

## HISTORY OF TENANCY RELATIONS IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA SINCE 1900

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THE State of Maharashtra in its present form came into existence in May 1960. Formerly it was a part of the larger bilingual state. The present State of Maharashtra includes 12 districts from the old Maharashtra, 5 districts from the old State of Hyderabad and 8 districts from Vidarbha, which was formerly a part of Madhya Pradesh. All these parts have to be studied separately; for though the entire area is now governed uniformly, yet the history of different parts is quite separate. The present note deals with the original part of Maharashtra.<sup>1</sup> What is attempted is a historical account of only the legal concepts regarding tenancy relations. Barring a few incidental comments no major attempt is made to evaluate the implementation of the Acts. The starting point of this history is the year 1900; this is thought convenient because the situation prevailing around this time has been summed up by Baden-Powell in his famous work.<sup>2</sup> However, whenever necessary, developments prior to 1900 have also been reviewed.

The land tenure system in the State of Maharashtra is known as the ryotwari system. It was called ryotwari system because the assessment of land revenue was settled directly with the ryot, i.e., the cultivator. Though this was the main system covering practically the whole of the State, there were small pockets here and there where different systems were prevailing. These included alienation and non-ryotwari tenures which have been enumerated in the table given on the next page.

The present note is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the ryotwari system which was predominant in the State; the second part deals with the alienation and non-ryotwari systems enumerated in the statement.

<sup>1</sup> The 12 districts viz., Thana, Kolaba, Ratnagiri, West and East Khandesh, Nasik, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Poona, Satara and Kolhapur.

<sup>2</sup> Baden-Powell, *The Land System of British India*.