

**Colonial Governance in Gujrat: Revenue Administration and Judicial Transformation
under British Rule (1849–1947)**

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the emergence and function of revenue and judicial systems during the British colonial period (1849–1947) in Gujrat. After the annexation of Punjab in 1849, the British colonial government established a centralized bureaucratic framework that aimed to consolidate political authority, regulate agrarian production, and secure a steady revenue stream. In Gujrat, these policies were carried out by implementing systematic land revenue settlements, extensive land surveys, and developing intricate systems of record-keeping, such as jamabandi and khasra records. These policies resulted in a change in land ownership and strengthened the hand of local landed classes, who worked closely with the colonial government. Simultaneously, the colonial government's introduction of codified legal systems replaced earlier systems of pluralistic legal practices, such as customary law and Islamic law, with a hierarchical judicial framework that operated under British legal codes. This study reveals how closely connected these systems were with each other during the colonial period in Gujrat. Land records, which emerged during revenue settlements, served as principal evidence in legal cases, and the judicial systems frequently upheld the agrarian order that emerged during colonial fiscal policies. While these systems ensured administrative and legal standardization, they also led to considerable socio-economic implications, including landlordism, the marginalization of small farmers, and an increasing reliance on market forces and credit systems. This study, by examining settlement reports and colonial gazetteers, attempts to place Gujrat's experience within a broader framework of colonial Punjab and suggests that these systems functioned not just as systems of governance but as tools by which colonial authority remade rural Punjab and its people. This study also reveals how these systems' legacies continue to impact contemporary administrative and legal systems in postcolonial Pakistan.

Keywords: Colonial Administration, Land Revenue System, Judicial Institutions, Agrarian Society, Gujrat District (Punjab)

INTRODUCTION

Annexation of Punjab by the British Empire in 1849 led to a significant reshuffling in the administrative, economic, and legal systems of the region (Talbot, 1988). Among the districts that were reshaped in this context, Gujrat held a centrally strategic position in Punjab and enjoyed a relatively close proximity to the key political and economic centres of northern India. Under the British regime, Gujrat came to be recognized as a key site for the application and experimentation of colonial administrative mechanisms, with a specific focus on revenue collection and judicial systems.

The revenue and judicial systems introduced by the British were not only administrative innovations but also integral components of colonial rule in India. The land revenue system was the primary financial base of colonial rule in India, and its systematic realization involved detailed surveys, bureaucracies, and an efficient network of local intermediaries. Simultaneously, the introduction of codified judicial systems allowed the colonial administration to regulate conflicts, enforce property rights, and justify its rule through the rhetoric of law and justice. In aggregate, these institutions revolutionized agrarian relations, landholding patterns, and conflict resolution in colonial Punjab. This article examines the growth and functioning of the revenue and judicial systems in Gujrat between

1849 and 1947. It examines the realization of land revenue settlements in Punjab, the classification and valuation of agricultural lands, and the administrative mechanisms through which land revenues were realized in Gujrat. It also examines the introduction of British law codes in Punjab, the judicial hierarchy in colonial Punjab, and the role of lawyers in the colonial judicial process. It draws upon district settlement reports, administrative records, colonial gazetteers, and existing historical scholarship to position Gujrat within the broader framework of colonial Punjab.

The argument that the current work advances is that the revenue and judicial systems established by the colonial state did not simply operate as neutral administrative systems, but as systems that effectively reshaped the social hierarchies of the colonial world in favour of the imperial powers. The impact of the systems of property rights and colonial law on the state-rural society interface has been profound, and the legacy of the colonial systems can be seen to have been felt long after the colonial state itself was dismantled.

BRIEF HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT OF GUJRAT

Gujrat, located at 32.5711° N, 74.0750° E in the Punjab province of modern-day Pakistan, has throughout its history enjoyed strategic, economic, and cultural importance in South Asia. It is bordered on the south by Wazirabad and Gujranwala, on the east by Sialkot, on the west by Mandi Baha-ud-Din, on the northwest by Jhelum, and on the north by Bhimber, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Situated between the Chenab and Jhelum rivers, it provides highly fertile land for agricultural purposes (Gupta, 2006; Iqbal & Ali, 2025). The historical importance of Gujrat may be understood from its historical villages and towns, like Jalalpur Jattan, Tibbi Sikhwan, Chakina, Barrila Sharif, Sheikh Chogani, which altogether highlight its historical importance as a focal point of economic, cultural, and political activities in South Asia. Its importance is recorded as early as 326 BCE, when Alexander the Great launched his campaign in the region in the famous Battle of Hydaspes, a battle that promoted cultural and administrative interaction between Greek and native cultures (Stein, 1932). Various Islamic, Mughal, and Sikh empires have contributed to its socio-political and architectural history, resulting in a number of mosques, gardens, and cities that blended native and imperial styles (Ali, 2017).

The mid-nineteenth century is a landmark period in the history of Gujrat, which saw the end of the Second Anglo-Sikh War and the decisive Battle of Gujrat in 1849. This marked the end of Sikh rule in the region and paved the way for British colonial dominance in Punjab (Singh, 2008; Talbot, 1988; Iqbal, Ali & Azeem, 2025). The period saw Gujrat become a major administrative center for British colonial rule, a key center for military operations, and a major center for revenue collection. This was coupled with the development of irrigation systems like the Jhelum Canal in 1901 and the establishment of new towns like Mandi Bahaudin, which featured modern town planning (Rehman & Wescoat, 1993). The colonial period was marked by major social and cultural transformations. Traditional systems like kinship networks, caste systems, and religious practices were recorded, codified, and transformed during the colonial period (Ibbetson, 1883; Cohn, 1996). Though the British period saw the development of modern systems like education, law, and infrastructure in the region, it was still marked by the cultural identity that has existed since the early period. This includes traditional practices like oral history, Sufism, and literature (Gilmartin, 1988; Iqbal, Ali & Mushtaq, 2025). An attempt to sketch the historical period from the early period to the colonial period provides a clear background for discussing the development of revenue systems during the British period.

Imposition of British Authority in Gujrat (1849)

The consolidation of British authority in Gujrat took place in the larger political transformation that followed the disintegration of the Sikh Empire. The Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–49), which resulted in the annexation of Punjab by the British East India Company, effectively brought to an end the era of Sikh rule and ushered in a new era in the administration of Punjab. The district of Gujrat came to acquire considerable symbolic and strategic importance in this process due to the decisive

Battle of Gujrat fought on 21 February 1849. The defeat of the Sikh Khalsa army led by General Sher Singh at the hands of the British forces enabled the final consolidation of British authority in Punjab under Governor General Lord Dalhousie (Singh, 2008).

In the immediate years following annexation, the British dismantled many of the existing structures of governance that had been in place during the Sikh era, introducing a standard system of provincial governance. Gujrat, as a district, was formally established within the Lahore Division of the Punjab in 1853, although the early years of colonial governance were characterized by a transitional system of governance dominated by military officers, such as John Nicholson and Henry Lawrence, who played a significant part in bringing order to the region and laying the initial stages of governance, although this was prior to the full-fledged system of civil governance (Talbot, 1996).

The strategic importance of Gujrat for the colonial state can be gauged on the basis of various factors, including the fact that the district of Gujrat was located on the Grand Trunk Road, which was one of the primary communication arteries of northern India, while the fertile agricultural plains of Gujrat promised significant revenue potential for the colonial state, besides the strategic location of Gujrat vis-à-vis Kashmir and the north-western frontier, which greatly enhanced its importance for the colonial state, while Gujrat also came to be recognized as one of the primary recruitment centres for the British Indian Army.

The administrative authority in the newly annexed province was in the hands of the Board of Administration, which was a governing body specifically set up for the governance of Punjab and comprised the leadership of Sir Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Charles Mansel. The policies set by the governing body were designed to bring rapid pacification to the region, revive agricultural activity, and lay the foundations for a stable system of revenue collection and judicial administration. In the district of Gujrat, as in other districts, the administrative authority was in the hands of a Deputy Commissioner, a characteristic of the centralized administrative system established by the British in Punjab (Ali, 1988).

Another important aspect of the early British administration in Gujarat was the reliance on the local landed classes to assist in governance. Rather than trying to remove the rural hierarchies completely, the colonial government tried to bring the powerful classes into the new system of governance. Many of the members of the landed classes, including some of the former officials of the Sikh regime, were identified and brought into the colonial fold. This was achieved by offering them recognition of property rights, involvement in the revenue system, and participation in local government. This can be seen as part of the colonial ideology that indirect rule through loyal classes could be achieved at minimal administrative cost (Ali, 1988).

The initial settlements in Gujarat were provisional in nature and were based on limited knowledge regarding local agriculture. The initial settlements were mostly based on rough estimates and limited information available to the British authorities regarding local landholding patterns. The district's first comprehensive settlement was carried out in the early 1860s by E. L. Brandreth and later refined by W. R. Gourlay. The settlement operations involved detailed surveys regarding landholding patterns, agriculture, and revenue possibilities in the region, laying down the basic framework for colonial agrarian administration (Punjab Settlement Reports, 1865).

Meanwhile, the British authorities introduced a new judicial system in the region to replace or regulate local mechanisms of dispute resolution. The application of the Indian Penal Code (1860) and Civil Procedure Code (1859) in Punjab represented a major departure from existing judicial traditions in the region. The introduction of codified legislation was meant to introduce uniformity in judicial procedures and expand colonial authority to the judicial domain. However, in practice, it was found to be in contradiction to local customs that were previously in operation in rural society (Misra, 2001).

In association with these administrative reforms, the colonial state invested heavily in infrastructure development. The development of roads, railways, telegraph systems, and irrigation systems was intended to improve communication, facilitate the movement of the military, and expand commercial linkages. The construction of the Gujrat-Jhelum Road and the expansion of the North Western Railway helped connect the district of Gujrat with the larger urban centres. In this way, the district of Gujrat was brought into the larger economic and administrative fold of the colony of British India (Gilmartin, 1998).

In this way, the British colonial state established an innovative form of governance in the district of Gujrat. This form of governance provided the basis for the development of the district's systems of revenue collection and justice in the coming decades.

Revenue Framework in Gujrat

The revenue system introduced by the British in Gujrat was used as the basic form of colonial rule in the district. The land revenue was considered to be the main source of income in Punjab, and its proper collection was considered to be essential for the financial stability of the colonial empire. The British introduced methodical land settlements, surveys, and created a hierarchy in land administration in the district of Gujrat to reform the rural economy and consolidate political authority over rural society in Punjab.

Land Revenue Settlements

In the post-annexation era, the British colonial government initiated a series of revenue settlements in the Punjab region to assess the agricultural resources of the region and develop a reliable system of taxation. The first phase of the revenue settlement in the region was the summary settlement, which took place from 1850 to 1853. The summary settlement was a provisional settlement that provided immediate revenues to the government by conducting a thorough survey of the region in the future. The summary settlement in the Gujrat district was largely dependent on the records of the Sikh government and the rapid surveys conducted by the British government, which resulted in a large number of inaccuracies in the records (Punjab Settlement Reports, 1865).

The second phase of the revenue settlement in the region took place in the early 1860s under the supervision of revenue officers such as E.L. Brandreth. The second phase of the revenue settlement involved the measurement of the land, the classification of the soil types, and the evaluation of the agricultural resources of the region. The genealogical records of the villages in the region were also prepared, along with the *jamabandi* records of the region. These records marked a significant improvement in the development of the colonial government in the region, as the legal grounds for the properties in the region were established in the *jamabandi* records (Brandreth, 1865).

Further settlement operations took place during the 1880s and again during the 1920s. The latter operations employed advanced statistical techniques, as well as more accurate agricultural data, which reflected the advanced level of colonial revenue management. W. R. Gourlay, for example, emphasized the significance of settlement records, noting that the detailed records compiled during the settlement operations provided a valuable means of controlling rural society within areas such as Gujrat District (Gourlay, 1923).

Revenue rates differed depending on the nature of the land, soil fertility, and irrigation facilities available. Irrigated lands, particularly those classified as *chahi*, bore a higher rate of taxation than rain-fed lands classified as *barani*. On average, the state's demand for revenue consisted of one-third to one-half of the estimated net agricultural produce, although exceptions might be made in the event of crop failure or other natural calamities (Mackenzie, 1861).

Land Classification and Assessment

A central feature of British revenue policy was the systematic classification of land based on agricultural potential and irrigation facilities. In Gujrat, land was typically categorized into four principal types:

1. Chahi (well-irrigated land)
2. Nehri (canal-irrigated land)
3. Barani (rain-fed land)
4. Tibba (sandy or uncultivable terrain)

These classifications have been arrived at following detailed field surveys. These classifications have been recorded in the official records. One of the records is the *khasra girdawari* record. This is a record of the seasonal conditions of the crops. It is also a record of the pattern of cultivation (Waterfield, 1874). The conceptual basis of the assessment system is the calculation of the net agricultural produce by deducting the costs of production. The burden of the payment of revenues remained high for the farmers. The introduction of the system of cash payment is a significant departure from the earlier systems of payment in kind. This brought the rural population into the colonial economy. The peasants were now vulnerable to the consequences of the market prices (Baden-Powell, 1892).

Revenue Collection Mechanism

The method of land revenue collection in Gujarat was based on the village-level system of administration. A major figure in this system was the *lambardar*, or the village headman, who was responsible for the collection of land revenue from the cultivators and depositing it into the government treasury. The *lambardars* were usually recruited from the powerful families of the villages. They were offered a small commission as a token of appreciation for their work. This post was hereditary, thereby ensuring the alliance between the colonial government and the rural elite (Talbot, 1996).

To assist the *lambardars*, there were other supporting officials. The patwari maintained records of land revenue, whereas the *kanungos*, tehsildars, and naib tehsildars supervised the work at the district level. However, all these officials worked under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner, who was the supreme authority at the district level. This bureaucratic system helped the colonial government to exert effective control over the rural land revenue system, at the same time strengthening the rural intermediaries (Davies, 1893).

Socio-Economic Impact

The long-term impacts of the colonial revenue system were far-reaching. Firstly, the system entrenched landlordism within the rural sector of the Indian subcontinent. By formally designating some individuals as land proprietors, the British formally converted flexible customary systems into rigid land property rights. This process, to a certain extent, marginalized tenants and sharecroppers whose land rights were not formally registered (Ali, 1988).

At the same time, the requirement for cash payment of land revenue led to increased levels of rural indebtedness. Many farmers were forced to borrow money from banyas and other moneylenders to pay the land revenue. Although the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 aimed to restrict the alienation of land from agricultural to non-agricultural groups, it concurrently entrenched the rural elite and protected the interests of the established landholder classes (Ali, 1988).

As such, the revenue system had profound political implications for the Indian subcontinent. Rural elites who allied with the British progressively gained power within the rural sector of the Indian subcontinent. Many of these individuals were appointed to district boards and later to the provincial legislative bodies instituted through the limited constitutional reforms of the British colonial authorities. Therefore, the revenue system contributed to the development of a politically powerful class of rural elites whose power outlived the British period (Talbot, 1996).

Judicial Administration in Gujrat

The creation of a formal judicial system was a major aspect of the colonial administrative structure that was developed in the Punjab territory after the annexation of the region in 1849. In the Gujrat district, as with the rest of the province, the aim of the colonial administration was to replace or control local forms of dispute resolution with a formal legal system based on British law.

In the pre-colonial period, local disputes were mainly resolved with a combination of traditional practices, local arbitration, and religious authority. In many cases, village elders or tribal leaders played a significant role as mediators of local conflicts involving land, inheritance, marriage, and social relationships. Although flexible and embedded within local society, the colonial authorities saw these forms of dispute resolution as inconsistent and lacking uniformity that was necessary to create an effective bureaucratic state (Misra, 2001).

After annexation, the British government began a systematic expansion of a hierarchical structure of courts in Punjab. In Gujrat district, the Deputy Commissioner concurrently assumed wide judicial powers in addition to his other roles. This centralization of powers was a realistic approach to colonial governance in the early years of annexation. The lack of trained legal officers compelled the colonial government to combine the roles of the executive and the judiciary in the same office (Talbot, 1996).

Subsequent to this, the judicial system evolved to become differentiated. A hierarchical structure of courts emerged with civil and criminal courts at various levels of the administration. At the district level, the Deputy Commissioner assumed the role of the District Magistrate. He was responsible for criminal courts. Judicial officers such as the Assistant Commissioners and the Extra Assistant Commissioners assumed the roles of Magistrates at the subordinate courts. Civil disputes involving land tenure, tenancy, and contractual obligations were heard at civil courts presided over by officers working within the parameters of the codified British law (Gilmartin, 1998).

The introduction of comprehensive legal codes was a major milestone in the evolution of colonial judicial administration. The introduction of the Indian Penal Code (1860), the Civil Procedure Code (1859), and the Criminal Procedure Code (1861) to the Punjab judicial system was a major leap. These legal codes ensured uniformity in the practice of law within the province. This ensured that the discretionary powers of the courts were eliminated. By codifying criminal law, the colonial government hoped to produce a legal climate that would be favourable to stability and economic development (Davies, 1893).

Despite this structure, it is clear that in the administration of justice in districts such as Gujrat, there existed a complex relationship between colonial law and indigenous custom. It was quickly realized by British administrators in colonial India that it was not possible to eradicate indigenous custom entirely, and so it was commonly applied in the resolution of disputes relating to inheritance, marriage, and rights in village land. In these areas, British colonial judges were guided by custom through their interactions with local elders and revenue officials in determining the customary law applicable to a particular group (Ali, 1988).

One area where this conflation of judicial and revenue administration was clear was in disputes relating to land ownership. As it had been formally registered in the system of revenue administration, it also featured prominently in judicial proceedings as evidence in disputes relating to property

ownership. Such documents as *jamabandi* and *khasra girdawari* were central to this in their use in property disputes, thus giving credence to the authority of colonial administration in this area. In this way, it is clear that judicial administration served as a tool in enforcing property relationships established in the system of revenue administration (Williamson, 1921).

Another major change was the emergence of a legal professional community within the district. With the increase in litigations, legal practitioners like lawyers and petition writers played a more important role within the judicial process. Urban centers like Gujrat city and Kharian gradually developed a small but significant community of legal experts who played the role of mediators between the litigants from rural areas and the colonial judicial apparatus. The emergence of legal professionals certainly widened access to legal justice but at the same time introduced new complexities that may put the litigants from poor backgrounds at a disadvantage because of their lack of familiarity with legal processes (Misra, 2001).

Colonial judicial processes within the district of Punjab often involved litigations over agrarian concerns with special emphasis on cases involving land boundaries, tenancy, and inheritance. The growing importance of land as a legal concept of property has given rise to an increasing number of legal litigations as people attempted to assert their right to property or defend their legal claims to land within the colonial judicial apparatus. In the district of Gujrat, legal litigations often arose over ambiguities within the settlement process or over conflicts between customary and legal principles. In that sense, the judicial process became an important site to contest legal understandings of property and power relations (Ali, 1988).

However, access to the colonial judiciary was not equal throughout society. In particular, the costs involved in seeking representation at court, traveling to district courts, and the time taken to resolve cases often deterred poorer cultivators from using the judiciary to resolve their conflicts. As a result, the salience of informal dispute resolution persisted as an important feature of the rural landscape during the colonial period (Government of Punjab, 1918).

Nevertheless, the existence of the colonial judiciary contributed to an important transformation in the nature of power relations in the rural landscape. In particular, the provision of a formal platform for the adjudication of disputes in accordance with codified laws contributed to the gradual erosion of customary power relations in the countryside. At the same time, the judiciary's dependence on revenue records contributed to the rise in power of those individuals who had seen their rights to land ownership recognized during the process of settlement.

In this context, it is apparent that the judiciary functioned in close tandem with the revenue administration during the colonial period. In particular, the revenue system established the property relations and fiscal obligations in the countryside, while the judiciary provided the necessary framework to enforce these relations legally. In effect, a large number of disputes involving property rights were resolved in the colonial judiciary, with the verdicts often favouring those with established rights to land ownership. As such, the judiciary's enforcement of property rights contributed to the consolidation of power relations that had emerged during the colonial period (Punjab Government, 1884).

In time, the judicial institutions established during the colonial period had become an integral part of the administrative landscape in the district. In particular, even with the end of colonial rule in 1947, a large part of the judicial structures, codes of procedures, and administrative practices established during the colonial period continued to influence the nature and character of the judiciary in contemporary Pakistan. As such, the historical evolution of judicial administration in Gujrat district reflects the enduring influence of the colonial period in the nature and character of the judiciary in the contemporary context.

Interconnection between Revenue Administration and Judicial Institutions in Colonial Gujrat

The revenue and judicial systems, as introduced by the British in Punjab, were not separate administrative systems, but in reality, these two systems operated in close institutional cooperation. In districts like Gujrat, these two systems were closely interlinked, forming two of the main pillars of colonial governance. The revenue administration, as a system, was responsible for defining and regulating property relations in rural society, whereas the judicial system provided the requisite legal authority to implement these property arrangements (Punjab Government, 1903).

One of the prominent interfaces of these two systems was in relation to revenue records, as these were used in judicial cases. The British, in revenue settlements conducted in the nineteenth century, created detailed records of land ownership, cultivation, and revenue obligations. The *jamabandi*, *khasra girdawari*, and *shajras*, or village genealogical tables, formed authoritative records of land ownership in the district. The revenue records, apart from being administrative tools for revenue extraction, formed primary legal evidence in judicial courts dealing with property inheritance cases (Punjab Settlement Manual, 1909).

As a consequence, civil litigation in Gujarat frequently involved revenue records. The judicial bodies resolving civil disputes over land boundaries, tenancy, or inheritance frequently depended on revenue records maintained by patwaris. The authority of these records, therefore, provided a link between the revenue administration and the judicial system, ensuring that property relations established during settlement work were reinforced by judicial processes (Ali, 1988).

A second area of institutional overlap was found in the administrative organization of district administration. Under early British colonial rule, the district administration was headed by a Deputy Commissioner who exercised executive, revenue, and judicial authority (Douie, 1930). The Deputy Commissioner, as chief revenue officer, was responsible for revenue collection, but he was also District Magistrate, responsible for running criminal courts and maintaining law and order. This concentration of power was part of a centralized administrative model adopted by colonial rulers, intended to ensure efficiency and administrative control in newly colonized territories (Talbot, 1996).

The interface of the two administrative domains was most apparent in the case of disputes over agrarian relations. For example, tenancy agreements, irrigation rights, and land transfers were often at the centre of disputes that traversed the domains of revenue administration and judicial adjudication. Revenue administrators were concerned with maintaining settlement policies, while the judicial system was involved in adjudicating disputes that resulted from these agreements. Disputes often resulted from litigation by individuals who questioned the accuracy of settlement records, thereby injecting revenue administration into the judicial domain (Aggarwala, 1943).

The legal codification of the British colonial period further served to strengthen the interface of the two domains. For example, the British legal system's approach to property rights, inheritance, and contractual obligations was heavily dependent upon the documentation of revenue administration. The judicial system, therefore, served the purpose of consolidating the agrarian order that was established by the revenue settlement policies. By validating the accuracy of land records, the judicial system served the purpose of consolidating the authority of the colonial state and the revenue system (Gilmartin, 1998).

The institutional configuration that was created had considerable social implications. The recognition of certain individuals as proprietors within the settlement records provided considerable benefits for the landowners in legal conflicts. Tenants and sharecroppers who did not formally have their rights recorded often faced problems in asserting their claims within the framework of colonial law. Thus, the joint role of the revenue administration and judicial enforcement was crucial in the consolidation of the power of the landlords in the countryside of Punjab (Ali, 1988).

Despite the integration of these institutions, the colonial system of law did not entirely supersede the customary system of dispute settlement. Many communities in the countryside of Gujrat continued to adhere to their customary system of dispute settlement through mediation conducted by village elders. However, the presence of the formal judicial system was crucial in the eventual change in the dynamics of power.

Thus, the interface of revenue administration and the judicial system came to be seen as a significant feature of colonial rule in Gujarat. The revenue system provided the colonial state with the fiscal and agrarian base, and the judicial system provided the legal framework necessary for the regulation of society. The combined role of these two branches of the colonial state facilitated the British colonial administration in maintaining effective control over the rural society and integrating the district more closely into the colonial state of Punjab.

CONCLUSION

The British colonial rule in Gujrat from 1849 to 1947 developed a complete system of revenue management and legal institutions that significantly changed the political, economic, and legal profile of the district. After the annexation of Punjab, the colonial state's consolidation of authority resulted in the development of a centralized bureaucratic system that emphasized land revenue as the primary source of revenue for the state. Through the systematic settlement of land and the development of formal record-keeping mechanisms, the colonial state was able to extend its reach into the rural society of Gujrat. These measures not only facilitated the efficient taxation of land revenue but also changed the profile of landholding, agricultural activity, and rural society in the district.

The revenue management system, based on regular settlement and the classification of land, integrated the agrarian society of Gujrat into the colonial revenue system. The transition from a traditional or in-kind taxation system to a cash-based system of land revenue not only formalized the system of landholding and land revenue management through the development of formal record-keeping mechanisms like *jamabandi*, *khasra*, and village maps but also further consolidated the power of the elite and the vulnerable position of the small landholding farmers in the district.

Parallel to this fiscal evolution, the colonial judicial system reorganized the processes of dispute resolution and the administration of justice. Instead of the pluralistic systems of panchayats and *qazi* courts, the British introduced a codified system of law based on the Indian Penal Code and the Civil and Criminal Procedure Codes. In the case of Gujarat, this colonial judicial system led to the evolution of a hierarchical court structure ranging from the *munsiff* court to the district and sessions court, in which the Deputy Commissioner possessed significant magisterial powers. Despite the colonial judicial system's pretences of legal uniformity and procedural fairness, the colonial judiciary prioritized property rights and procedure over traditional practices, thereby reinforcing the colonial objectives.

The relationship between the colonial revenue system and the colonial judiciary enhanced the colonial state's potential in managing rural society. Land records, which the colonial revenue system generated during the process of revenue settlements, functioned as the primary piece of evidence in the colonial judiciary. This led to the judiciary extending the colonial revenue system and thereby legitimizing the colonial agrarian structure. In this way, the colonial fiscal and judicial systems in Gujarat functioned in tandem in the extraction of colonial revenue and the maintenance of social stability in the colonial period.

Despite the colonial fiscal and judicial systems' efficiency in managing the colonial empire, the colonial fiscal and judicial systems in Gujarat led to significant socio-economic legacies. For example, the colonial fiscal and judicial systems empowered the zamindars and local intermediaries, which led to the emergence of the rural elite as significant stakeholders of the colonial empire. Simultaneously, the colonial fiscal and judicial systems marginalized the peasants and tenants in the

colonial period. This evolution of the colonial fiscal and judicial systems in Gujarat reshaped the rural politics of the colonial period and significantly impacted the political evolution in the late colonial period.

From a retrospective perspective, it can be argued that the colonial revenue and judicial systems in the region of Gujrat were not only administrative innovations but also measures that facilitated the colonial state to impose its authority over the local landscape. The integration of the British bureaucracy into the lives of the people in the rural landscape led to the establishment of robust systems that continued to exist long after the colonial period had passed. The modern systems of administration that exist in the country of Pakistan today are a direct result of the colonial systems that had been established in the country, particularly in the realms of land management, the districts, and the judicial systems. The historical analysis of the systems that had been established in the region of Gujrat is a valuable tool for understanding the colonial legacy that exists in the country today.

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GLOSSARY

Barani	Rain-fed land that only depends on monsoon rains; subject to a reduced rate of taxation due to uncertain crop yields.
Panchayat	Community or caste councils used to settle local or family disputes outside of court.
Chahi	Land that is irrigated by wells or traditional means; considered to be of high fertility, hence subject to a high rate of revenue.
Jamabandi	Land registry that lists ownership, revenue, and tenant rights; admissible as evidence in court cases.
Khasra Girdawari	Crop inspection register that lists crop details, land area, crop growth, and average crop yield for purposes of taxation.
Lambardar/Numbardar	The headman of a local area who is responsible for collecting land revenue from local farmers and paying it to the government; usually a prominent individual, hence hereditary in nature.
Munsiff	The junior judicial officer who hears minor civil cases, land disputes, and petty offenses at a local level.
Naib-Tehsildar	The assistant of the tehsildar who is involved in revenue administration and record-keeping.
Nehri	Land that is canal-irrigated, usually part of an older or colonial canal system; subject to moderate to high revenue depending on crop yield.
Patwari	The local officer who is responsible for keeping records of land, revenue, and crop data.
Qazi	Islamic judge who was responsible for hearing family cases; no longer relevant under the British codified legal system.
Tehsildar	The administrative officer who is responsible for revenue collection at a tehsil (sub-district) level.
Tibba	Sandy highlands, uncultivated land, or low-yielding land; usually subject to low or no revenue due to low crop yield.
Zamindar	The legally recognized landholder who is usually empowered as an intermediary between the colonial government and peasants.