Politics under the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha Svarajya'.

Taking up, first, J.G. Duff's account and his treatment of the Maratha history, the most notable thing about him is that it was his pioneering writing on the Maratha history that encouraged all subsequent studies on the themes which comprised, inter alia, as to what the Maratha polity was, what was the central structure of it, what was the relationship between the 'core' Mughals and the 'periphery' regional kingdoms/successors states including the Marathas and so on. As Stewart Gordon remarks "much of the subsequent historiography on the Maratha polity should be read as a gloss on James Duff and all the subsequent generations of historians of Maratha history needed to prove that Duff was wrong."<sup>9</sup>

Writing his 'The History of the Mahrattas' Duff who was the political agent of the British at Satara, seems to have carried away by the British conquest over the Marathas in 1818 and the failing of the Maratha rule which paved the way for the British conquest. No wonder, in order to serve this purpose, Duff characterized the Marathas as mere 'marauders' who acted as stumbling blocks for the British expansion and imperialist interests in India. His book, therefore, is narrow in scope as it gives merely a detailed account of the acts of wars and intrigues, the factional politics in the Maratha court and the chronological account of who won and lost.

Serving under Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Resident at Poona in 1818, Duff had followed the approach which showed obvious predilections in favour of the British rule in India. One of the evidences which reflect such type of approach is his portrayal of the Marathas including Shivaji as 'treacherous'. As he remarked, "perfidy and want of principle are the strongest features in their character and their successes have perhaps been less owing to their activity and courage than to their artifice and treachery. Their presence of mind, patience and intrepidity are truly surprising since they appear to have no point of honour to fight for, few feeling of generosity or gratitude and little esprit de corps".<sup>10</sup>

Hence, by paying a negligible attention to the socio-economic ramifications of the Maratha dominion, Duff associated himself with the like-minded British historians, namely, William Chaplin, Henry Pottinger, etc. Who, in their objective of providing legitimacy to the British conquest over the local kingdoms of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, depicted the Marathas as 'narrow-minded, rapacious, notorious liars' and so on. Duff's study, however, on the Marathas had always been a reference point for all the subsequent historians who have critiqued Duff's attempt as 'Unauthentic' and 'inadequate' on the ground that his study was mainly based on Marathi 'bakhars' or eulogies by Maratha court's official historians and persian sources like 'Tawarikhs'.

Nevertheless, Duff being aware of all his limitations confessed in his letter to Elphinstone in 1820 that – “Notwithstanding all I have done and all I have chalked out, I am perfectly sensible of my inability in many respects for the task of authorship.” True, leaving aside the context in which Duff undertook his study on the Marathas, the approach within which he framed his views and the objectives he pursued; the pioneering job rendered by Duff in the field of the Maratha history can hardly be denied. He was the first one to take a comprehensive study of the Marathas and it was this very endeavour of Duff which later encouraged the detailed and broader study of the Maratha history in India in the times to come.

Justice M.G. Ranade’s work ‘The Rise of the Maratha power’, was a powerful reply to Duff’s views on the rise and expansion of the Maratha power. He wrote this book in the midst of the 1890s and hence it reflects a complex interplay of the historical interpretations on the one hand and the erstwhile political-social environment on the other. Most importantly his book is a philosophical essay on the identity and character of the Maharashtrian people, for his overriding objective in that time was oriented towards encouraging mutual harmony among the diverse factions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century society. As he himself accepted, “My objective is to present to the English and Indian readers a bird’s eye view of the Maratha confederacy which was the foremost among the native rulers and to present a clear view of the salient features of the Maratha history from the

Indian standpoint aiming to remove many misapprehensions which detract much from the moral interest and the political lessons of the story and above all, to enlist the sympathy of the representatives of the conquering British powers in the fortunes of its worsted rival".<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, driving along with the feeling of patriotism Ranade accepted that his narrative is far away from the 'beaten tracks' which the Maratha history has been subjected to by the earlier writers namely James Duff. Ranade thus sought to spread out some 'moral lessons' which he categorized as- (a) that the rise of the Maratha power was not a mere accident but was a genuine effort on the part of a Hindu nationality to assert its independence and to achieve the formation of a confederacy of states infused with a sense of patriotism and (b) that though this attempt failed, nevertheless, this failure on the part of the Marathas acted as an inspiration in pursuance of unity and fraternity of the Indian people under the British.

Emphasising further on the moral values of his work, Ranade remained averse to the conventional way of looking at the Marathas as mere 'plunderers' or 'cunning' etc., as projected by the writers viz., James Duff etc. and which had no moral significance as he believed. According to him, such a view regarding the Marathas is 'inconsistent with facts' and is 'unintelligible'. Further, in contrast to



Duff's views Ranade opined that the colonial conquests and ascendancy became possible not because of the Marathas being 'treacherous', 'marauders' 'plunderers' etc., but because of the fact that the British were backed up by the 'resolution' and persistence and resources of Britain'. Had the Marathas been free-booters and plunderers, as he observed, they could never have succeeded in building up empires which lasted for generations and which 'permanently altered the political map of the Indian subcontinent'.<sup>12</sup>

Ranade further held the view that unlike other 17<sup>th</sup> century figures like Hyder and Tipu in Mysore, Nizam-ul-mulk at Hyderabad, Shuja-ud-daula in Oudh, Alivardi Khan in Bengal Ranjeet Singh in Punjab etc. the Marathas stand poles apart as it were only they who were inspired by a zeal of nationalism and it was because of this feeling of Maratha nationalism that their power did not perish 'with the individuals who founded it' and they "rose Phoenix like in greater splendour from the very ashes of their apparent ruin".<sup>13</sup>

Hence, in Ranade's opinion the Marathas showed greater 'tenacity' and vitality' which was driven by the sentiment of nationality and distinct from other independent kingdoms coming into existence after Aurangzeb's death. In other words, the foundation of the Maratha power like other kingdoms, was laid on the

common people and the rise of the Maratha powers witnessed the first beginning of, what he called, the process of 'nation –building'.

Hence, trying to explore the roots of unity and cohesion in Maharashtra society back into the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century, Ranade attempted to revive and re-introduce the same inspirational values in the 19<sup>th</sup> century British India. As he himself put it, "The history of the Marathas is the history of the formation of a true Indian nationality, raising its head high above the troubled matters of Mohammadan confusion". It was this force behind, which supported the efforts of the leaders and enabled them to dream, as a possibility, of the establishment of a central Hindu pad-padshahi or empire at Delhi, uniting and controlling all other native powers".<sup>14</sup>

Providing further justification for his book to be looked as a moral inspiration for the 19<sup>th</sup> century Indian people, Ranade drew analogy between the protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe and the 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century Deccan, which experienced according to him, the religious, social and literary revival and reformation. This event he said, brought about people of all castes and class under one umbrella and gave them distinct Maratha identity.

However, while evaluating and assessing both Duff's and Ranade's projection of the Maratha history, two common features can be discerned. Firstly,

that both these scholars looked at the Maratha identity as the point of reference for the justification of their arguments. In other words while James Duff sought to glorify the British conquest over the Marathas, Ranade on the other hand glorified the Maratha leadership and nationalism. For Duff, victory over the Marathas paved the way for the imperial penetration into the Indian subcontinent while for Ranade, Marathas' victory over the local kingdoms and challenge to the Mughal might prepared the ground for the spread of the feeling of the Maratha nationalism which aimed at the expansion and dominance of the Hindu-Pad-Padshahi.

However, it was after 1900 A.D. that the British government permitted to use, for research purposes, the huge stock of the documents relating to the 17th and 18th century Marathas which were captured by the British in 1818. The first piece of research based on these documents came to be published between the years 1917 and 1925 in 13 volumes (ed.) by R.B.wad and in 1928 by G.S.Sardasai, who collected the documents of the Peshwa Daftar or Alienation Office in 45 vols.

However, it was in the 1930s and 40s that the writings on Marathas history took a new turn. The historians of that period added a new dimension to Shivaji and the Maratha identity. For this group of historians, the importance of the Marathas lay in the fact that it was a Hindu resistance against the overbearing and

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oppressive Muslim government, i.e., the Mughal empire. Shivaji thus, came to identified as an ideal Hindu ruler, struggling against the 'foreign' Muslim rule. The best known protagonist of this group was G.S.Sardesai and his study, 'The New History of the Marathas.' The word 'new' in the title of his book subscribed to his belief that "The spectacle of a brave nation, inspired by the soul of one great man and rising against overwhelming despotism, will always speak to the heart from generation to generation".<sup>15</sup>



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However, in his opinion, 'the historical interpretation of the Marathas should not be captivated only by a narrow regional history but rather, the history of the Marathas encompassed within its fold the bits and pieces of the Indian social, political and cultural dimensions as an organic whole.' He also clarified that the personality, attributes and achievements of Shivaji and the later Chatrapatis and the Peshwas left an indelible mark on the Indian history. Projecting the Marathas, thus, as a distinct and foremost of the 'races' inhabiting on Indian soil, Sardesai felt proud to assert that it were only these people called the Marathas who had the courage and vigour to challenge the Mughal rule and set up the independent Maratha self-rule.

Taking further his eulogising projection of the Marathas, Sardesai believed that it was under the political umbrella of the Maratha government that the people



of all classes coalesced together and came to form a united and harmonious Maratha identity - a proposition which was similar to that of Ranade. Furthermore, portraying Shivaji, Bajirao I, Balaji Bajirao, Madhav Rao I, Mahadji Shinde etc. as national heroes, striving to establish the Maratha superemacy, not only in the Deccan but over the whole of Indian territory even surpassing and uprooting the Mughal might, Sardesai endeavoured to bring out the origin of Maratha nationalism right from the time of Shivaji - an approach not much different from that of Ranade.

Though, Sardesai did intense spadework on Marathi sources viz., the state papers, news-reports, diplomatic despatches, legal decisions, diaries, land-grants, official and private correspondence etc., his area of research mainly comprised the political events and focussed less attention on the social, economic and cultural trends of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. Moreover, comparing both Ranade's and Sardesai's approach, it becomes clear that both were infused with the 'nationalist' attitude which got manifested in their works. For, both agreed that under the Marathas, social cohesion and fraternity became possible and different class interest were merged into one universal identity, i.e. the Maratha identity. Also, both agreed that it was under the Marathas that the seeds of nationalism, seeking for independent rule and establishing the Hindu-Pad-Padshai, came to be germinated. Nevertheless, there is a stark difference in their respective

objectives, and that is, the degree and extent of the 'nationalistic' strands which both emphasise upon. It means, that while Ranade looked at the Marathas as infused with the feeling of unity and nationalism, Sardesai seemed to lay greater emphasis on this sense of 'nationalism' which the Marathas, as he claimed, to have possessed, because for Sardesai, Maratha 'nationalism' apart from bringing different sections of society together also aimed at uprooting the Mughal rule. Hence it would not be exaggerating to say that what Sardesai apparently meant for Maratha nationalism was in reality a Hindu nationalism against the Muslim Mughal rule.

However, it was in the decades after independence that there emerged several significant trends in the study of the Maratha history. Under this style of historical writings, Shivaji and the Maratha identity were retreated to regional rather than national symbols. Moreover, as against the earlier trend of writings; portrayal of the Maratha identity as glorious and heroic came to be seen as one among many trends in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and not as a proto-nationalist resistance against the foreigners nor as a Hindu crusade against Islam.

In the last 15 years, however, historians studying pre-colonial Maharashtra have explored quite different themes and trends of conceptualizations concerning the Marathas. Now the focus has shifted away from the political events of courts

and campaigns towards the countryside incorporating the economic and social processes. These studies have, for example, examined the dynamics of state and caste and rural labour relations of the Maratha domain. For instance H.Fukazawa's study on the landed elites and land relations in the rural 18<sup>th</sup> century Maharashtra, Stewart Gordon's work on the nature of conquest, the relations between the state and the local potentates and the process of the Maratha state formation', Frank Perlin's work has focussed on the processes of the 18<sup>th</sup> century state formation, of money use and credit network and rural society. However, it is Andre Wink's voluminous study on the themes of Maratha sovereignty, the inherent relationships that developed between the Maratha Chatrapati and the Peshwas the relationship between the Maratha state and the local rural elites and the pattern of political and economic transactions etc. that a broader understanding of the hitherto inherent aspects of the Maratha history has been made possible.

Wink, however, conceived his concept of the formation of Maratha polity on the sole basis of 'fitna' for which he is often critiqued. It seems that for him the 'fitna', literally meaning sedition or revolt, had a wider connotation. For him it meant forging of alliances which was the normal mechanism of state-formation of the medieval Indian history, and the Islamic east. He believed that, in India political power rarely implied direct territorial control. Also, that conquest was

not merely a military venture but was a process through which the conqueror sought to acquire legitimacy and sovereignty by intervening in the local gentry rights. And it was through fitna that the conqueror tried to maintain a balance between the conflicting interests.

Further, for Wink the term 'Swarajya' as applied by the Maratha sardars and the Peshwas, had its limitations too. The term denoted, according to him, only Maratha political and fiscal claims and was not a term for the 'Maratha homeland'.

The Swarajya did not necessarily imply direct administration nor it was exclusively territorially circumscribed dominion - as he believed. The Marathas were bound to collect the chauth and Sadeshmukhi on behalf of the Mughal empire and send a part of it to the Mughal treasury regularly. Hence, in Wink's assessment the entire gentry rights which the Marathas possessed was an extension of the sovereign power possessed by the Mughal emperor.

To sum up, the varied and chequered trends of writings on the Maratha history of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries have established and dealt with the subject within their own paradigm. Each paradigm so to say, has its own positive aspects as well as some limitations and each has been sought to be 'improved' in all subsequent writings. While on the one hand, Duff has projected the Maratha polity as being 'anarchic' and 'disturbed', Rande's attempt has been to give a



nationalist colour to the rise and expansions of the Marathas. Somewhat similar to Ranade's views is Sardesai's who has over-emphasised on the nationalist approach. The recent readings, however, on the Marathas have downplayed the political narratives in favour of various socio-economic themes not discussed and analysed in earlier studies.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Letters No. 13,14, Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, (hereafter SPD), Vol. 13.
- <sup>2</sup> See Washbrook, D.A., 'Progress and Problems: South Asian Economic and Social History, C. 1720-1860, Modern Asian Studies, 1988.
- <sup>3</sup> See, Leonard Karen, 'The Great Firm Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire', in Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 21, 1979, p. 165.
- <sup>4</sup> Marathas, Marauders and State Formation in the 18th Century India, OUP, 1994. p. 179.
- <sup>5</sup> See, her essay in Indu Banga (ed.), 'Ports and Hinterlands in India, 1700-1950'.
- <sup>6</sup> Medieval Maratha Country, Books & Books, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 227, 230, 231.
- <sup>7</sup> See, their article in Indian Economic and Social History Review, 25, 4, 1988.
- <sup>8</sup> See, his article in MAS, 1982.
- <sup>9</sup> See, Gordon Stewart, The Marathas 1600-1818, Cambridge University Press, Introductory pages.
- <sup>10</sup> Duff J.G., 'History of the Mahrattas', Vol. 2, p. 215.
- <sup>11</sup> Ranade, M.G., 'The Rise of the Maratha Power', Introductory page no. 2, Bombay 1900.
- <sup>12</sup> Ranade, op.cit., p. 8.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., Introductory page 4.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., Chapter 1, p. 8.
- <sup>15</sup> Sardesai, G.S., 'New History of the Marathas', Vol. 1, preface pages.

**CHAPTER – 1**

**FINANCING THE REVENUE  
COLLECTORS**

As has been mentioned in the introductory pages, the present chapter would deal with the contextual setups or conditions which induced the bankers to come into play at the level of the pargana or for that matter the Suba where the Kamavisadars/mamlatdars were posted. In other words it would be a study of the local situations which paved the way for the monetary dealings between the Sahukars or bankers and the Kamavisadar/mamlatdars or revenue collectors. Here there are two important aspects which would be discussed, first is the structural or administrative reasons i.e. the land revenue collecting mechanism of the 18th century Maratha dominion was itself responsible to a large extent for inducing the bankers to come to the fore. It would be proposed, arguably, that the typical Maratha system of advance collection of land revenue from the Kamavisadar/mamlatdars was greatly responsible for the monetary relationship between the Kamavisadar & Sahukar. In this sense, the system of advance collection was one of the most important factors for the growth and expansion of the banking activities, at least at the lower level i.e. at the pargana and suba level of administration of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. In order to support the argument, the chapter would discuss the various nuances relating to the problems and demerits in the revenue collection of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion which provided, as it were, the *raison d'etre* for the system of advance collection of revenue in the Marathe areas.

Related to it is the second aspect which would deal with the exigent factors or abnormal conditions in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha areas namely, recurring famines, crop failures, disturbances by the armies etc. which further aggravated the problems in releasing the revenue and the resultant monetary crisis to the government and the consequent introduction of the system of farming the revenue which further induced the big bankers to undertake the farming.

Taking up the first aspect, its pertinent here to comprehend the flip-side of the revenue collecting mechanism prevalent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the Maratha areas in order to understand the factors which provided the rationale behind the introduction of the system of advance collection of revenue, thus, giving way to the bankers to finance the Kamavisadar/mamlatdars. It is not, however, intended here to present a general description of the land revenue administration and land revenue collecting mechanism, as these details are readily available in vast number of texts. The purpose here, instead, is to bring out the anomalies and complications inherent in the revenue administration which had a bearing on the monetary health of the Marathas.

The most visible complication featured in the revenue collection (though there were different modes of assessment and the revenue was usually collected in cash) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion was the prevalence of unhealthy practices. Although existence of different modes of assessment of

revenue was not a demerit in itself but, the absence of an effective enforcement of checks and balances on revenue officials seems to have cost dearly to the revenue collection. As John Malcolm had vividly noted the nature of revenue collection thus, "...the lands were assessed differently by the Mahratta governments, according to the character of the person who exercised power...."1

In areas around Poona the tankhwa or permanent assessment or fixed sum or *Kamal* (in some parts of the Southern Marathas areas) system was practised. 2 However, until the mid- 18th century no general revision of the tankha settlement was carried out and the old rates continued to be repeated in the revenue documents.3 The second demerit inherent in the tankha or kamal system was that after the land was assessed it was left on the discretion of the Patil of the village whose scope for manipulation with the assessments increased in the 18th century.4 On the other hand, in the Deccan, Gujerat Central India and Nagpur annual assessments were made according to the state of cultivation and taking into account "local constellations of political power"5 Under this system the assessment of the village fluctuated with the increase or decrease of cultivation each year. The third mode of assessments was in the Konkan area where survey of land was made once in seven years.4 Fourthly, if the land was assigned to a Saranjamdar (the practice which was widely prevalent in the 18th century Maratha dominion) for maintaining his military contingents, the collection was done by his own Kamavisadars and the

Saranjamdar was free to settle the Jamabandi or assessment with the Zamindars of his areas and make the collections of the revenues assigned to him and was independent of dakhalgiri or intervention of the subedar of the province in the collection of the revenue.<sup>7</sup>

Such complication inherent in the revenue administration remained one of the basic drawbacks of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha land revenue system. The next aspect relates to the administrative part of the land revenue collection which was more complex and intricate in nature. The antecedents of the Maratha land revenue administration go back to the times of the Adilshahi and Nizamshahi dynasties of Bijapur and Ahmednagar respectively when the areas of modern Maharashtra was divided into Parganas, Sarkars and Subas.<sup>8</sup> During the times of Shivaji however these divisions/classifications came to be termed as Mauja, Tarf and Suba. Under his reign, the officer in charge of a Tarf was called a Havaldar and the head of the Suba was termed as Subedar or Mukhya Deshadhikari.<sup>7</sup> However in the 18<sup>th</sup> century we find traces of liquidation of this well defined revenue structure as the terms tarf, pargana, sarkar and suba came to be interchangeably or indiscriminately used.<sup>10</sup>

Further, the revenue collectors-cum-administrative officials under in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion were termed as Kamavisadars or Mamalatdars or sometimes Vahivatdars who were stationed in pargana.<sup>11</sup> However, there is also the another view which holds that the Mamlatdars held the charge of

bigger divisions, namely the province or the suba.<sup>12</sup> and that is why sometimes, the Mamlatdars in their capacities as the principal collector of government's revenue of the province were designated as Subedars.<sup>13</sup> moreover, except the three provinces of Khandesh, Gujrat and the Karnataka, the Mamlatdar was directly responsible to the central government whereas in these three provinces he held his office under an official termed Sarsubedar.<sup>14</sup> The complexities of the revenue administration of the Marathas is further observed when one finds a lack of uniformity of the powers and functions of the Sarsubedars. While in the Karnataka he was responsible for the revenue collection and appointed his own Mamlatdars whereas in Khandesh (where his subordinate was the Mamlatdar) he was only a general superintendent and the Mamlatdar did not submit the revenue collection to him but directly to the government.<sup>15</sup> As regards the salaries of these revenue collectors is concerned here again an amorphous scale of payment is found and it varied with the importance of the districts under their charge.<sup>16</sup>

To a large extent such demerits in the land revenue administration in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion arose due to the absence of a centralised administrative structure prevalent under Shivaji's regime. While under Shivaji, local landed elites such as the zamindars, deshmukhs, deshpandes etc. were kept under strong vigilance of the central monarchy coupled with an efficient system of checks and balances at the pargana or taraf level. But after his death and especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the centralised structure of the 17th century



Maratha empire was gradually reduced to, what is commonly christened, a 'confederacy', featuring warring interests and intrigues. It was under such liquidated structure (in the whole course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) that encouraged corrupt practices and left ample scope for the officials and landed elites to play with the system as discussed earlier.

The same plight in the structural arrangements is observed in the Saranjam system which would be discussed in the next Chapter. Here, while discussing the weak aspects of the 18th century land revenue administration under the Marathas, we come across widely prevalent corrupt practices of the Kamavisadars or the Mamlatdars who in collusion with the local officers and elites, gave a blow to the system of checks and balances at the lower level of administration. Mountstuart Elphinstone had given a classic description of the deformities cropped up in the revenue administration arising out of the corrupt practices of the revenue collectors. To quote him, "every Mamlatdar on his appointment or at the commencement of the year received from the government an estimate of the revenue (called beheda) of his district with a list of all the authorized charges including pensions, religious expenses, salaries etc. It was his duty to send in the balance to government and a proportion of it, generally half, was paid immediately, the rest was paid by instalments, but always in advance. The Mamlatdar then proceeded to his district and moved about to superintend his offices and to redress grievances ; he kept a Vakil at Poona to receive all orders and answer all complaints... At the end of the year, the

Mamlatdar presented his accounts of the collection confirmed by the account signed by the zamindars, and the receipts and expenditures in his own office, drawn up by the Furnavees (read Fadnis) and signed by the other Durruckdars (read Darakdars). These were carefully revised, and, as from the mode of payment in advance there was generally a balance in favour of the Mamlatdar, all unauthorised charges were struck out of it, and often reductions were made on account of supposed embezzlements, without much proof or investigation. The admitted balance was, carried on in account from year to year, sometimes compromised by partial payments, by grants of annuities etc., but was seldom fully paid. On the other hand, all balances due to the government were exacted ; though the Mamlatdar was not bound to pay the sum inserted in his estimate, if the receipts fell short of it .....Though in this adjustment of accounts, all advantages appear to be on the side of the government, yet the Mamlatdars do not appear to have .... suffered much in reality. They had many ways of making money, which eluded the utmost researches of the government, especially as they could generally find means to engage the zamindars and Darakdars on their side. The sources of their profit were concealment of receipts (especially fees, fines and other undefined collections), false charges for remission, false musters, non-payment of pensions and other frauds in expenditure".<sup>17</sup>

Another source of their huge profits accruing from the malpractices was, as Elphinstone lets us know, "an extra assessment above the revenue,

called Sauder warried Puttee which was levied to pay expenses of the district not provided for by government, and naturally afforded a great deal for speculation; one of the chief of these expenses was called Durbar Kharch or 'untust'. This was originally applied secretly to bribe the ministers and auditors. By degrees their bribes became established fees and the account was audited like the rest; but as bribes were still required, another increase of collection took place for this purpose; and as the auditors and accountants did not search minutely into these delicate transactions, the Mamlatdar generally collected much more for himself, than he did for his patrons... it was chiefly the government that suffered by these frauds".<sup>18</sup>

John Malcolm had also noted in the Central Maratha territories that "the collector ..secures his office for years by being able to prove fabricated account in the office of the Furnavese, or by having given a bribe to a minister. Their (collectors) advantage lies in the power of men under them to satisfy their comparatively light personal claims, even to the prejudice of those of the government, against which they, in fact, often combine".<sup>19</sup>

Another major factor that undercut the very purpose of the system of kamavisadar or mamlatdars in the 18th century Maratha dominion was the practice of hereditary occupancy of the office. While in Shivaji's time, these revenue collectors were appointed for short term and were subject to frequent transfer from one district to another, to keep them in check. Whereas in the

18th century it became a normal practice that the mamlatdar came to occupy his office in the same area for the period, sometimes ranging from 30 to 40 years and after his death even his son succeeded him',<sup>20</sup> which left considerable scope for mamlatdars to misuse his office.

These loopholes and demerits of the revenue administration in the 18th century Maratha dominion cost dearly to the revenue collection. Added to such demerits of the revenue administration, it was the normal practice that within a territorial boundary of a subedar, there existed a number of kamavisadars, some appointed directly by and accountable to the Peshwas while some appointed by and accountable to the saranjamdars. And the collections made by those kamavisadars appointed by their saranjamdars fell outside the responsibilities of the subedar.<sup>20</sup> Hence, in a suba, there often existed a large number of kamavisadars working either for the Poona government or for the saranjamdars. Moreover, this particular aspect of the revenue administration resulted in the irregular revenue collection and distribution which could not be thoroughly plugged through out the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion.

Hitherto, we have been discussing the structural anomalies inherent in the revenue administration of the Maratha territories. Now the discussion switches over to, as pointed out earlier, the exigent factors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion namely, famines, droughts and disturbances of the armies which further not only made revenue collection inadequate but difficult also.

At this point, it is pertinent to give Gordon's assessment of the revenue administration as he remarks, "...the kamavisadars made a contract with the village headman on the basis of the previous year's crops and data furnished by the central secretariat on allowable expenses and disbursements. A document stating the amount to be collected, signed by the headman and by the pargana officials was sent to Poona. Through the year, revenue was brought to a regional treasury and a receipt given. However, there were several recurring situations which made this contract impossible to fulfill." <sup>22</sup> Gordon, further, comes out openly confessing that, "the documents have dozens of creative reasons why cultivators could not pay including plant disease, war, drought, robbery and so on".<sup>22</sup>

Certainly, there are several instances of this sort which seems to have caused recurrent irregularities in the revenue collection process. Following are cited some of these chosen instances in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion, most of whom are recorded in the documents in the form of correspondence letters. To begin with, a letter belonging to the year A.D. 1741-42 says, "the Jagirdar of the village Khanapur and Siroli Khord in the Junnar province reported that the villages owing to the droughts and the inroads of the armies had been deserted".<sup>23</sup>

Another letter belonging to the year A.D. 1742-43 states, "the Patels and ryots of the pargana Bijagad in the Khandesh province represented to the

Peshwa that owing to the oppression of the officers, the ryots had been reduced to poverty and had absconded.”<sup>25</sup>

Further, a letter belonging to the year A.D. 1747-48 mentioned that, “the parganas of Bakvada and Jalalabad in the Sarkar of Khargaon were inflicted with a terrible famine that year and Ramchandra Ballal who was entrusted this sarkar reported that though he gave a large amount of tagai, several inhabitants had succumbed to the ill-effects of the famine and that the amounts obtained by him as loan from the bankers remained outstanding.”<sup>26</sup>

Another instance belonging to the year 1751-52 lets us know that, “in the village of Talegaon in the Junnar province, that year some officials came there and destroyed the crops and houses of the villages.”<sup>27</sup>

Further, another letter dated 1763-64 notes that, “Shamrao Ambaji, the Mamlatdar of Wai requests permission to remit arrears of revenue due from ryots as the province had been plundered and had suffered much loss in the preceding year. In return, the government sent a reply to him stating that though he had authority to grant what remissions he deemed necessary but he should keep in mind the embarrassed circumstances of the government.”<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, in the year 1763-64, as a letter informs, “the village of Alandi in tarf Chakan of prant Junnar had been plundered by the army and had

become desolate. A Kowl (meaning assurance deed or document of agreement) therefore, granting exemption from revenue for two years was issued to induce the cultivators to return.”<sup>29</sup>

Further a letter dated 1763-64 noted that, “an advance of revenue had been taken by government in the preceding year from Hari Damodar, mamlatdar of prant Junnar. The province was, however, subsequently invaded by the Nawab Nizam Ali and was plundered. Sufficient revenue could not, therefore, be realised to liquidate the advance. The government being in need of money, a further advance was taken from the mamlatdar at rupee one percent per mensem on the following terms that (a) the kamavis would not be transferred to another person for five years and (b) that the Kowl of remission would be issued in regard to the villages which were found to have suffered from the war.”<sup>30</sup>

Further in the year 1773-74 a letter mentioned that, “the village of Khojewadi suffered oppression at the hands of the holder of the Zila Amal and others and became, consequently, desolate. A Kowl was subsequently granted for five years.”<sup>31</sup>

In the same year, it was recorded that, “Gopalrao Bhagwant, the kamavisadar of pargana Indapur represented that owing to the drought, the Kharif and the Rabi crops had failed. He was directed by the government to

visit the villages and make a field to field inspection, and to suspend the collection of the revenue where the crops had failed. It was also ordered that if the careful inspection was made much loss of revenue could be saved".<sup>32</sup>

Another record of the year 1776-77 noted that, "the kamavisadars in the former years had settled the revenue of the village Rajapur, in paragana Wan, without taking into account the extent of cultivation thereof and owing to this cause the village was reduced to poverty".<sup>33</sup>

The following instance gives a glimpse of the overbearing nature of the revenue collectors as revealed through a letter dated 1777-78 that, "the zamindars of the tarfs Nagothne, Ashtmi and Shimal in the taluka Avachitgadhad represented that owing to the oppression of the mamlatdars of government and the mamlatdar of the Sudhagadkar, the ryats had left their villages and the country had suffered".<sup>34</sup>

Another instance of the year 1782-83 noted that, "the term of the 5 year settlement of revenue in the taluka Vijaydurga had expired in 1777-78. No fresh inspection of land and settlement of revenue was however made, though asked for by the ryats and the old rates continued to be levied".<sup>35</sup>

In the year 1784-85, "the Patils of taluka Shivner and the zamindars being dissatisfied moved to the village Alem. The kamavisadar sent his karkuns to get them back. The zamindars and Patils stated their grievances that



since crops had failed owing to want of rain, the jamabandi (assessment of revenue) must be fixed after careful inspection and second that a customary haks of the zamindars should be paid".<sup>36</sup>

One letter of the year 1779-80 informs that, "the kamavisadar of prant Kalyan Bhivandi wrote to the Sarsuba in Saman Sabain that the revenue fixed after inspection could not be realised and asked that remissions be granted. His request was accepted".<sup>37</sup>

The following instance presents a case of peasants' refusal to pay revenue to the government, owing to perhaps, undue exactions by the local officials. As a letter mentions that "in the year 1784-85 the villager of mauja Kurakwade in the taraf Chikan in the pargana Nandurbar revolted and refused to pay the government's revenue. Wamnaji Hari, the kamavisadar of Tukoji Holkar, proceeded to quell the revolt, but the villagers took to arms and repulsed him bare handed causing loss of revenue to the government."<sup>38</sup>

Another letter dated 1787-88 informs that an official, "Krishnarao Gangadhar reported to the government that there was a scarcity of rain in the pargana Nasik that year and the Brahmins were engaged in invoking the deity for rain. Grains have become very dear and the ryats are facing tough times".<sup>39</sup>

A similar incident occurred in the year 1792-93. As a letter informs that, “the land of the mauja Karje in the taluka Satara was assessed at Rs. 10 per bigha. The crops, however, failed in this year owing to scarcity of water and consequently remission was ordered to be granted as usual”.<sup>40</sup>

Again in the year 1793-94, “some of the ryats of the pargana Newase left their homes due to scarcity and went to Khandesh and Berar. Those who remained lost their cattle. The Patils of several villages of this area, therefore, came to Poona and requested that Kowls be granted reducing the assessment. The concessions thus asked for was granted by the government”.<sup>41</sup>

Sometimes, it was also the case that owing to the military expeditions of the Peshwas or the sardars themselves, crops were damaged and subsequently a remission of revenue had to be granted. One instance of this sort is recorded in a letter dated 1765-66 which notes that, “the Peshwa having encamped at Chikhali in the tarf chakan of the prant Junnar in the field of Ranoji Shelka, the crops were damaged. Orders were, therefore, issued to remit the assessment on the field”.<sup>42</sup>

Another instance is of the year 1779-80 which informs that, “Ghanshyam Trimbak apprised the government that owing to the movements of the army of Bapuji Holkar, Tukoji Holkar and Mahadji Scindia in the pargana Ner, the pargana was pillaged and was lying desolate and the ryats had fled”.<sup>43</sup>

Cumulatively, taking both the structural factors as well as the abnormal conditions, as discussed above, relating to the revenue administration and collection of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion, one crucial aspect becomes clear — that such demerits inherent in the revenue administration coupled with the abnormal conditions, certainly, led to the revenue loss to the government which was already reeling under cash crunch. It is in this context that the rationale behind the existence of the system of advance collection of revenue in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion should be viewed. Gripped with the problems in revenue administration and collections in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (as discussed in the foregone pages) the best way to ensure a regular flow of revenue as well as to keep the revenue collectors in check was to demand a part of the revenue in advance from the kamavisadars.<sup>44</sup> While in the territories of the Peshwas, the kamavis system and the practice of taking revenue in advance was introduced in the 1730s,<sup>44</sup> in the territories of the Shindes and the Holkars, the introduction of this system of advance collection was a later development of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>46</sup>

Related to it is the aspect that since the kamavisadars salary was not proportional to the revenue actually realised from his areas, any increase, therefore, in the revenue due to the extra efforts put in by him did not mean an increase in his salary.<sup>47</sup> It was, perhaps, due to this lack of incentive attached to his job that the kamavisadar came to play with the revenue collection. (by

misusing his enormous responsibilities and authorities ranging from reviewing all religious grants in his areas of jurisdiction, surveying the land, settlement of the taxes of a village jointly with the patils, devising means and methods for improving agriculture, regulating market-towns, extracting the transit duties to adjudicating both the civil and criminal disputes)<sup>47</sup> and thus amass large fortunes in collusion with the local officials (as discussed earlier).

Further, the kamavisadar used to remit the advance revenue not through his personal income but by taking resort to the bankers. The modus operandi was such that the kamavisadar/mamlatdar at the time of his appointment entered into a contract with the government for remitting in part or the whole of the estimated (jama) revenue of his territory in advance termed as rasad.<sup>49</sup> As a matter of fact, this amount (rasad) which varied from one third to one half of the contract, was the money loaned by the kamavisadar/mamlatdar to the government. The amount advanced by the kamavisadar was tagged with a rate of interest ranging from one percent to two percent per month which the government was obliged to pay back in the form of allowing the agreed amount to be recovered from the district/area which the kamavisadar administered. The interest paid by the government on the advanced was rated according to the scheduled month in which it was advanced by the kamavisadar. In the contract moreover, the salary of the troops, officials and servants maintained by the kamavisadar/mamlatdar was guranted by the government. However, the most

crucial aspect of this arrangements was that the government even guaranteed the repayment of advances—which included both the principal as well as the interest — if either the district/area of the kamavisadar/mamlatdar was found ungovernable or the amount advanced remained uncollected during the revenue year.<sup>50</sup> And as has been shown in the foregone pages that the revenue collection and remittance had had to face a number of irregularities arising out of the structural and exigent factors. The overall process of revenue estimation, collection as well as remittance, therefore, transformed into a circular affair in which the government due to inadequate revenue arising out of the inefficiency and demerits in revenue collection and remittance, could hardly have afforded to do away with the system of advance collection of revenue, (as the regular source of ready cash) while at the lower level the kamavisadar/mamlatdar in order to advance the 'rasad' amount, in part or in whole, often looked out for instant money. The ultimate loser in this sense, appears to be the government which kept on taking loan or rasad and returning the amount with interest to the kamavisadar, by allowing to recover the amount from the jurisdiction of the kamavisadar. However, in most of the cases as would be discussed later, the bankers were handed over the mamlat or revenue collecting rights to recover their loan given for the purpose of rasad. For instance in the central Marathas territories of Holkars, Shindes and Bhonsles, the banker who advanced the rasad amount to the kamavisadars were repaid in the form of mamlat rights i.e. an assignment for the collection of revenue of the districts.<sup>51</sup> On the other

hand, in the areas of Gujrat, when the Patils borrowed money from a banker, the latter mortgaged a small part of the village lands on condition of retaining it as revenue-free land (known as Pasaetun)<sup>52</sup> How much importance the government accorded to this practice of advance collection of revenue is amply borne out of the following instances.

As a letter dated 1762-62 noted that, “some part of Satara was given out in Kamavis to Visaji Mahadeo who was directed to advance Rs.10,000/- to government at an interest of Rs.1-4% and to recover the amount from the revenues of the Mahals. These orders were, however, subsequently cancelled and another kamavisadar was appointed because Visaji was unable to pay the agreed amount.<sup>53</sup>

It is in this contextual setup, therefore, that the penetration of bankers in the revenue administration must be viewed. The very existence of the practice of advance collection of revenue combined with guaranteed repayment made the banking business too lucrative. Since the advance payment was a guaranteed loan, with interest, given by the kamavisadar to the government, the Sahukars always aspired to get into the revenue financing business. The advance payment of revenue was made available by the local bankers or sahukars who also arranged for its remittance in the form of ‘hundi’ (bills of exchange) either to the kamavisadar/mamlatdar or directly to the treasury at Poona where it was converted into cash.<sup>54</sup>

Another another area of the land revenue structure were the banking communities' participation can be observed especially in the later half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion was the system of revenue farming. The widespread practice of revenue farming, especially in the later half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was the direct fall out of the cash shortages and the problems in the land revenue collection in the Maratha domain. This system of farming of land revenue and custom duties (termed locally as Makta, Ijara, Gutka and in the Konkan areas Khoti), had spread through out the region comprising Karnataka, Deccan and Central India.<sup>55</sup> In addition to ensure regularization in the collection of the land revenue the Marathas resorted to the farming system for another purpose too, i.e.; sometimes the Patil rights of a village which was ravaged by natural disasters were farmed out, in most cases to big bankers, to get the village re-populated and to restore agriculture.<sup>56</sup>

Generally, the farmers of revenue, specially in the central Indian territories of the Shindes and the Holkars, belonged to the banking community. As Malcolm observed that, 'the lands of the Mahratta princes are usually rented; and as many of the renters are either bankers, or men supported that class, they have acquired, and maintain an influence both in the councils of states, and the local administration of the provinces, that gives them great power'.<sup>57</sup> These bankers, as Malcolm had observed, held the farming for long period spanning upto even 30 years.<sup>58</sup>

However, opportunities and privileges of this sort would further be taken up, inter alia, in the second and third chapter. For now, to sum up, it has been shown how the bankers formed a main prop of the revenue administration. The whole process of revenue collection and remittance along with revenue farming, posed as major incentives for these bankers to come into play at the lower level of revenue administration i.e. at the pargana and the suba level, proving thus, to be a major support base for the whole administration.



## NOTES

1. Malcolm John's, " A Memoir of Central India including Malwa" v/ol-II, Sagar Publications New Delhi 1970 P.P. 29. Fukazawa also believes that "the land revenue, whether tax or rent, was as a rule assessed and levied in cash on different soils and different crops after a very complicated process which makes it very difficult to estimate the probable proportion of revenue in the produce of the soil", in The Cambridge Economic History of India Vol.I., P. 257.
2. See Wink Andre book "Land and Sovereignty... p. 280."
3. Ibid., pp. 272 , 277.
4. Ibid., p. 290
5. Wink, op. cit, pp. 280 - 281
6. Ibid .
7. Ibid pp. 281, 329-330.
8. See Sen S.N., "Administrative system of the Marathas," K.P.Bagchi and Co., third edition, Calcutta, 1976, pp. 152.
9. Ibid
10. See Chapekar N.G., "Peshwaichya Saavaleet" Poona 1937, pp. 10 – 12, S.N.Sen also corroborates it in op. cit., p. 152.
11. Mahajan T.T., "Maratha Administration in the 18<sup>th</sup> century", Common wealth publishers, New Delhi, 1990, p. 114.
12. For instances Wink op.cit in p. 298 and Sen op.cit in p. 152, Mountstuart Elphinstone in his "Territories Conquered from the Paishwa: A Report", Oriental Publishers Delhi 1973, also noted it in p. 31. Elphinstone however viewed the

Mamlatdars as in charge of a large district and not of province as Wink has argued. Hence there appears a lack of consensus among scholars regarding the exact jurisdictions of the Mamlatdars.

13. As Wink has argued in op. cit., p. 298.
14. See Elphinstone, op.cit p. 31
15. Ibid
16. Elphinstone noted it in op.cit., p. 31, Sen also corroborates it in op.cit., p. 152-153.
17. Elphinstone, op.cit., pp. 32-33
18. Ibid.
19. Malcolm John, op. Cit pp 51-52. Even Sen in op.cit., p. 158 says that antast or bribe became a regular and ordinary item in the revenue accounts of the kamavisadars. Chapekar also, op. cit pp. 17-18 talks about how the money i.e. karkuni which was used as payment to the clerks came increasingly to be misused as bribe.
20. Sen, op.cit pp. 158-159.
21. Wink, op. cit p. 309
22. See, Gordon Stewart, "Marathas, Marauders and State Formation in 18<sup>th</sup> century India." OUP, 1994 pp. 101-102
23. Ibid ., pp. 148.
24. Chosen from the 'Selections from the Satara Rajas' and the Peshwas' Diaries' (hereafter SSRPD) (eds.) Wad and Parasnis, Vol-III, letter no.327 part 1.
25. Ibid, letter no.329
26. Ibid letter no.362
27. Ibid letters no.390 and 395

28. See, SSRPD, Vol.VII part-II, letter no.422, p. 14
29. Ibid, letters no.429, 430, pp. 18-19
30. Ibid letter no.445 p. 33
31. See, SSRPD, Vol.-VI, Part-II, letter no.709, p. 215
32. Ibid., letter no. 722, p.230.
33. Ibid., letter no. 714, p. 220.
34. Ibid., letter no. 716, p. 223.
35. Ibid., letter no. 718, p. 226.
36. Ibid., letter no. 719, p. 227
37. Ibid., letter no. 726, p. 234.
38. Ibid., letter no. 731, p. 238-39.
39. Ibid., letter no. 732, p. 239.
40. Ibid., letter no. 721, p. 229.
41. Ibid., letter no. 735, p. 241. Some of these recurring instances of scarcity of rain resulting in the damages to the crops and the subsequent revenue loss in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century were caused, as Richard Grove's study has shown, due to a worldwide climatic phenomenon of El Nino roughly between the years 1788 to 1793. In India, as his study shows, this climatic havoc was mainly felt in the Deccan, Madras Presidency and the Godavari Delta, causing irredeemable damages and leaving a vast stretch of areas depopulated. See his chapter titled, "The East India Company, the Raj and the El Nino" p. 309 in "Nature and the Orient: The Environmental History of the South and South East Asia" (eds. ) Richard Grove, Vineeta Damodaran and Satpal Sangwan, OUP, 1998.

42. SSRPD, Vol VII, Part II, letter no. 424, p. 15.
43. SSRPD, Vol. VI, Part II, letter no. 734, p. 240.
44. Wink also noted that the system of taking in advance a portion or the whole of the expected revenue (rasad) of the district served not only as a cautionnement but also as a means to supply a government hard-pressed for funds, in 'Land and Sovereignty' pp. 301 and 333.
45. See Gordon S, "Marathas, Marauders....", pp. 38-39.
46. See Malcolm, "A Memoir..." p. 50.
47. Wink, op. cit, p. 353.
48. Gordon, op. cit. p. 141, also in Sen, "Administrative System...", p. 154.
49. Gordon, op. cit., p.40, Wink op. cit. p. 333 and Kadam .V. S., "Maratha Confederacy: A study in its origin and development" 1993, p. 59.
50. Gordon, op. cit, pp. 40,44, 46 and 56 also see Wink op. cit p. 353.
51. As Malcolm had observed in his, 'A Memoir ....', p. 50.
52. See, Wink, op.cit., p. 35.
53. SSRPD, Vol-VII, Part-II, letter no.437
54. For the network of hundi transactions there are various instances. For instance, the dealings of the Vaidya bankers in the hundis are available in VDNK Part-V letter no.V, letter no.VI dated Dec. 6, 1754 and letter no.I dated March 18, 1755. The bankers even maintained a detailed accounts of the deposits of rasad amounts from different corners of the Maratha areas. For instance see Tulshibagwales' and Kalyan Subedars' accounts in "Peshwaichyaa Saavaleet" , by Chapekar, pp. 32-33, and 24-25. Also see Kulkarni, "Banking in the ...." , and Malcom, op.cit p.50

55. Wink, op. cit p. 344, both Wink (pp.339-40, 341) and Kadam op.cit p. 64, hold the view that revenue farming was a follow up of the difficulties in realizing revenue as well as cash shortages. Wink even goes to the extent of concluding that, “the cash shortages of the government could become so acute that regulation of the collections of land revenue had to be relaxed to obtained credit and that thus it had to throw the financial side of administration and agrarian development into the hands of private entrepreneurs” p. 334.
56. For this view see Wink, op.cit, pp. 340-41 and 347
57. See, Malcom’s “A Memoir...”, pp. 30 and 38.
58. Ibid., p. 40

## **CHAPTER – 2**

### **FINANCING THE MARATHA LEADERS**

In the preceding chapter, the various aspects of the land revenue mechanism and the system of advance collection of revenue were discussed that made the money-lending/banking a lucrative business at the level of the Kamavisadarss/Mamlatdars, and which was a major factor for the expansion of the money-lending/banking network in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. In the present chapter, it would be shown as to how money-lending became a viable business at the upper level i.e. at the level of the Peshwas, the Chatrapati and the Maratha Sardars during the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In other words, the present chapter would study those causative factors which compelled, as it were, the Peshwas and the Maratha leaders to enter into financial dealings with the money-lenders and it were precisely these causative factors which facilitated the expansion of the money-lending/banking network in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. Hence, the factors which, on the one hand, deprived the Peshwas and the Sardars of adequate income were, on the other hand, the same factors providing opportunities for the money-lending/banking families to come into play. In addition, a brief description about the money-lending/banking families would also be given in the end of the chapter.

To begin with, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha history presents a classic example of how on the one hand, the economic needs of a state moulds the politico-administrative set up while on the other hand, how the nature of political set up affects the economic health of the state. The base of the 18<sup>th</sup>

century Maratha military cum administrative set up lay in the Saranjam system. This particular system of Saranjam acted as one of the most potent factors in integrating new territories into the Maratha domain throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was for the first time, Rajaram, who after succeeding the deceased Sambhaji in 1689, adopted the Saranjam system, i.e., assignment of land revenue to a person for military service in lieu of cash salary.<sup>1</sup> However, it was during the reign of the Chatrapati Shahu that the Saranjam system came to be fully crystallised. According to a 'Farman' of the Mughal emperor of the year 1719, the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath was granted the right to collect Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six Mughal Subas of the Deccan viz. Aurangabad, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Hyderabad and Khandesh<sup>2</sup>. However, after getting the Farman, the Peshwa faced twin problems relating to (a) the mechanism to realize these dues i.e. Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from these areas and (b) winning over the Maratha chiefs and Sardars on his side so as to keep the Swarajya of Shivaji intact. As a solution to both these problems, Balaji Vishwanath assigned large parts of the Deccan to his ministers, leaders and his allies<sup>3</sup>. For this, he kept the areas of Khandesh and parts of Balaghat for himself to realize the dues, while he assigned Gujarat to the Senapati Dabhade, parts of Gondwana and Berar to Kanhoji Bhonsle, Aurangabad to the Sarlaskar, the Karnatak to Fattah Singh Bhonsle and Hyderabad and Bidar to the Pratinidhi<sup>4</sup>. These Maratha leaders were given the right to collect Chauth and Sardeshmukhi and in lieu of cash salary, were authorized to keep a stipulated amount and remit the rest to the Poona government annually. However, within



the areas of their jurisdictions, these Sardars were the de facto rulers<sup>5</sup>.

Later in the 1720s after the conquest of Malwa<sup>6</sup> his son i.e. the Peshwa Bajirao assigned the western half of Malwa i.e. Ujjain to the Shindes, Indore to the Holkars and Dhar and Dewas to the Pawars as Saranjams<sup>7</sup>. According to a settlement, 'Out of the revenues of the newly acquired territories, 31% was to be paid to the royal treasury. 30% of the remaining was a share of each of Shinde and Holkar and 9% of Pawar'. But this settlement could not be materialized in later times<sup>8</sup>. Besides other leaders viz. the Bhonsles of Nagpur, the Dabhades and the Gaikwads of Gujarat etc., were also assigned the Saranjam of some territory in lieu of cash salary. Following is the list of some more Saranjamdars of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>9</sup>.

<b>NAME OF SARANJAMDARS</b>	<b>VALUE IN RUPEES</b>
Malhar Rao Holkar	95 lacs
Anand Rao Pawar	45 lacs
Chintaman Pandurang Patwardhan	11 lacs
Gangadhar Govind Patwardhan	6.5 lacs
Raghuji Bhonsle	1 crore
Govind Rao Gaikwad	72 lacs
Pratinidhi	14 lacs
Nana Fadnavis	4.5 lacs
Raste	21 lacs
Purandare	2.32 lacs

Thus, a large territorial portion of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion came to be parcelled out in Saranjam. According to an estimate, belonging to

the year 1811-12 A.D., there existed no less than 60 Saranjamdars excluding the dominant ones viz. Shindes, Holkars and the Pawars<sup>10</sup>. Altogether, this system of Saranjam in the 18<sup>th</sup> century effected a loosely tied and decentralized political set up or sometimes christened as 'a confederacy', in which the Saranjam holders were expected to maintain a stipulated number of force (though the size or number of force differed with different Saranjamdars) which was dispatched to assist the Peshwa in times of war or expeditions. However, the subject dealing with the defence of his territory and maintenance of law and order lay completely within the jurisdiction of the Saranjamdars<sup>11</sup>. The Saranjam assignments of land revenue and other incomes in the form of tributes, custom duties, etc.,<sup>12</sup> were subject to Jama or estimation and the rest had to be remitted to the Poona government<sup>13</sup>. For the collections of revenues and other dues, the Saranjamdars appointed their own Kamavisadarss. Moreover, it was also a common feature that the big Saranjamdars, like Holkars, Shindes, etc. also had a number of sub-assignees within their territories,<sup>14</sup> and some of whom held their Saranjams directly from the Peshwas.<sup>15</sup>

Apart from the dues mentioned above, other exactions namely Sayar, Mulukhgiri, Ghasdana and Nazar were also to be shared between the Poona government and the various Sardars. It was this very framework of collection and sharing of varieties of dues and division of authority between the Peshwas and the Sardars, that remained as the hallmark of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha Saranjam system.

However, in reality, 'the vast dominions of the Maratha Sardars brought them closer to patrimonial sovereigns than to mere assignment holders'<sup>16</sup>. Here, an analogy between the 'Iqta' system of the Delhi Sultanate and the Saranjam system of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion can be drawn where the assignment holders were not the Chatrapati's servants but claimed to be *primus inter pares* i.e. first among equals<sup>17</sup>. Barring the short span of Balaji Bajirao, who tried a little to keep a greater check on these Sardars by maintaining a strong army, the balance of power remained, increasingly, tilted towards the Sardars in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Although officials like Chitnis (in charge of correspondence), the Fadnis (the accountant) and the Potnis (the head of the treasury) were appointed by the government or Huzoor at Poona and stationed under various Sardars to keep a check on them, but in fact, they could not discharge their functions well.<sup>18</sup> Under these conditions, in which the Sardars possessed enormous resources and military strength, they could hardly be controlled by means of a few officials appointed by the Huzoor at Poona<sup>19</sup>.

Secondly, while during Chatrapati Shahu's reign, or more specifically till 1735, the Saranjam was given for a year and was subject to transfer from one person to another<sup>20</sup>. Further, while Saranjam was assigned for military service, any lapse in imparting the service would tantamount to confiscation of the Saranjam during Shahu's reign. However, after his demise, the Saranjam not only became hereditary but the Peshwas often found it difficult to confiscate the Saranjams as the execution of the confiscation depended, often,

upon comparative military strength<sup>21</sup>. In addition, these Saranjamdars and most notably, the Pawars, the Holkars, Shindes, Gaikwads and the Bhonsles not only appointed their own provincial governors or Subedars but also the revenue collectors or Kamavisadars within their own territory<sup>22</sup>, with a little interference of the Poona government.<sup>23</sup> Further, it became a natural propensity on the part of these Sardars that they came to treat their Saranjams as their personal and independent demesne.<sup>24</sup> This was further aggravated by the fact that the reins of real power at Poona kept shifting the hands in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After the death of the Chatrapati Shahu, the power transferred from Satara to the Peshwas at Poona who became the de facto executives and the power to assign Saranjams came to be made not by the Chatrapati but by the Peshwas. Even after the death of the Peshwa Madhav Rao in A. D. 1772 the de facto power moved into the hands of the managers or 'Karbhari' and again it transferred into the hands of the Fadnis<sup>25</sup>. As a natural corollary to such a system, the relationship among the Maratha Sardars, the Chatrapati and the Peshwas often remained hostile in nature,<sup>26</sup> partly due to the weak governance of Poona and largely due to the financial interests. We come across various instances in the long span of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which elucidate this facet of the Maratha dominion. For instance, the conflicts between Trimbak Rao Dabhade of Gujarat and the Peshwa Bajirao I, between Damaji Gaikwad and the Peshwa, the antagonism between the Shindes and the Holkars, the differences between Manaji and Sambhaji Angre, conflicts between Govind Rao and Fattah Singh Gaikwad and the hostility between Sabaji and Mudhoji

Bhonsle are all but glimpses of such aspects of relationships<sup>27</sup>.

Thirdly, all these facets of the politico-administrative set ups were further aggravated by a very complex system of sharing the income between the Saranjamdars, the Peshwas and the Chatrapati. The chief dues/exactions shared by the Chatrapati, the Peshwas and the Maratha Sardars were the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, which were charged from the invaded territory. Theoretically, the 'babati' was the 25% of the Chauth exclusively reserved for the Chatrapati. Another 6% of the Chauth called 'Sahotra' was given to the 'Pant Sachiv' and the other 3% of the Chauth called 'Nadgauda' was distributed to any person the Chatrapati liked. The rest i.e. 66% of the Chauth called 'Mokasa' was partitioned among the Sardars and the Peshwas for maintaining troops<sup>28</sup>. Moreover, if any part of the foreign land paying Chauth and Sardeshmukhi was annexed into the dominion, the remaining three fourth of the revenue (after deducting one fourth for the Chauth) was not termed as Chauth but as 'Jagir' and was recognised as a perquisite of the Maratha Sardar/s who had conquered the region<sup>29</sup>. Such a mechanism of revenue sharing, in which 66 per cent of the collection was appropriated by the Saranjamdars and only 25 per cent was the Chatrapati's share, remained prone to internal conflicts more so in the absence of an effective control over the disbursement of such dues.<sup>30</sup> Further, as a consequence of such a complex and weak method of revenue sharing arrangement, different agents claimed different shares over the same area. For instance, one agent claimed the Sahotra, the other Mokasa, while the third claimed some percentage of Jagir, thus leading to increasing exactions from the

local people.<sup>31</sup> However, the most important consequence, though detrimental to the whole Maratha economy, was that the sharing of the Mokasa and other dues always remained a bone of contention among the trio i.e. the Sardars, the Chatrapati and the Peshwas<sup>32</sup>.

Within such politico-military framework of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Marathas, the sharing of dues often tilted in favour of superior military power - wielders<sup>33</sup>. Though, however, sometimes in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, ideas such as Hindu Padpad Shahi and Maharashtra Dharma came to have surfaced and applied and the Maratha leaders even joined together on some occasions, for instance, in the battle against Mysore, the English, the Nizam,<sup>34</sup> and in Panipat, but largely, the nature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha political and military structure seems to have given more precedence to personal monetary interests than the cultural calls like Hindu Padpad Shahi of the Maratha Peshwas and leaders. Needless to say, that such internal demerits of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion added to the financial stringency.<sup>35</sup> We come across numerous instances depicting such mutual wranglings over the collection and distribution of dues. Following are given some chosen instances which would elucidate this aspect of the Maratha politico-financial schema.

In one such instance, Chatrapati Shahu had farmed out the collection of Babati and Sardeshmukhi rights of Prant Gujarat and Prant Malwa in late 1720s to the Peshwa for Rs. two lakhs but this agreed amount was never received by the Chatrapati. The Peshwa Bajirao only gave a vague promise of paying the

amount in future to Shahu<sup>36</sup>.

Another instance deals with the Suba of Gujarat where the Chatrapati Shahu had given permission to the Senapati Khande Rao Dabhade to collect the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the Gujarat province. In the mean time, the Peshwa Bajirao opened negotiations directly with the Senapati to share mutually the revenues from the provinces of Malwa and Gujarat. However, the Senapati who was following the authority of the Chatrapati declined for such an agreement, as Shahu had assigned Malwa to the Peshwa and Gujarat to the Senapati as their respective spheres. On the denial of the Senapati, Chimaji Appa, the brother of the Peshwa invaded Gujarat in A. D. 1727 to secure for the Peshwa the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi at the instance of the Peshwa<sup>37</sup>. The Peshwa Bajirao even negotiated and promised Sarbuland Khan, the Mughal Subedar of Gujarat that If one fourth and one tenth shares in the revenue of the province were granted to him, he would protect Gujarat from other invaders.<sup>38</sup>

The Gaikwads, in parts of Gujarat, used to collect some dues but there was always a dispute between the Peshwa and the Gaikwads about the sharing of the dues viz. nazar and Salabadi, and the Gaikwads had to face financial difficulties arising out of the payment of these dues to the Peshwa.<sup>39</sup> The payment of these dues coupled with the huge expenditure on their own military and administrative apparatus led, naturally, to the huge gap between the income and expenditure of the Gaikwads<sup>40</sup> and the consequent dependence on the bankers to take loans. Following are cited some more instances which speak

about the extent of mutual bickering between the Peshwa and the Gaikwads. For instance, a letter dated Sept 13, 1774 from Tukoji Pol, keeper of the Kaira fort written to Fatteh Singh Rao, states that the forces of the Peshwa and Govind Rao Gaikwad are creating havoc, that the cattle and other wealth from the vicinity Modha village and Matar pargana have been carried away and that the Kamasvisdar had fled.<sup>41</sup>

Another letter dated April 11, 1775 from Fatteh Singh Rao to Govind Vasudev informs the latter's encounter with Gangadhar Rao Raste and Naropant Nana at Kareli near Orpad and the forcible collection of the 'Sukhadi' dues by the Peshwa Raghunath Rao, by posting his men in all the Mahals and harassing the Kamavisadarss.<sup>42</sup>

One letter dated July 31, 1779 from 'the Peshwa Madhav Rao II to Fatteh Singh Rao mentions Raghoba's malintentions to create disturbances at Ahmedabad and asks Fatteh Singh Rao to send troops to Ahmedabad to protect the city'.<sup>43</sup>

Even among the family of Gaikwads, the collection of dues resulted in mutual antagonisms and encroachments upon one another's territories. For instance, 'a letter dated August 25, 1774 from Appaji Ganesh Bhagwat (the Peshwa's agent at Ahmedabad) to Fatteh Singh Rao Gaikwad informs that Govind Rao Gaikwad was assigned the northern while Fatteh Singh Rao Gaikwad, the southern bank of the river Mahi. However, Fatteh Singh Rao crossed the river and invaded Patan district which fell within the territory



assigned to Govind Rao. At this incident, Appaji warned Fatteh Singh Rao to obey the orders of the Peshwa's government and forbade him to enter into any strife'<sup>44</sup>.

In similar way, the financial interests of other Maratha Sardars like the Holkars, the Bhonsles and the Shindes were often at odds with those of the Peshwas and even with the Chatrapati. Since the late 1730s the relations between the Peshwa and the Bhonsles began to take a plunge which remained so in the whole course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. By 1736-37, Raghuji Bhonsle had marched up to Allahabad in northern India and amassed large fortunes but whenever he was called to pay annual tribute regularly, Raghuji Bhonsle used to send evasive replies.<sup>45</sup> Further, in the early 1740s when Raghuji was campaigning in Bengal for fortunes, the Nawab Alivardi Khan sent urgent pleas to the Mughal emperor to help against the Marathas.<sup>46</sup> The emperor issued an order to the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao to help Alivardi Khan against Raghuji Bhonsle, which the Peshwa could not refute since, in return for his show of service and loyalty to the emperor, the Peshwa was to be granted a portion of Malwa and the right to collect Chauth from the region of Azimabad (Patna).<sup>47</sup> What followed was the invasion of the Peshwa and the defeat of Raghuji Bhonsle at the hands of the Peshwa in Bengal in A. D. 1743.

It was in the same year that the Chatrapati Shahu tried to bring reconciliation between the Peshwa and Raghuji Bhonsle. While the Peshwa was allowed to look after the management of Konkan and Malwa and exact tributes

from Allahabad, Agra, Ajmer, some parts of Patna and Rs. 20,000 from the province of Arcot,<sup>48</sup> Raghuji's area of collection, on the other hand, comprised Lucknow, Patna, lower Bengal and the portion between Berar and Cuttack<sup>49</sup>. However, such settlements made the complications inherent in the Maratha polity more grave than solve it. For, now Raghuji assumed a free hand in his area of influence without the interference of the office of the Peshwa.

Shahu, himself, fell victim of his arrangement, as the following instance is a further evidence of how personal monetary interests effaced the whole political culture of an empire, especially so in the context of the 18<sup>th</sup> century highly decentralized Maratha politico-military framework. The Chatrapati Shahu in the late 1740s had been repeatedly asked for money from Raghuji Bhonsle as he was aware that Raghuji had just returned to Nagpur from his another Bengal campaign amassing large fortunes of Chauth which could, as Shahu wished, prove to be of great help in servicing his (Shahu's) heavy debts to the bankers. Raghuji, on the other hand, being owner of huge amounts of wealth, sent excuse after excuse from Nagpur to Satara stating his inability of sending money to Shahu. Finally in the year 1749, in his last phase of life and heavily in debt, Shahu kept on ailing on his death bed at Satara and did his utmost to call money from Raghuji to pay off his debts. While on the other hand, Raghuji, to the utter dismay of Shahu, avoided the payment even after repeated dispatches of special messengers and agents from Shahu<sup>50</sup>.

Such mutual tug of war over the issue of parting with the dues spurred

on by the different claimants for the dues in the same area clearly indicate that the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha leaders lay greater importance to the personal monetary interests, as has been shown through instances in the preceding pages of the chapter. However, on account of all such mutual antagonisms in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion, the financial conditions of the Chatrapati, the Peshwas and the Sardars could not have remained unscathed. Coupled with this was the high cost of wars-expeditions and the problem of cash payment to officials and troops<sup>51</sup>. All these factors juxtaposed together created an unwanted financial problems for the Maratha leaders.<sup>52</sup> It is in the backdrop of these causative factors, that the heavy dependence of the Peshwas, Chatrapati and the Sardars on the bankers as a source of instant cash should be seen<sup>53</sup>. And it were precisely such urgent look outs, on the part of the Peshwas and Sardars, for bankers to fetch loans both in cash and kind throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century that made the profession like banking a viable business vis-a-vis the Maratha leaders.

However, It is not suggested here that banking upon the money lending families for cash and kind relieved the Peshwas, the Chatrapati and the Sardars permanently from all sorts of financial hardships. As a matter of fact, the Peshwas, the Chatrapati and the Sardars, throughout the long course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, reeled under heavy debt.<sup>54</sup> The painful condition of the debt-ridden Chatrapati Shahu has already been shown earlier. Even when the Peshwa Bajirao died in 1740 A.D, he had over him a debt of Rs. 14.5 lakhs taken form 30 moneylenders.<sup>55</sup> The extent of his desperation to get rid of his indebtedness

is evident from his letters to Brahmendra Swami, a religious figure-cum-financier settled at Dhavadshi near Satara. The Swami was enjoying immense popularity among the people of the Maharashtra region at that time including the Maratha Sardars. From A.D 1728 to 1745 Swamiji was directly or indirectly involved in the political affairs of those days.<sup>56</sup> Swamiji had an influential role in coronating Bajirao as the Peshwa. In his capacity as being a dominant person in politics and having large wealth mainly in the form of offerings made by the people, the Swami used his huge wealth in giving loans to the Sardars and the Peshwas and the Peshwas Balaji Vishwanath and Bajirao had borrowed huge loans from the Swami.<sup>57</sup>

In one of his letters to Swamiji, the Peshwa Bajirao desperately wrote, 'you (Swamiji) have planted the seed, now that the plant has grown up, its upto you whether to nurture it or let it get withered away.'<sup>58</sup> The inherent meaning in it imply that the Swami had showered blessings on Bajirao at the time of his coronation to the Peshwaship. But out of the growing desperation of Bajirao being heavily indebted to his bankers, the Peshwa sent an urgent call to the Swami for help. Another letter of Bajirao to the Swami mentioned, 'I am deeply in debt. It seems that I would be relieved of my debt only after my death. Give me your blessings, so that I could repay my loans'.<sup>59</sup>

Such desperate feelings were divulged and shared by not only the Peshwa but even by various Maratha Sardars, since most of the Sardars were monetarily indebted to bankers as well as to Swamiji. One of the letters written

by Malhar Rao Holkar dated 17.9.1733 for example states, 'Regards to Swamiji... As you had demanded your loan of Rs 3000, I am unable to send that much of amount but sending Rs. 2000 only because this year the loans are mounting up.'<sup>60</sup>

Another letter dated 29.8.1740 written by Malharrao Holkar to Swamiji states, 'I was glad to receive your letter. Let your blessings be showered on us forever. I was constantly out for the past two years, but there is no income. I am trying to tide over the financial problems and its is only when I would succeed in it that I would be able to repay your loan. The interest amount can be solved later. I'm extremely regretful for that.'<sup>61</sup>

A letter from Fattesingh Bhonsle, for that matter, states, 'Regards to Swamiji. Received your letter. It is because of the founding of some small industries that financial conditions have deteriorated. The money, which you had asked to return, would be sent soon. At your service.'<sup>62</sup>

Another letter of Krishnaji Dabhade sent to the Swamiji, states, 'Regards to Swamiji. Though the financial conditions are not sound but still I'm repaying your loan of Rs. 4000 as you had asked to by taking loan from Antobanaik Gude. Please accept it and send the receipt to my mother.'<sup>63</sup>

These are some of the instances pointing towards the intensity and extent of the debt-problems faced by the Peshwas and the Maratha Sardars, as divulged to their revered religious guru, Brahmendra Swami. Further is given

some of the chosen anecdotes, which show as to how much the Peswa Balaji Rao was helpless in matters regarding his debts. In his letter to the Swami, Balaji wrote, 'let your blessings be showered on us. As for the repayment of your loan is concerned, I am sending you Rs. 10,000 but the interest of 8 Mohars and 8 Pachas would be returned only after I come back from the expedition'.<sup>64</sup>

Infact, Balaji's twin problems were not only to service his own debts but of his father's i.e. Bajirao's also for which the bankers like Bapuji Naik were constantly putting pressure on him.<sup>65</sup> Balaji's letters to Jayappa Shinde (whom alone he trusted most among all other Maratha leaders) are replete with the urgent calls for help to pay off his (Balaji's) loan. In one of his letters to Jayappa Shinde, for example, the Peshwa mentioned that, 'the loan amount has already crossed Rs. 25 lakhs and that unless the amount of Rs. 40-50 lakhs were recovered from the northern Hindustan campaign, the problem would remain unresolved.'<sup>66</sup>

Later when Jayappa Shinde got killed, the Peshwa wrote to Jankoji Shinde that he should urgently remit Rs. 15 lakhs to the Peshwa out of the Rs. 40 lakhs that he had collected.<sup>67</sup> He adds that if the money were sent immediately it would be extremely helpful for him.

In an another letter written in A.D 1758 to Ramji Anant, Balaji mentioned that he had incurred the loan amounting to staggering Rs. One Crore

and, therefore, Ramji Anant should immediately pay him Rs. 50 lakhs.<sup>68</sup>

Even during the crucial period of the Maratha advances against the Afghans around A.D 1760, the Peshwa Balaji Rao kept on demanding from Sadashivrao Bhau, who was involved in this advance against the Afghans, the money acquired from the northern region to be immediately sent to Poona. But Bhausahab, realising the urgency of money at that crucial juncture implores to the Peshwa that sending money at this moment would yield utter chaos and, therefore, he should be allowed to use the money in such a situation.<sup>69</sup>

As one letter by Trimbak Rao would make us believe that the total amount of debt incurred by Balaji Rao at the time of his death stood at Rs. one and a half Crore.<sup>70</sup>

Such an extent of indebtedness on the part of the Peshwas, the Chatrapati as well as the Sardars, arguably points towards the conclusion that despite levying of Chauth, Sardeshmukhi and other dues, the Maratha government's coffer always remained empty and the so called 'confederacy' as a whole could not become financially strong.<sup>71</sup> This was the case even when by 1750s, the Marathas had expanded from the low -fertile and low -income areas of Western Maharashtra to Malwa, Gujarat and the rich areas of the Indo-Gangetic Doab, to Orissa and even upto Delhi.<sup>72</sup> Faced with all the problems in revenue collection (as discussed in the first chapter) and aggravated by the mutual antagonisms in matters of Chauth distribution, therefore, taking recourse to borrowing from the bankers remained one of the way outs, which

the Maratha Peshwas, the Sardars, and the Chatrapati were left with. It is really a matter of discredit, which the Maratha leaders suitably deserve that instead of paying adequate attention towards these problems, they kept on relying on their bankers to sustain themselves. Also, the Marathas, especially between 1740-1760 did not endeavour to establish direct rule over any of the fertile areas of the Karnataka, Coromandel and even the Ganges valley, and kept on harping on the 'protection money' i.e. the Chauth from those areas, the distribution of which formed the main irritant in the relationship among them throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>73</sup> It is in this backdrop, that the role of the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion should be viewed. The loans which the government borrowed was secured, generally, by mortgaging the Patilki and Mamlat or revenue collecting rights to the bankers which the banking families could ill-afford to have ignored. Thus, apart from the factors, as pointed out by the scholars, namely growing urbanisation, growth of money economy etc in the Maratha areas, one major factor which added to the growing dominance of the banking families in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion was the nature of the whole Maratha political and administrative structure which not only induced the bankers to provide the loans but also offered a secured return of their debt, either through the cash mode or in the form of giving them the right to recover their loan from the revenue collection of an area. It is this very factor of a secured return of their loan, which greatly attracted the banking families into the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. Hence was laid the foundation of the relationship between the banking families and the Maratha 'confederacy'. This



brings us to conclude the first section of the chapter and move over to the second one where a brief background or introduction of the prominent banking families in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion is given.

Although in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Maratha region banking /money lending business was undertaken by the local élites like Deshmukhs, Deshpandes, Shete-Mahajans and some rich Brahmans,<sup>74</sup> but they were not the professional bankers.<sup>75</sup> Infact, the Shetes and Mahajans were just honorary titles (and not a distinct caste-group) given to those who were members of the 'Gotsabhas' (judicial bodies) of Pargana and of Kasba. And the association of these Shetes and Mahajans with the administration of justice and growth of Kasba and Pargana helped them to enjoy a respectable position and prestige in the urban society. These Shets-Mahajans belonged to different castes such as Shimpi (tailor), Marathas, Brahmans, Baniyas, Jains etc. and were officials distinguished from bankers and traders.<sup>76</sup>

However, the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the gradual but steady expansion of a distinct community or class of money-lenders/bankers called 'Sawakar' (in the local dialect, equivalent to the Sahukar) most of whom were Brahmins having their business spread over to far-flung areas.<sup>77</sup> The prominent banking cum trading families in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha region were viz. Dikshit Patwardhans, Chiplunkars, Tulshibagwales, Naiks, Vaidyas, Khasgiwales, Wakades, Subedar of Kalyan, Wanwale, Bhides, Gadgils, Karjes and so on.<sup>78</sup> Many of these banking families had migrated from other areas to settle in the

Maratha dominated areas where they found suitable opportunities for their business. For instance, the families of Vaidyas and Bhides had migrated from Konkan and Satara, respectively, to the capital city of Poona.<sup>79</sup>

Similarly, the family of Dikshit Patwardhans originally hailed from the village Guhagar.<sup>80</sup> Later one of its members Hari Dikshit came to and settled down at Nasik in the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and started the business of money lending on a small scale at Nasik.<sup>81</sup> In the course of time, the family came into contact with the Peshwa Bajirao through Vishwanath Pethe, a prominent military general of the Peshwa. In 1729 A.D., Bajirao brought the Dikshit Patwardhan family to Poona and established matrimonial relations with the family.<sup>82</sup> Gradually, the banking branches of the Dikshit Patwardhans expanded from Poona and Nasik to Bombay, Aurangabad and Bijapur and according to an estimate their annual turn over in the year over in the year 1777-78 A.D. amounted to Rs. 12,61,623.<sup>83</sup>

Another prominent banking family who had close interaction with the Peshwas and the Maratha Sardars was that of the Tulshibagwale. Apart from financially aiding the government, the Tulsibagwales (like most of the big bankers) were even a part of the Maratha government in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They were given the office of Sarsubedar of Poona by the government which they retained for 68 years.<sup>84</sup> It was Naro Appaji Tulshibagwale who was first appointed as the Sarsubedar of Poona in 1745 A.D, continuing till 1775 A.D and after him his son Ramchandra Narayan was given the same office which he

held from 1775 A.D to 1798 A.D The Sarsuba of Poona was directly ruled by the Peshwa and the Subedar of this province was the highest civil authority mainly responsible for collecting the revenue from the Talukas and villages from his territory.<sup>85</sup> Besides being the revenue collector, he was also supposed to maintain law & order and investigating all sorts of criminal disputes. In addition to being the holder of such a responsible post, Naro Appaji was also an active participant in the politics of the Poona Court for atleast 15 years from 1761 to 1775 A.D Even one of his nephews Janardan Appaji was employed in the government to assist Naro Appaji. The network of the Tulshibagwale family was quite affluent as well.

Following is given a brief introduction of one more prominent banking family and that is of the Chiplunkars. They were big banking-cum-trading family who would give loans to the Sardars like Holkars, Sanglikar, Akkalkotkar, Jamkhindkar etc. Daji Gangadhar seems to be the headman in-charge of the accounts of this family.<sup>86</sup> Later Krishna Hari, Shivram, Raghunath Keshav and Anant Hari, who were perhaps nephews of Daji Ganagadhar came forward to expand the business. The family of Chiplunkars had the turnover in lakh of rupees.<sup>87</sup>

Another big family of Sawakars or bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha areas was that of the Khasgiwales. Their banking network had spread over to cities like Poona, Nasik, Sholapur, Jamkhindi and other areas. Apart from giving loans to the Peshwa Bajirao II, the Khasgiwales also arranged for the

articles, like oil, wood etc. for the royal kitchen.<sup>88</sup>

However, the next chapter would further take up the discussion, in detail, regarding the functions of the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha areas. However, the point that most of the banking families were Brahmins who readily supported the Peshwas by lending huge amounts of loan and the banking family of the Dikshit Patwardhans even maintained matrimonial relationship with them might, easily, lead one to deduce that the *raison d'etre* of such relationship lay in the caste affinity since the Peshwas also belonged to the same caste . But caste was certainly not the factor that constituted the base of the relationship between the bankers and the non-Brahmin Maratha Sardars like Shindes, Bhonsles, the Gaikwads or for that matter the Holkars. The caste affinity played its role but only as far as the matter of matrimonial relationship was concerned. In fact, profession like banking, in order to sustain itself and flourish warrants a secure and guaranteed return (either monetary or non-monetary) of its investments i.e. loans and can not afford to rely on caste and kinship ties. This was especially the case with the banking and credit networks especially in the Maratha dominated areas of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which largely remained immune from caste and kinship affinity.<sup>89</sup>

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Kadam, V. S, op. cit. Chapter II, 'Saranjam System of the Marathas', p. 18
- <sup>2</sup> Sardesai G. S., 'New History of the Marathas' volume II pp. 47. Also see Wink op. cit. pp. 44.
- <sup>3</sup> See, Sinha H. N., 'Rise of the Peshwas' Indian Press Ltd., Allahabad, 1954. Pp. 73 and 76.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 76.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 76-77.
- <sup>6</sup> Kadam says that it was due to the financial difficulties that the Peshwa government started assigning land in lieu of salary, in op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>7</sup> See Gordon Stewart, 'The Marathas 1600-1818' The New Cambridge History of India, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 139-40.
- <sup>8</sup> Sinha op. cit., p. 151.
- <sup>9</sup> See Mahajan T. T. 'Maratha Administration in the 18<sup>th</sup> century'. p. 138. Also see Wink op. cit., p. 307.
- <sup>00</sup> Sen S. N., 'The Military System of the Marathas'. p. 50. Wink, however, opines that there were around a thousand Saranjamdars who held their assignments from the government or Huzoor at Poona. See, Wink, op. cit., p. 321.
- <sup>11</sup> See Mahajan op. cit., pp. 138 and Sen op. cit., pp. 48-50.
- <sup>22</sup> See Kadam op. cit., p. 20 and Wink p. 319.
- <sup>33</sup> See Wink p. 325.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 323.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 325.
- <sup>66</sup> As Wink says in op.cit., p. 299.
- <sup>77</sup> Sinha also believed that 'unlike the Mughal Subedars Shahu's feudatories were not his humblest servants, but his friends and supporters' in op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 78.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid. pp. 79.

<sup>0.0</sup> Kadam op. cit., Chapter II, p. 21.

<sup>1.1</sup> Ibid., pp. 22 and 28. Also see Banerjee Anil Chandra, 'Peshwa Madhav Rao I', A. Mukherjee and company Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta, 1968. p. 186.

<sup>2.2</sup> See Wink op. cit., p. 299.

<sup>3.3</sup> Sinha, p. 76.

<sup>4.4</sup> See Banerjee op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>5.5</sup> See Wink, p. 322 and Kadam, op.cit., Chapter III, p. 31.

<sup>6.6</sup> The argument draws upon Kadam, p. 26.

<sup>7.7</sup> Sen, op. cit., pp. 56. Also see, Kadam, op.cit., pp. 26-28.

<sup>8.8</sup> Kadam, p. 78 and Sen S. N. 'Administrative System of the Marathas' K. P. Bagchi and Company, III edition, 1976, p. 168.

<sup>9.9</sup> Sen, op. cit., p. 168. Also maintained by H. Fukazawa in the chapter 'The Medieval Deccan and Maharashtra' in 'The Cambridge Economic History of India', (eds.) D. Kumar and T. Ray Chaudhury, volume I, p. 259.

<sup>0.0</sup> See Sinha op. cit. pp. 77-79.

<sup>1.1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2.2</sup> Kadam, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>3.3</sup> Sinha, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>4.4</sup> See Banerjee, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>5.5</sup> See, 'The Cambridge Economic History', op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>6.6</sup> See, Kadam, op. cit., p. 81. Kadam further makes it clear that in this manner the amount collected by way of Sardeshmukhi stopped reaching the royal treasury during Shahu's time.

<sup>7.7</sup> Sardesai G. S. (ed.) Selections From the Peshwa Daphtar, volume XII, letter nos. 14, 33, 39, 42. Also see Kulkarni A. R., 'The Marathas', Books & Books publishers and distributors, 1996, New Delhi, pp. 98-100 and Srinivasulu Prabha, 'Malwa under the Marathas' Classical Publishing company, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 253-54 for the issues of contention between the Peshwas and the Dabhades.

<sup>8.8</sup> See, Sinha, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>99</sup> See Kadam, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-105.

<sup>00</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102-105. Kadam also maintained that it was due to cash crunch arising out of the conflicts between the Peshwa and the Gaikwads that the Gaikwads turned to the bankers for loan. For Instance in 1754 Damaji Gaikwad, in order to pay the forced payment to the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, took refuge to the bankers, namely, Shivram Bhide, Bhukanji Haridatta and Gopal Keshav Karve and took loan worth Rs. 8,40,000. As security of the loan Damaji gave the bankers the Parganas of Petlad, Bhadok, Koral, Balesar, Vekadi, Chikhali, Kavraj and Mohe.

<sup>11</sup> Historical Selections from Baroda State Records, volume II, A. D. 1769-1789, published by the State Records Department, Baroda, 1936, p. 181.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>55</sup> See Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp: 226-27.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>00</sup> Vaidya Daphtarantun Nievadlele Kagad, part IV by Shankar Lakshman Vaidya, BISM Journal, pp. 17, 28, 30-31, letter nos. 21, 38, 39 and 44.

<sup>11</sup> Mahajan *op. Cit.* Pp. 139-141. Also in Gordon, 'Marathas, Marauders and State Formation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century India'. OUP, 1994 pp. 179.

<sup>22</sup> As Kadam argues in *op. cit.* Pp. 103 -112 . He lengthily discusses the financial strains of the Gaikwad, Holkars, Shindes and Bhosles. Also see Cambridge Economic History...*op. cit.* p. 260.

<sup>33</sup> Mahajan also maintained that the huge burden of war expenses compelled the Peshwas to borrow loans from the bankers. See, *op. cit.* pp. 141-42.

<sup>44</sup> See, Wink, *op. cit.*, p-335.

<sup>55</sup> See Chandra Satish, 'The 18<sup>th</sup> Century in India: Its economy and the role of the Marathas,

the Jats, the Sikhs and the Afghans' S.G. Deuskar Lectures on Indian History & culture, 1982, K.P.Bagchi & company, revised edition, 1991, p-26.

<sup>6.6</sup> See Parasnis D.B., 'Brahmendra Swami Dhavadshikar: Charitra va Patravvyavahar, Bombay, 1900, p-38.

<sup>7.7</sup> Sinha op. cit., p.172.

<sup>8.8</sup> Parasnis, op. cit., p-40.

<sup>9.9</sup> Ibid., p-40.

<sup>0.0</sup> Ibid., letter no. 170, p.181.

<sup>1.1</sup> Ibid.,letter no. 171, p.182.

<sup>2.2</sup> Ibid., letter no. 179, pp.186-87.

<sup>3.3</sup> Ibid.,letter no. 189, p. 196.

<sup>4.4</sup> Ibid.,letter no. 73, p. 105.

<sup>5.5</sup> See Sinha op. cit., pp. 217 & 220.

<sup>6.6</sup> See Apte D.V., 'Nanasaheb Peshvyanchen Karj', in BISM quartely vol.16 no.4, p.92.

<sup>7.7</sup> Ibid.,p. 93.

<sup>8.8</sup> Ibid., pp.93-94

<sup>9.9</sup> Ibid., pp.94-95.

<sup>0.0</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>1.1</sup> As Satish Chandra opined in op. cit., pp.26-27 also see Mahajan op. cit., in the chap.' Financial Administration' p. 119.

<sup>2.2</sup> Chandra Satish, op. cit., p.26.

<sup>3.3</sup> Ibid, pp-26-27.

<sup>4.4</sup> See, Kulkarni A.R. 'Medieval Maratha Country, Book & Books, New Delhi, 1996, p. 227.

<sup>5.5</sup> See Gadgil D.R. 'Pune Shaharanteel Mahajan va Nagarsheth' Gokhale Institute of Economics, Pune, 1962.

<sup>6.6</sup> See Mahajan T.T. 'Aspect of Agrarian and urban history of the Marathas, commonwealth publishers, New Delhi 1991, p. 134.



<sup>7.7</sup> Kulkarni A.R. op. cit., p.230-31.

<sup>8.8</sup> Kulkarni A.R. op. cit., p. 231 also in Mahajan op. cit., p. 135 and in Mahajan T.T, 'Industry, Trade & Commerce During the Peshwa period', Pointer publishers, Jaipur, 1989, p. 94.

<sup>9.9</sup> Mahajan, 'Aspects of ...' p.139.

<sup>0.0</sup> See Joshi, C.B's chapter 'Dikshit Patwardhan Yanche Pedhicha Vyawahar, in BISM quarterly vol- 16 no. 1, p. 15.

<sup>1.1</sup> See Kulkarni G.T, 'Banking in 18<sup>th</sup> century: A case study of a Poona Banker' in 'Artha Vijnana' ( a journal of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune), June 1973, vol 15, no.2.

<sup>2.2</sup> Ibid, also in BISM quarterly vol-16 op. cit., pp.16-17.

<sup>3.3</sup> Kulkarni G.T. op. cit.,

<sup>4.4</sup> See Chapekar N.G., 'Peshwaichya Saavaleet' Pune 1937, pp. 3-4

<sup>5.5</sup> See Athavale Sadashiv's, 'Tulshibagwale Daftar,' BISM quarterly, vol-76, July 97-April 98.

<sup>6.6</sup> Chapekar, op. cit., p. 8

<sup>7.7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8.8</sup> See Chapekar N.G., 'Khasgiwalyanchya Hishebache Manthan, BISM quarterly no.1:2-3, Oct 1920-Jan 1921,

<sup>9.9</sup> As mentioned in Rudner David, 'Banker's Trust and the culture of Banking among the Nattukottai Chettiars of Colonial South India', Modern Asian Studies, 23,3,1989,p. 417. that this was one of features of the banking business where the ties of class and not the ties of caste were the moving factors especially in he early colonial India as in the 18th century.

## **CHAPTER – 3**

# **NETWORKS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE BANKERS**

The present chapter takes a closer view of the mode of functioning of the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha areas and would show the extent of penetration the big bankers had made into the political and administrative levels of those days. In other words, the chapter would focus on the twin roles of the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion. First, their banking/crediting networks and secondly, the privileges and diversified responsibilities enjoyed by them in the Maratha political and revenue structures.

Taking first the mode of functioning of the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion, the most visible function of the bankers seems to be extending loans to the government and the army commanders. These monetary dealings were recorded in two broad entries in the account of the bankers, (for instance of the Dikshit Patwardhans) viz. Roznamah (day book) and Khate vahi (ledger book.)<sup>1</sup> Other functions of the bankers included namely (a) receiving and sending promissory notes or 'hundis' from and to distant places.<sup>2</sup> The money-lenders charged a certain percentage of commission for undertaking these transactions which varied from 2 to 2.5 percent of the amount. The family of Dikshit Patwardhans, for instance, dealt in hundi transactions from areas which included Varanasi, Siv Pattan, Jalnapur, Aurangabad, Bombay, Nasik, Paithan, Burhanpur etc.<sup>3</sup>

(b) Collecting government dues from the Kamavisadar and paying it to the exchequer and

(c) Exchanging currency of one type for another as per the needs. The Bankers dealt with various types of coins prevalent during those days, namely; Adhelya, Rupaye, Pawalya, Khurda, Sivrai, Arkati, Ganjikoti, Tabgaoche, Elave, Belapuri, Kanoji, Gairsal etc.<sup>4</sup>

As regards the loans to the government is concerned, the Peshwas and the Sardars often raised short-term loans from the bankers with the interest rate of usually 1 Or 2 percent per month or 12 per cent or 24 per cent per annum. The loan advances which the bankers extended either to the Kamavisadars/Mamlatdars or to the Peshwas was recorded in two separate accounts. The loans to the first one i.e. to the Kamavisadars/Mamlatdars were entered under the head "Mamlat Accounts" while the loans to the Peshwas was recorded under the heading "loans to the Peshwas".<sup>5</sup> The mamlat accounts of the Dikshit Patwardhans belonging to the year 1777-78, for instance, looked as following.<sup>6</sup>

MAMLAT ACCOUNT OF THE PESHWAS

Rupees	Annas	Debit entries	
		(Outstanding dues of the previous year: Details)	
		Rs.	Annas
7346	11		
		3796	7
			paid in the treasury Saka 1693
		50	
			paid in excess Saka 1690
		2456	8
			demand draft paid to Trimbakrao Vishwanath in respect of Karnataka Campaign
		1330	-
			paid in the treasury Saka 1693
		100	-
			demand draft paid to Ganoji and Bhagwant Sakhare
		584	-
			demand draft, paid wages of the government's stable yard-2 months
		269	8
			demand draft paid to Sivaba Naik Thorat against loan bond.
		98	8
			demand draft paid to Bhikaji Shinde of the stable yard
		190	8
			demand draft paid to Sardar Neelkanth
Rs. 7346	11		
		----- Rs.3550 paid in the government's treasury in Chaitra Saka 1694	

On the other hand, the loans for instance of the Dikshit Patwardhans was recorded in the form as shown in the following.<sup>7</sup>

LOAN ACCOUNT OF THE PESHWAS

Rs. Annas  
1,89,335 2

12688 10

1,16,734 12

DEBIT ENTRIES

Dues Outstanding  
Previous Year

Rs. Annas  
34,911 11  
(excess amount after the  
verification of the Nasik  
accounts. Saka 1635),  
interest at 1per cent per  
month  
67,782 As14 Capital  
7378 As 13 Interest  
75,161 11  
out of this, amounts received  
from Balaji Mahadev  
Subedar-  
10,000 Saka 1678  
5,000 Saka 1689  
11,000 -do-1690  
9,500 -do-1690  
4750 -do-1692

-----  
Total Rs.40,250 (balance  
due as Above)

We undertook the collection  
of Sarkar Handa for the year  
1690 and paid excess to  
treasury as per the balance  
sheet prepared in Saka 1691.

New bonds were executed.  
Interest 1per cent per month  
98,000 Capital Saka 1697.  
18,734 interest Saka 1698

Rs.1,16,734 As 12  
25,000 New Bonds saka 1678  
rate of interest 1per  
cent pm  
39,354 As 5 cloth supplied to  
the state  
Total Rs. 2,28,686 As 7

While the exact amount of loan borrowed by the Peshwas and Sardars during the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is a little difficult to measure, following is given a glimpse of the amount in cash taken as loan by the Peswas and the Sardar from the big bankers.

The account of A.D. 1740 shows that the Peshwa Bajirao took a loan of Rs.50,000/- from the Vaidyas at an interest rate of one rupee two annas percent per annum.<sup>8</sup>

An account of the sums of money in the Vaidya's family papers shows the loan advanced to Raghuji Bhosle from 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1741 to 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1750 and the end of the account shows that Raghuji still had to repay to the Vaidyas a sum of Rs.21,770/- including the interest.<sup>9</sup>

Further, a ledger of the Tulshibagwales of the year 1758 shows that they paid loan amounting to Rs.27,500/- with an interest rate of 1.5per cent per month to Damaji Gaikwad and Rs.30,208/- to Mudhoji Bhonsle.<sup>10</sup>

There is a long list of creditors prominent among whom included the Vaidyas, Bhides, Patwardhans, Gadgils, Gosavis, Naiks, Joshis, and the Rastes who extended lakhs of rupees as loan to the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao from the year 1740-41 to 1760-61 at an interest rate of Rs.1 to 2per cent per month.<sup>11</sup>

Another record shows that the Vaidyas paid Rs.53,750/- as loan to Balaji Bajirao from 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 1749 to 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1750.<sup>12</sup> However, there are various other entries and letters, of the types described above, in the bankers' accounts showing loan agreements between the Peshwa Balaji and the Vaidyas.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, a vast amount of loans to the Bhonsles and the Gaikwads paid by the Vaidyas and the Tulshibagwales are recorded in their private account books.<sup>14</sup> Even the Peshwas Madhav Rao and Raghunath Rao borrowed huge cash from the banking families as the records would make us believe. For instance there is mentioned a list of bankers from whom loan amounting to Rs.16,22,292/- were borrowed by the Peshwa either in cash or in kind.<sup>15</sup> Similarly Raghunath Rao was also in debt of Rs.3.54 lakhs as the Vaidya papers show.<sup>16</sup>

An account paper of the year 1774-75 of the Subedar Ramchandra Narayan Tulshibagwale shows that the Peshwa owed Rs.2,66,619/- to him.<sup>17</sup> Further, an account of the year 1797 of the same shows that the Raste Sardars owed Rs.15,769/- to Ramchandra narayan.<sup>18</sup>

Another aspect of the banking activities in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion, as mentioned earlier, was that even the army commanders, court officials and administrative officers resorted to taking loans and even the salaries of the Sardars' employees came to be, some times, paid by the



bankers.<sup>19</sup> For instance a letter belonging to 1759 AD addressed to Bhausahab by Antaji Mankeshwar mentioned the request made by the latter to the former to write to Suraj Mal to pay at once the sum of Rs. 7 lakhs to enable him to pay the salary of the army which was long overdue.<sup>20</sup> Similarly an account of the Tulshibagwales mentions payments to be made to different persons from ordinary clerks to the chief minister in the Peshwa's office.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the loans in cash, various other articles which included mainly, camels, ivory-combs, wooden combs, thread, bangles, shoes, gulkand, attar, food-grains etc. were procured by the government as well through the bankers.<sup>22</sup>

The loans to army commanders, also a short term loan, was charged, usually, higher rate of interest i.e. from 24 to 36 per cent per annum.<sup>23</sup> Apart from financing the Peshwas and the Sardars, the bankers' another chief engagement was, as has been discussed in the first chapter, financing the Kamavisadars for paying the government's revenue and Sardeshmukhi.<sup>24</sup> The payment was made to the Kamavisadars whenever demand drafts or Varata were issued by the Kamavisadars. Apart from the income from the interest charged on such payments, the bankers also earned from the commission charged from both the parties, for transferring government's dues to the treasury. Such commissions on remittance to the treasury were charged in accordance with the distance from where the payment was remitted to the

treasury.<sup>25</sup> In addition the big bankers like Tulshibagwales, Kalyan Subedars etc even maintained detailed accounts of the amount received as "rasad" from different parts of the dominion. For instance the account of the Tulshibagwales of the year 1760 look like the following:-<sup>26</sup>

<u>Deposit in Rupees</u>	<u>Income from Govt.</u>
52,000	Yaval Khate, Rasad of Rs. 41,000
70,000	Rasad from Antaji Apaji (Gandapur 1760 AD)
60,642	Rasad from Antaji Apaji (Gandapur 1762 AD)
10,000	Rasad from Ramchandra Dhondeo - 1760 AD)
8800	From Daji Trimbak Bokil who was given charge of Karhad
45000	Rasad from Pune and Dabhaji Patane 1764 AD

Similarly the account of the Kalyan Subedars belonging to the year 1766 looked like the following: -

Rs. 1,34,411	Rasad to be recived from Hari Krishna & Balaji Mahadev
Rs. 50,000	Rasad from Sashti
Rs. 50,032	Rasad from Sashti with interest

As far as the repayment of the huge loans back to the bankers is concerned, the Maratha Sardars, the Peshwas and the Chatrapati usually relied on two modes of repayments- (a) either through cash repayment (procured by

tributes, war-plunder etc.) or more commonly (b) through assigning the right to collect revenue of an area to the bankers or part with the Mokasa and Babi amounts.

As commented upon by S.N. Sen that, "the Marathas looked upon war as a normal source of revenue."<sup>27</sup> It increasingly seems plausible that the military forays beginning from Malwa to north India, Rajputana, Bengal, Orissa etc., a major guiding force, driving the Peshwas and the Sardars to undertake such expeditions and thereby to collect the Chauth from the enemies' territories, lay in their impatient urge to pay off their huge debts. The repeated calls by the Peshwa Bajirao to his brother Chimaji Appa in the latter's expedition in Malwa in the late 1720's to fetch 'Ghas-dana' and the Chauth from the area and send the dues immediately to Satara so that the Peshwa could be relieved of his debts<sup>28</sup> are the earliest instances which show that one of the impelling motives (though not the only) behind war-expeditions of the Peshwas was to pay off their debts which they had borrowed from their bankers for carrying out their military activities.<sup>29</sup> Such urges to pay off their loans in 18<sup>th</sup> century remained equally dominant with their other motives of political expansion and cultural assertions like the Hindu Padpad Shahi. <sup>30</sup>

For instance a letter belonging to the year 1733 - 1734 mentioned that Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Srinivas Pandit Pratinidhi took loans from Kandoje Gogawale for an expeditions to Rajpuri and was told that on their return the

money would be repaid with interest at Rs. 3 per cent per month and in case of failure a province would be made over to him in Kamavis.<sup>31</sup>

Even in the later half of the century when the Maratha Sardars had spread the Maratha suzerainty into Central India and beyond and, are said to have established a sound revenue administration, it was oftenly the war - income (and seldom the internally generated resources) that remained the chief source of repayment of debts. There are further evidences which give credence to this proposition. As we have seen (in the second Chapter) Balaji Bajirao's and other sardar' assurances to Brahmendra Swami regarding repayment of their debts after their return from battle. Similarly a letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1767 written by Tukoji Holkar to Chinto Vitthal Gosavi, his creditor, in which Tukoji mentions that, "I have to pay you Rs.46,000/- out of which I have paid Rs.42,500/-. The remaining amount of Rs.3,500/- would be paid soon after I come back from the battlefield."<sup>32</sup>

Similarly a letter belonging to the year 1763-64 says that since two officers of Satara namely Venkaji Mankeshwar and Vishnu Narhar were in urgent need of money, the Peshwa Madhav Rao directed Parshuram Nayak Angal, Bhikaji Naik Raste and Sadashiv Naik Raste who were bankers of Satara, to pay Rs.25,000/- each to the above two officers. These bankers were informed that the amount would be repaid on the Peshwa's return from the battle.<sup>33</sup>

Further the military adventures of Raghuji Bhonsle in Bengal and North Indian territories for the purpose of realising fortunes in the name of Chauth, have been discussed in the second chapter. Even in the mid 1750s when one of Raghuji's general named Shivbhat Sathe brought Rs. 87,160 as chauth for Raghuji Bhosle, loans due to Raghuji amounting to RS. 73,900 were repaid to the bankers out of this money.<sup>34</sup>

Again one of the purposes of the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao's last campaign in northern India, popularly called the Newai expedition of 1747 - 1748 was to amass wealth for the Chatrapati Shahu to pay off his debts.<sup>35</sup>

However, it was the second mode of repayment of the loans i.e. payment through assigning rights of collecting revenue,<sup>36</sup> babati and mokasa about which the evidences speak louder. For instance according to a loan agreement between Sayajirao Gaikwad and Naro Appaji Tulshibagwale dated 02.01.1770, the Gaikwad had borrowed of rupees six lakhs from Naro Appaji. In the agreement Naro Appaji secured a written undertaking from Sayajirao that the former could take back the sum from the revenue yields of thirteen districts in Gujarat which fell within Sayajirao's domain.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, Raghuji Bhonsle had agreed to give to the Vaidya brothers a two percent share of the revenue of the villages in Deogad district in the year 1749.<sup>38</sup>

Further, the clauses of an agreement belonging to the year 1755 show that both Janoji Bhonsle and Trimbak Rao- Moro Vinayak Dikshit Patwardhan had agreed to divide the share of the revenue of Sarkar Taluka into equal parts.<sup>39</sup>

One letter of Tukoji Holkar to Vyankatrao Kasi dated 20.02.1768 says, "I have spent the money i.e. Rs.15,000/- but instead I am giving you a village from where you can get your Rs.15,000/- within a year."<sup>40</sup>

Another letter in the Vaidya records informs that the Chatrapati Shahu transferred the right of revenue collection of the Mawal district to Visaji Raghunath Vaidya in payment of debt.<sup>41</sup>

Another letter mentions the rights of villages given to Vishwanathbhat Vaidya by Raghuji Bhonsle in payment of his debts.<sup>42</sup>

Another letter mentions Raghuji's orders to the Deshmukh and Deshpande of the village Ramtek, district Deogad that the right of revenue collection of the Mauje Dumri Chikhalya has been given to the agents of Vishwanathbhat Vaidya.<sup>43</sup>

Again, one letter mentions the orders of Fattesingh Bhonsle to the Deshmukh and Deshpande of the Tarf Chakan, Sarkar Junnar, to pay Mokasa of Mauje Bhoose to Balambhat Vaidya.<sup>44</sup>

One more letter speaks of the order given by Basawantrao Khaskhel to Damaji Shankar, the Kamavisadar of Supa to allow Satwaji More, an agent of the Vaidyas, to collect money of Babati of Mauje Karhati and Mokasa of Mauje Burhanpur for the Vaidyas.<sup>45</sup>

Further, in a letter addressed to the Chatrapati, the Vaidyas urged to the Chatrapati to issue the following orders (a) that the Sarlaskar should not trouble Vaidyas' agent to collect the Chauth of the village Karhati (b) that the Kamavisadar of the village Khodad, district Karad must pay to the Vaidyas its revenue and (c) that the Kamavisadar of Kasba Baodhan should ensure that the Vaidyas enjoy the Inam land of thirty bighas without any hitches.<sup>46</sup>

Further, in an agreement, Vishwanathbhat Vaidya had agreed to pay Rs.40,000/- as loan to the Pant Sachiv on the security of the revenues and Sahotra of Jalnapur and Beed Ambad.<sup>47</sup>

Similarly, in a letter to Baji Damodar, the Subedar of Pargana Supa, the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao orders him to allow the Vaidyas to receive the revenue of four villages.<sup>48</sup> In another letter Balaji Bajirao assigns the Babati and Sardeshmukhi of the district Varad to Vishwanathbhat Vaidya for repayment of his debt of Rs.92,500/- including the interest.<sup>49</sup>

As far as the mode of repayments of such loans to army commanders is concerned, it is best illustrated by Thomas Broughton, who had served in the

Shindes' army. To quote him, "...the usual method of raising money even in a military encampment was by making out 'Pats' or statement of sums... which were negotiated with the bankers of the camp and fetched a price regulated by the value set by these bankers upon security offered by the government for repayment. These securities were generally either revenue assignments of a province actually under the Sindhia's authority or bills upon different states from which tribute claims were enforced".<sup>50</sup>

One plausible explanation for the wide spread practice of repayment of loans to the bankers through giving them the rights of revenue collection, as has been shown, might be the nature of the loans itself which the Peshwas, the Sardars and the Chatrapati borrowed. Since such loans were of the short term nature, the Sardars, the Peshwas and the Chatrapati who were already in financial hardships, had little choice but to mortgage the rights of revenue collection and Mokasa and Babati into private hands i.e. their bankers. This explanation of repaying loans through, usually, granting the revenue-collecting rights to bankers, apart from the cash repayment to them, seems more plausible when one takes a look at the bankers' accounts, most of which show the outstanding dues of the Peshwas and the Sardars, to be paid to the bankers in cash. Thus the bankers of the Peshwas and the Sardars remained assured of the return of their loan advances to the Maratha leaders either in the form of cash return or getting the 'Mamlat' rights.



In addition the bankers of the Peshwas and the Sardars were given grants in the form of the 'Inam' or revenue free lands in recognition of their support and service to the government. For instance, Sayajirao Gaikwad granted a village as an Inam to the Tulshibagwales in 1772.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, there is an order of grant of a village as Inam from Raghuji Angre to the Tulshibagwales.<sup>52</sup>

Further, a letter of the Peshwa Madhav Rao mentions a grant of five bighas of land to the Tulshibagwales which lay adjacent to the Tulshibagwale's hereditary Vatan at Patali.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly, a letter contains a list having names of villages and their Vahivatdars whom Raghuji Bhonsle had ordered to pay 1 per cent of the revenue to Vishwanathbhat Vaidya as remuneration.<sup>54</sup>

Another letter mentions that a Sanad of the Chatrapati Shahu granted the village of Jambali to the Vaidyas.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, Balambhat and Vishwanathbhat Vaidyas, as a letter informs, were granted Sar-mokadami Vatan of eleven Mahals including Dabhol, Chiplun, Guhagar, Jalgaon etc.<sup>56</sup> In the same way an order of Raghuji Bhonsle grants Mokasa of Char Thane in the district Yedalabad to Vishwanathbhat.<sup>57</sup> Another Sanad of the Chatrapati Shahu grants Inam lands of Mauje Mahuri Budruk to Vaidya brothers.<sup>58</sup>

How much importance the Marathas accorded to the bankers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be gauged from the fact that even the 'Ajnapatra', a book on policies written by the minister Ramchandra Pant belonging to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, deals, in detail, with the importance of bankers or Sahukars to the state. It states'

"Sahukar's are ornaments. By them the kingdom is made prosperous and populous. They advance money during crises and the crises are overcome. Extending protection to Sahukars brings great advantages. Therefore, they should be honoured. Foreign Sahukars should be induced to come and settle. If it is not convenient for them to come, tempt them to or at least send their agents."<sup>59</sup>

Even in the whole course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Peshwas and the Maratha Sardars, in order to fulfil their cash needs, kept their doors open for the bankers-cum-traders in their domains. It is in this perspective that the various privileges (in the form of Inam lands, as discussed earlier) and other responsible offices conferred on the bankers in 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion should be viewed. Taking for instance, the case of the Holkars, Khando Baurao wrote to Ahilyabai Holkar, "I colonized here a new Peth naming it Ahilyapura in pargana Ambad. Local substantial Sahukars and such agents have, under your Highness name, been induced to come and stay with their families at Ambad."<sup>60</sup> One of the prominent sawakar families in the Holkars' territory was that of the wakades who were jewellers-cum-financiers and who, during Tukoji Holkar's time, loaned for the camels, horses and shanties for the armies.<sup>61</sup> Similarly big bankers like Balvantrao Gopal

financed the armies of the Holkars and Shindes.<sup>62</sup> Some of the bankers were even employed as 'pagedar' or commanders of troops by the Maratha leaders while Some of the bankers were given Saranjams.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to these, some of the big banking families were even offered prominent positions especially at the Maratha Sardars' courts.<sup>64</sup> For instance, Vishwanathbhat Vaidya was appointed as 'Sikkenavis' or keeper of the royal seal of Mudhoji Bhonsle.<sup>65</sup> Another letter informs that Viswanathbhat Vaidya was designated as the 'ambassador' of Raghuji Bhosle.<sup>66</sup> The influential role of the banking families, for instance, of the Vaidyas in the 18th century can be observed from the fact that they were an important link between the Bhonsles on the one hand and the Chatrapati on the other. Some instances showing Raghuji's urges to Vaidya brothers to communicate to the Chatrapati about his strong protest against the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao's encroachment into his territory have been mentioned in the last chapter. In addition there are various such requests made to the Vaidya brothers.

For instance, in one letter Tuloji Angre asked the Vaidya brothers to apprise the Chatripati about his preparedness for launching expetidition against the Siddis.<sup>67</sup>

In another letter, Pratap Somvanshi requested the Vaidya brothers to persuade the Chatrapati Shahu in issuing the Sanad granting the village Dhoraja to God Moraya of Chinchwad.<sup>68</sup>

In another letter, Raghuji Bhonsle sent a detailed report of his expedition and conquest in Bengal to Vaidya brothers and asked them to inform it to the Chatrapati.<sup>69</sup>

Another letter mentioned that the Chatrapati Shahu gave the responsibility to Vishwanathbhat Vaidya to sort out the differences between Raghuji and Rayaji Bhosle which Vishwanathbhat successfully accomplished.<sup>70</sup> Further, in one letter, the Amatya Bhagwantrao Ramchandra informed the Vaidya brothers the disturbed political condition of Kolhapur and requested for their intervention in solving the problem.<sup>71</sup>

Letters of this sort addressed to the Vaidya brothers show as to how much confidence and faith the officials, the Sardars and the Chatrapati reposed on the Vaidya brothers. Following evidences further show the influential position enjoyed by the Vaidyas in the political affairs of those days. These evidences are recorded in the form of reports sent from the officials. For instance, in a letter Ragho Ballal Bhogle the Kamavisadar of Ramtek informed the Vaidya brothers the details of the administration of Raghuji Bhosle. He also wrote that Krishnaji Narayan and Bimbaji Vanjal were the new Subedars of Chanda and Deogad respectively. He further mentioned that Janoji Bhonsle had gone to Bengal.<sup>72</sup>

Similarly, a report sent to the Vaidya brothers from Naro Anant Gadre from Nagpur mentioned in detail the difficulties in realising the revenue of kelwad, Bhugaon, Tekadi, Peth Nagpur and Ramtek.<sup>73</sup>

Further, in an another letter Baji Vitthal Phadke wrote to Vishwanathbhat Vaidya about the arrival of Ahmad Shah Abdali and the meeting of Nanasaheb and Sadashivrao Bhau at Patdur.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to receiving reports from different quarters, the Vaidya brothers' dominant position also get reflected by the following instance in which the Mokadam of the village of Vaki in the division of Supa received an order from the Vaidya brothers which want the Patil and Kulkarni of the village for their failure in sending to the Vaidyas the accounts of the revenue collection without any excuse. The Patil and Kulkarni were also warned against future disobedience.<sup>75</sup>

Similarly, an order by Vishwanathbhat Vaidya to the Mokadam of Mauje Rahatgaon, Prant Berar mentions that the revenue collection of the village of the current years would be done by Gopal Anant with whom he must cooperate.<sup>76</sup>

Similarly, at Baroda in the Gaikwads' domain, a wealthy banker Gopal Rao Mairal who had banking branches in big cities like Surat, Bombay, Hyderabad, Gwalior, etc. held an influential position at the Gaikwads' court

along with other bankers.<sup>77</sup> Even in the territories of Shindes and Holkars, as Malcolm's description would make us believe, the bankers acquired influence both in 'the councils of states' and the local administration of the provinces, that gave them considerable power.<sup>78</sup> For instance, a big banker Gopal Paruk acquired influence by being the minister of Shindes. Similar was the case with Tantia Jogh under the Holkars, especially under Malhar Rao Holkar.<sup>79</sup>

Further, the family of the Tulshibagwales also participated in the administrative processes (as discussed in the second chapter) as being the Subedars of the Poona Prant and discharging functions like maintaining law and order, adjudicating disputes as well as collecting revenue from the Prant of Poona. However, Naro Appaji Tulshibagwale was more than just Subedar of the Prant Poona. He was also a competent diplomat and actively participated in the political affairs of Poona especially during the period 1761-1775. For instance, he actively supported the ministers and nobles at the Poona Court who had firmly stood against the faction led by Raghunath Rao.<sup>80</sup>

It may be added here that besides these administrative responsibilities the activities of the bankers in the 18th century Maratha dominion incorporated even the cultural and social works. The bankers eagerly donated a part of their huge monetary profits for temple construction and other religious purposes.<sup>81</sup> The Vaidyas, for examples, patronised temple construction in the Konkan territory, chief among them being the temples of Lakshminarayan,

Karhateshwar, Adityeshwar etc. built at Lawagna, Jayagadi and var vade respectively.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, the family of the Tulshibagwales also performed activities like supervising several civic and community works such as building lake and sewer in and around the city of Poona, besides their patronages of temple construction.<sup>83</sup>

Hence to conclude, the big bankers' activities in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Maratha dominion had expanded well beyond their traditional business of banking and money-changing. The attitudes of the Peshwas and Sardars remained too favourable towards bankers and such attitudes came, largely, to be conditioned by the urgent need of cash as felt by the Peshwas and the Sardars. Moreover, the bankers not only financially aided the Peshwas, Sardars, the Chatrapati and the officials but even actively participated in the machinery of governance.

## Notes

1. See, Kulkarni G.T., 'Banking in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A case study of a Poona banker, 'Artha vijnana' June 1973, Vol.XV, No.2, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.
2. Mahajan T.T., 'Industry, Trade & Commerce During the Peshwa period, 'Pointer Publishers, Jaipur 1989, p.p. 93.
3. Kulkarni, op. cit
4. See, Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal Quarterly, Vol.16, No.1, Chapter, 'Dikshit-Patwardhan Yanche Pedhicha. Vyavahar' by C.B. Joshi, p. 19
5. Kulkarni, G.T., op. cit.
6. Ibid., p. 85.
7. Ibid.
8. See, Vaidya Daptarantun Nivadalele Kagad, by S.L. Vaidya, (hereafter VDNK) BISM Journal, Part-2, pp. 16-17
9. Ibid, part-3, pp.40-41
10. Chapeker, N.G., 'Peshwaichya Saavaleet', Pune, 1937, pp.71-72
11. Selections from Satara Raja and Peshwas' Diaries (hereafter SSRPD) Vol-II, Part-II, pp. 170-180
12. VDNK, Part-5, pp.23-24.
13. for loan agreement see VDNK, part-5, letter No.-8, year Oct. 1752 to July 1753, and VDNK Part-6, no.5, p. 4 year Oct. 1752 to July 1756 (Purandare Daftar part-I (ed.) K.V. Purandare BISM Granthmala, No.32, 1929, p.156 letter no.214, year 1748.)
14. For instance see VDNK Part-5, letter no.2, p.p.-3-5, year 18 Nov. 1753 to April 1754 and letter no.65, pp. 54-55, year 1754/55, also see Tulshibagwale Daftar by Sades Shiv Athavale, BISM Quarterly, Pune, Vol.76, July 1997- April 1998, a letter of the year 1760-61 shows Mudhoji Bhonsle owed Rs.31,546/- to Tulshibagwale.
15. SSRPD, Vol.7, Part-II, 732, year 1763-64.



16. VDNK, Part-6, No.7, year 1756
17. Tulshibagwale Daftar, op. cit.
18. Ibid.
19. See, Kulkarni G.T., op. cit, pp. 189-90.
20. Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 21, Letter No. 80.
21. See, Tulshibagwale Daftar. op.cit., account year May-June 1774- May/June 1775.
22. See for instance, S.S.R.P.D., Vol. 7, Letter Nos. 733, 734 and 735.
23. Mahajan T.T., 'Industry, Trade ....', p. 95.
24. See, Kulkarni, G.T., op.cit. pp. 188, 192.
25. Ibid.
26. See, for both these tables, Chapekar, N.G., 'Peshwaichya Saavaleet', Pune 1937, p. 32.
27. See, Sen S.N., 'Military System of the Marathas', pp.59.
28. See Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol-XIII, letter No.13, dated 30.10.1728, letter no.14, dated 29.11.1728, letter nos.18-19, dated Dec. 1728 and early 1729, letter no.22, dated either Dec. 1728 or early 1729, letter no.29, dated 04.01.1729.
29. As A.R. Kulkarni remarks that the Marathas took loans from bankers to carry out military activities, in Tripathi Dwijendra, (ed.), State and Business in India: A Historical Perspective', Delhi 1987.
30. See, Singh Raghubir, 'Malwa in Transition or A Century of Anarchy: The First Phase 1698-1765, Bombay, 1936, pp. 188-193.
31. See, SSRPD, Vol. 1, Letter no. 364, p. 211 dated 1733-34.
32. Rajwade Vishwanath Kashinath, (ed), 'Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhanen', part-13, Jan. 1918, p. 163, letter no.-159.
33. SSRPD, Vol. II, Chapter on the Peshwa Madhav Rao.
34. See, VDNK, Part-5, letter no.32, p.p. 30 dated 17 Oct., 1754 letter no.33, p. 30, dated 18 Oct., 1754, letter no.44, p.48, dated 29 Oct., 1755.
35. See, Sinha, H.N., p. 245.
36. Kulkarni G.T., op. cit.

37. Tulshibagwale Daftar, op. cit.
38. VDNK, Part-4, letter No.22, p. 14-15, dated April 1749.
39. BISM Quarterly, Vol.26, No.1-3, Aitihāsik Sankirna Sahitya Series part-6, 1946, Chap., 'Bhonsle Nagpurkar Yanchi Potadari va Karijakhaten' by S.N. Vatsa Joshi.
40. Rajwade, op. cit, letter no.-66, p. 50.
41. VDNK, Part-4, letter no.32, p. 27 dated 22 Nov. 1742.
42. Ibid., letter no.12, p.13 dated 30 April 1743.
43. Ibid., letter no.40, pp. 28-29, dated 29 Sept. 1749.
44. Ibid., letter nos.50-51, p.p. 35,36, dated 28 Oct., 1744.
45. Ibid., letter no.58, p. 39, dated 14 Dec. 1744.
46. VDNK, Part-5, letter no.21, p.18, dated 8 Oct. 1752.
47. Ibid., letter no.8, p.10, dated 12 June 1754.
48. Ibid., letter no.25, pp. 20-21, dated Aug. 29, 1750.
49. Ibid., letter no.2, p. 57, dated 30 March, 1755.
50. See, Broughton Thomas, 'Letters from a Mahratta Camp', Calcutta 1977, pp. 122-124.
51. See, Tulshibagwale Daftar, op. cit, dated 22.02.1772.
52. Ibid., dated June 3, 1777.
53. Ibid., dated Nov. 1, 1777.
54. VDNK, part-5, letter no.37, pp. 33-34, year 1754
55. Ibid., part-4, letter no.2, pp.2-3, dated 12 Jan. 1742.
56. Ibid, op. cit, letter no.1, pp.1-2, dated Jan 7, 1742 and VDNK, part-3, letter no.78, pp. 47-48 dated Dec. 18, 1741.
57. VDNK, part-3, letter no.69, pp. 42, dated Nov. 25, 1741.
58. Ibid., part-2, letter no.64, pp.70-71, dated Sept. 1740.
59. See, Guha Sumit, 'Potentates Traders and Peasants: Western India, 1700-1870'. Occasional Papers, Second Series, no. LVIII, Nehru Memorial Musuim and Library, New Delhi, 1992, p. 3.
60. Gordon Stewart, 'Marathas, Marauders ....', p. 179.

61. See, Kale B.G., 'Uttar Marathe Shahitil Sarafi Dhandha', BISM Journal, No. 18:4, April 1938.
62. Ibid.
63. Mahajan T.T., 'Aspect of Agrarian ....', p. 135. How much the bankers enjoyed privileges under the 18th century Marathas can be noticed in the nostalgic feeling share among themselves in 19th century. For instance, in the letter dated 24 Nov. 1843, a banker Daulatrao Lad recounted, how Saranjam was granted to his great grandfather by Chatrapati Shahu for his loyal services and that the same Saranjam was continued by the Peshwas, in Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 44, Letter No. 15, p. 24. Also see Letter No. 11, p. 14 for bankers' feelings about the Subedari and Saranjam privileges enjoyed by them under the Marathas.
64. As Wink discusses in op.cit., p.336.
65. VDNK, Part - 4, Letter No. 3, p. 2, dated Jan. 14, 1748.
66. Ibid., p. 30, Letter No. 34, dated August 24, 1746.
67. Ibid., Letter No. 14, pp. 11-12, dated May 9, 1742.
68. Ibid., Letter No. 15, pp. 12-13, dated 19 May 1742.
69. Ibid., pp. 22-23, Letter No. 23, dated 12 May 1745.
70. Ibid., p. 42, Letter No. 46, dated 25 November 1746.
71. VDNK, Part - 3, pp. 24-25, Letter No. 43, dated July 1741.
72. VDNK, Part-4, Letter No. 5, pp. 3-4, dated 23 January 1748.
73. Ibid., Letter No. 22, pp. 17-19, dated June 19, 1748.
74. VDNK, Part-6, Letter No. 30, p. 20, dated March 15, 1760.
75. VDNK, Part-4, Letter No. 28, pp. 27-28, dated July 7, 1745.
76. Ibid., Letter No. 42, pp. 38-39, dated November 22, 1746.
77. See, Wink, op.cit., p. 336.
78. See, Malcolm John, 'A Memor of Central India including Malwa' Vol - II, Sagar Publications, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 28, 38.
79. Wink, op.cit., p. 337.
80. See, Tulshibagwale Daftar, op. cit.

81. Mahajan T.T., 'Aspects of Agrarian ...', p. 139, Also see Wink, op.cit., p. 336.
82. Mahajan T.T., 'Industry Trade ....', p. 94.
83. See, Chapekar, 'Peshwaichyal .....', Tulshibagwale's account of the years 1774 and 1778 and 1782, pp. 81-83.

# **CONCLUSION**

The profession of banking/money-lending is age old. It thrives and flourishes in those surroundings which offer it a secured and added return (either in monetary or in non-monetary forms) of its capital i.e. the loan-advances.

So far, largely, the studies especially on the 18th century Maratha - ruled areas have assigned the causes of the widespread banking activities to the commercial vigour, monetisation of economy and territorial expansion of the Marathas which, as these studies opine, facilitated the growth of the banking network. True, these factors were certainly at work and the present study does, in no way, undervalue the overall positive impacts of all these factors on the expansion of the bankers' business in the 18th century Maratha dominion. But such factors, as delineated by the scholars, were not the sole ones which mobilised and encouraged the banking activities especially in the area and period of the present study because there were other factors or opportunities as well which offered a secured return with profit to the banking venture in the 18th century Maratha dominion. And these factors of assured return of the bankers' investments lay inherent in the nature of the 18th century Maratha political structure and revenue administration. The Maratha leaders, in the course of the 18th century often remained in urgent need of cash, partly (as has been discussed) due to the ineffectively implemented revenue administration, and partly owing to the internal strife and mutual antagonisms (in

matters of sharing the income among the Peshwas, the Sardars and the Chatrapati), which negatively affected their monetary requirements. The Maratha revenue administration of the 18th century was devised to ensure smooth revenue collection but the efforts towards ensuring a sound revenue administration seem to have taken a back seat in the light of the existing demerits and corrupt practices (as discussed in the first chapter), which cropped up in the revenue administration of the 18th century Maratha dominated areas; and in which the Maratha leaders had to bear the ultimate financial losses. It was in order to check these incongruencies in the revenue administration, therefore, that the government introduced the advance collection of revenue as 'rasad', aiming to (a) keep the revenue collectors i.e., the Kamavisadars/ Mamlatdars in control as well as (b) to ensure a regular flow of revenue in cash.

It was this system of advance collection, evolved in the revenue administration under the Marathas, that induced the active participation of the bankers, who provided the 'rasad' amount - as loan - either to the revenue collectors or directly to the treasury. However, since such loans, which the bankers advanced to the government were to be repaid to the bankers within a stipulated time-frame, the Maratha leaders repaid it generally through assigning the 'mamlat' or 'kamavis' rights of an specified area to the bankers (due to want of cash) to enable them to collect their dues to the government from the revenue of the area. In this way, the

Maratha government kept on assigning or parcelling out its resources into the private hands i.e., the bankers/money-lenders.

On the other hand, the bankers invested their capital, by advancing the 'rasad' amount either to the revenue collectors or directly to the treasury, remaining assured of its return either in the form of cash or through getting the revenue collection rights of an area.

The second measure which the Marathas took to ease their financial difficulties by regularising the revenue collection was the introduction of the farming system in the later half of the 18th century. The person who bid the highest revenue of an area was given the farming rights. Here, as well, it were generally the bankers who became the farmers of the revenue, especially in the central Maratha territories of the Shindes and the Holkars:

The Peshwas, the Sardars as well as the Chatrapati borrowed large amounts from the bankers owing, much, to the inconsistency in sharing the dues among themselves. The nature of mutual relationship that came to be shared among the Peshwas, the Sardars and the Chatrapati in the course of the 18th century, was such that the sharing of dues often favoured those who kept superior military might. Added to this plight was the non-compliance of the division of areas between the Sardars and the Peshwas.



Thus, cumulatively, the absence of a centralised and effective authority coupled with the mutual bickering and problems in revenue flow took a huge toll of the financial conditions of the Maratha leaders. Unfortunately, instead of stemming these mutual antagonisms in matters of sharing the income among themselves, the Maratha leaders, increasingly came to rely on the ready cash and kind, as provided by the bankers in the 18th century. Such loans which the bankers extended to the Maratha leaders were of short-term loans and generally, the Maratha leaders mortgaged a particular piece of revenue-yielding area to the bankers as security of the loan. And in case of non-payment of the loan to the bankers, they were given the revenue collecting rights of that area.

Hence, it was the overall nature of mutual relationships (among the Peshwas, the Sardars and the Chatrapati) and of the revenue administration in the 18th century Maratha dominion, which urgently sought the cash and kind supply through the bankers and thus contributed in giving a boost to the banking network in addition to the factors namely, monetisation of economy, commercial vigour in the 18th century, and so on; as pointed out by the scholars.

However, state's dependence on the banking capital to finance itself was not the feature of only the 18th century Maratha dominion but was, it seems, a pan-

Indian phenomenon. In Bengal, for instance, the bankers paid land revenue on behalf of the Zamindars and stood surety for them. In the 18th century Rajasthan also, the taluqdars furnished the surety of the bankers for the payment of revenue to the government which along with the practice of ijara facilitated the closer participation of the bankers in the administration of villages.

However, since exploring the factors responsible for the state's reliance upon the bankers' capital in these areas is out of the purview of the present study, nevertheless, as far as the 18th century Maratha dominion's dependence on the bankers' loans is concerned, the two causative factors namely, irregular revenue earnings (due to inherent demerits) and secondly, the mutual antagonisms among the Maratha leaders, were largely responsible for their dependence on the banking community and thus helping the bankers to penetrate their dominance and expand their network. Whether this penetration of the bankers' capital signified a sign of development or regression is a matter of further study, nevertheless, the various privileges available to the bankers in the Maratha areas, in the form of revenue-free Inam lands, appointment as advisors, ambassadors, sikkenavis etc., were certainly given in recognition of their power of purse, which the 18th century Maratha rulers had to reckon with.

All these engagements of the bankers in the 18th century Maratha dominion seems to imply that the bankers had diversified their activities and that the banking capital had made its presence felt in the 18th century Maratha dominion, be it at the level of the land revenue administration or for that matter at the Maratha rulers' courts.

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# **APPENDIX (MAPS)**

## HOUSE OF THE BHATS (PESHWAS)

(1) **Balaji Vishwanath Bhat** (Shrivardhan : Konkan)  
(1660-1720) **Peshwa : 1713-1720**  
= Radhabai

(2) **Bajirao I**  
(1700-1740)  
**PESHWA : 1720-40**

Chimaji Appa  
(1703-1740)  
= Rakhamabai  
= Annapurnabai  
Son : Sadashivrao Bhau  
(Panipat fame)  
Daughter : Bayabai

Anubai (daughter)  
(Married to Ghorpade  
of Ichalkaranji)

Bhiubai (daughter)  
(Married to Joshi  
of Baramati)

(3) **Balaji (Nanasaheb)**  
(1721-1761) **Peshwa; 1740-61**  
= Gopikabai

Ramachandra

**Raghunathrao** (Raghoba Dada)  
(1734-1783) **Peshwa : for a while  
in Oct. 1773**  
= Anandibai

Janardhan

Vishwasrao  
(1742-1761)  
died at Panipat

(4) **Madhavrao I**  
(1745-1772)  
**Peshwa : 1761-1772**  
= Ramabai  
(became sati)

(5) **Narayanrao**  
(1755-1773)  
**Peshwa : 1772**  
= Gangabai

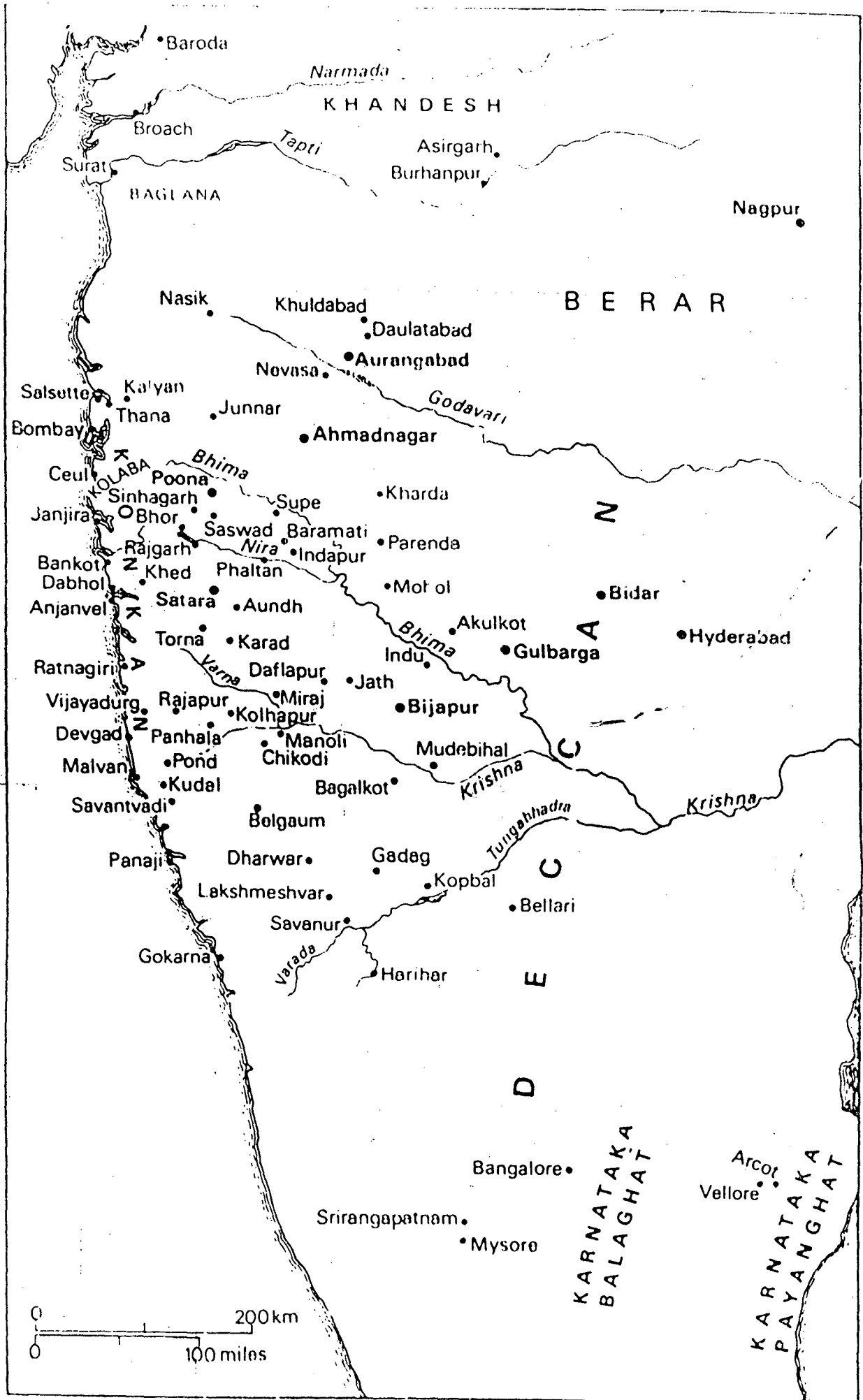
(6) **Madhavrao II**  
(1774-1795)  
**Peshwa : 1774-95**  
= Ramabai  
= Yashodabai

(7) **Bajirao II**  
(1775-1851)  
**Peshwa : 1795-1818**  
11 wives

Nanasaheb (Dhondopant)  
(adopted)  
Leader in 1857 Revolt.  
died in 1858

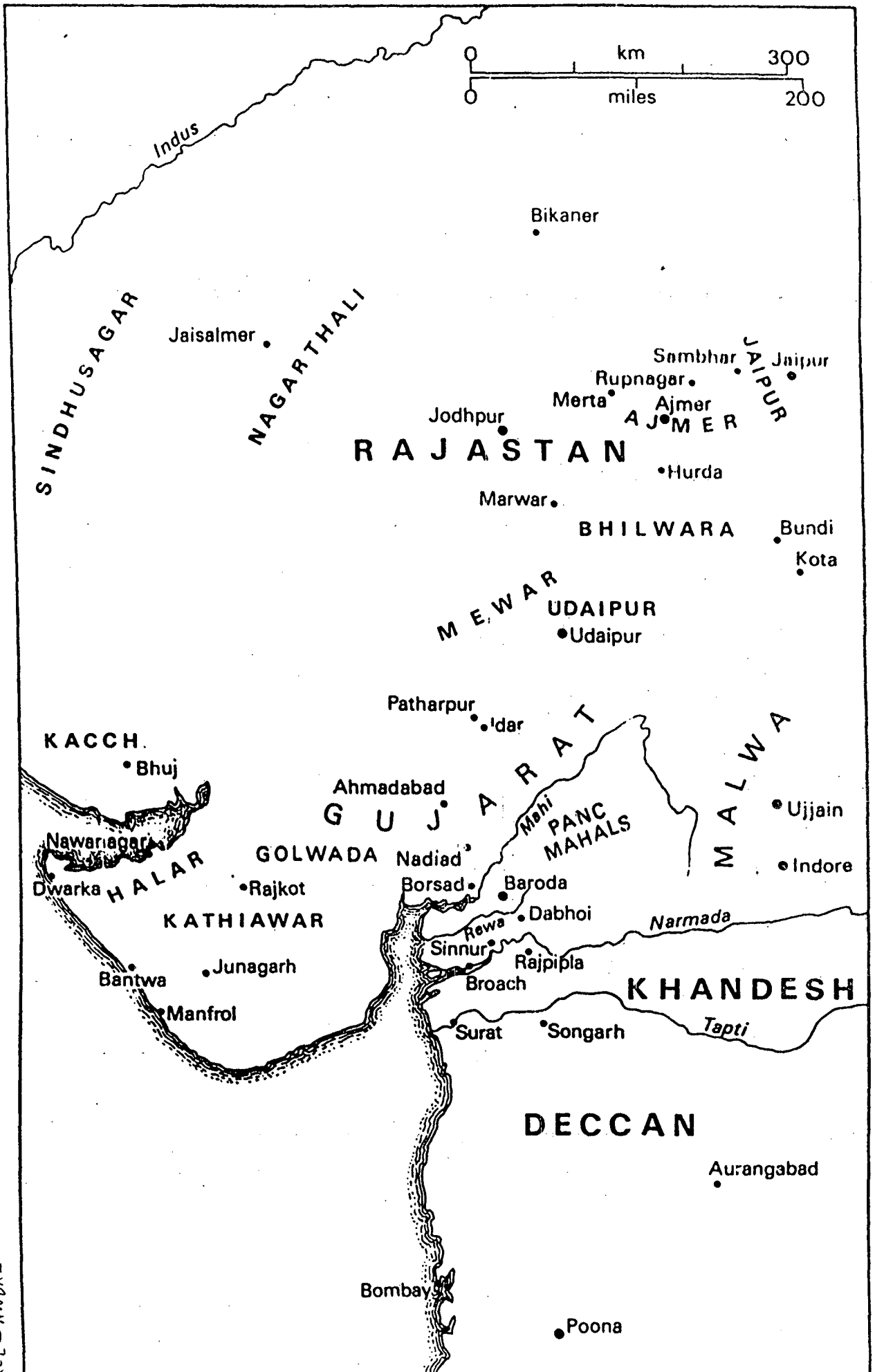
Chimaji

Amritrao  
(adopted)  
**Peshwa : for a while  
in 1802**

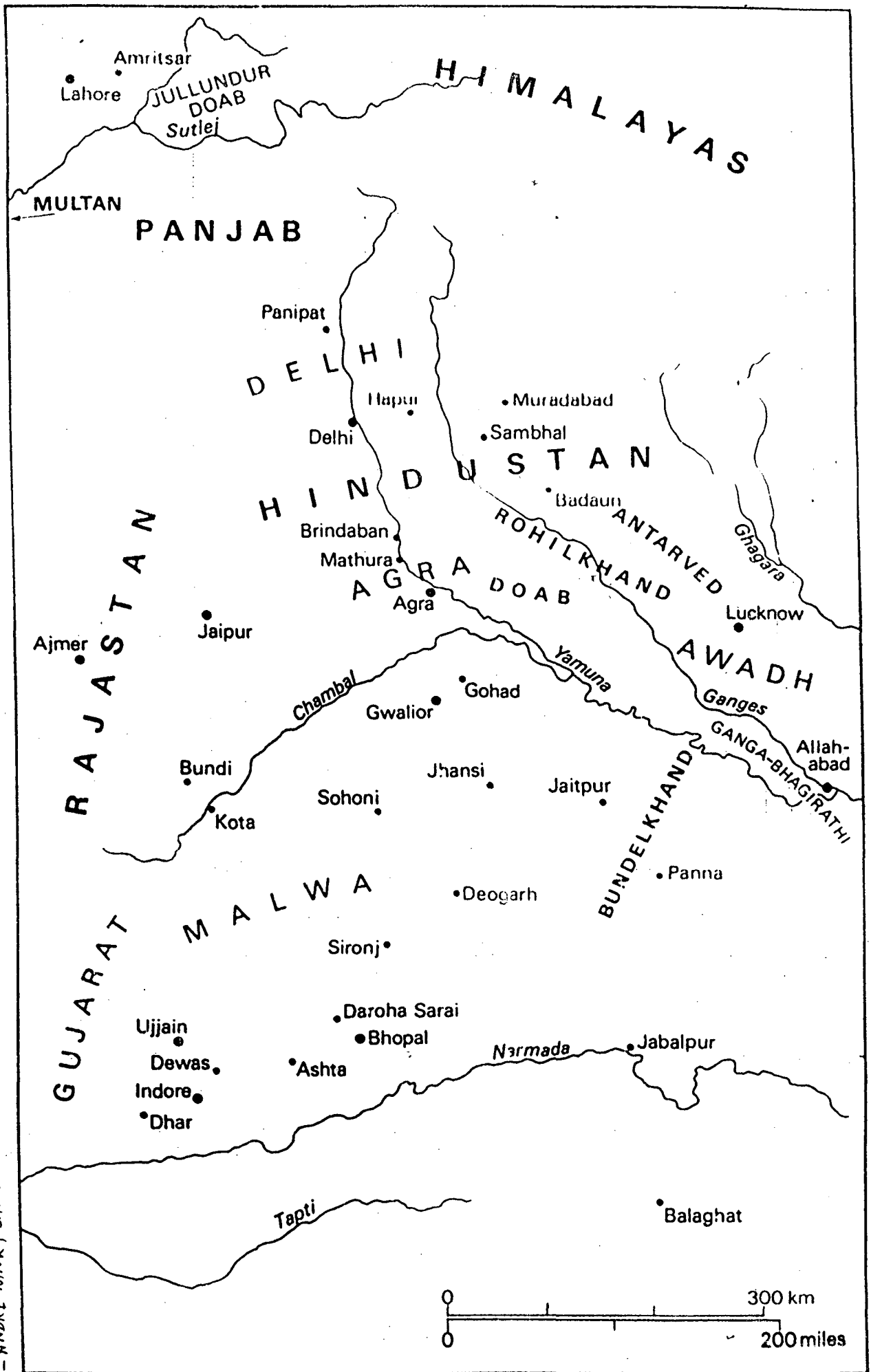


SOURCE — ANDRE WINK, LAND AND SOVEREIGNTY...

The Deccan

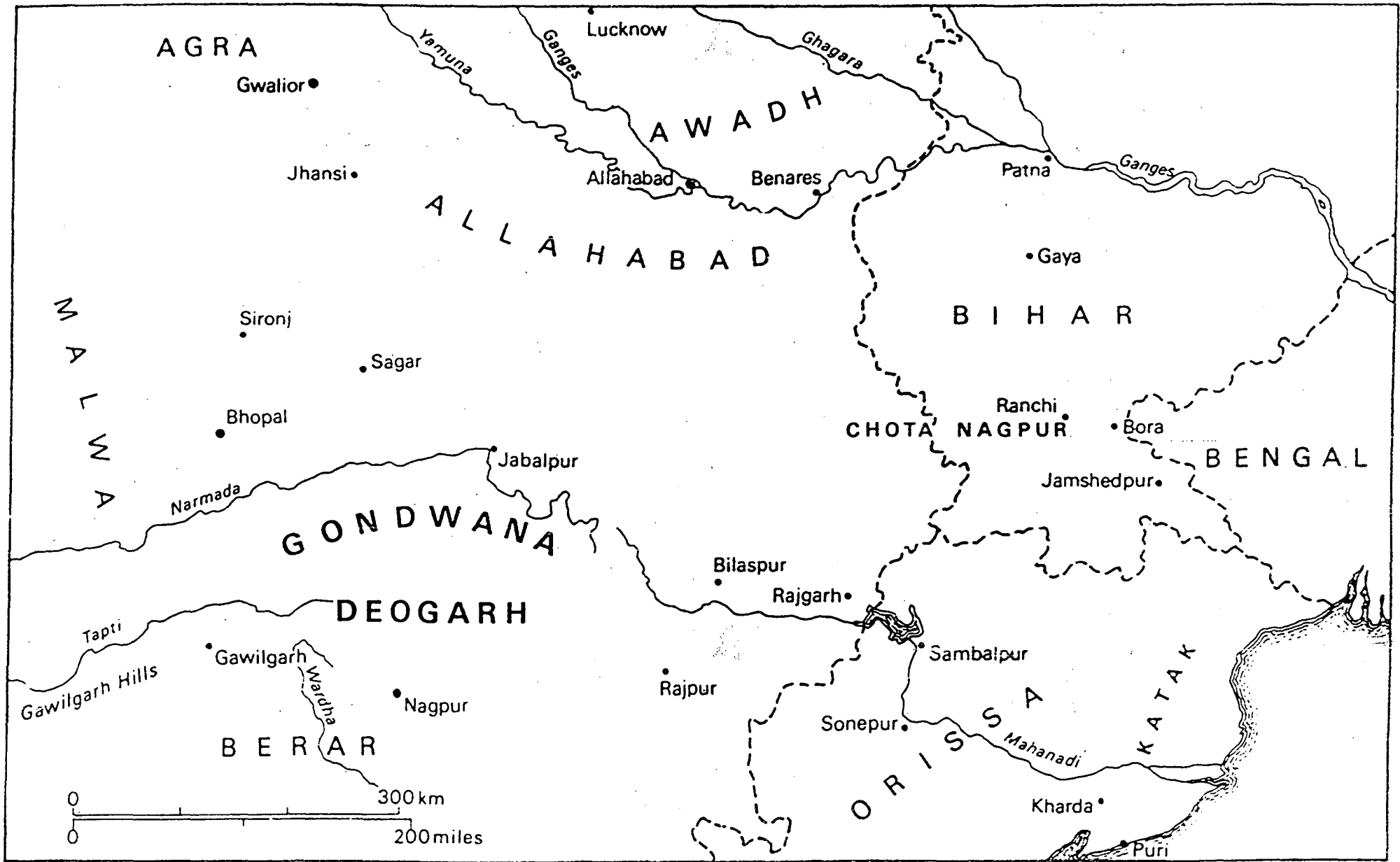


Gujarat and Rajasthan



Malwa and Hindustan

SOURCE- ANDRE WINK, "LAND AND SOVEREIGNTY..."



Berar, Bihar and Orissa



