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The Middle Classes in the Mughal Empire

THIS STUDY starts on the assumption that the central feature of the production relations in Mughal India was a peculiar form of feudalism as distinct from the 'Asiatic Model' suggested by Marx in his notes of 1857-58.[1] Such an assumption presupposes the existence of feudal classes having contradictory economic interests. It does not rule out, however, the existence of social groups (other than peasants and artisans) whose means of sustenance were independent of feudal property. In the context of Mughal India, the merchants and professional groups could be supposed to have together constituted this category. A social stratum representing such interests within the broad framework of Indian feudalism, in so far as these were antagonistic to the feudal interests of *jagirdars* and *zamindars*, should be regarded as representing a potential antithesis of the feudal mode of production.

Most of the modern studies seeking to comprehend the direction and pace of social change in Mughal India are unanimous in discerning: (a) widespread prevalence of money economy resulting from a growing trend of production for market in agricultural as well as non-agricultural sectors; (b) linking of the internal market with world commerce through long-distance trade in which commerce by the European trading companies became increasingly important; and (c)

existence of considerable merchant capital which controlled large sectors of small-scale commodity production in urban centres through different forms of the putting-out system. These studies also testify to the existence of quite numerous groups of merchants, bankers and people belonging to other professions wielding considerable influence within society.[2]

Where these studies differ with each other fundamentally is on the question as to what extent the above features were capable of transforming the particular kind of production relations obtaining in Mughal India into capitalist relations without the intervention of any exogenous agency or, conversely, as to what were the inherent weaknesses of the social and political system of Mughal India which hampered the potentialities of social transformation indicated by these features. This basic question, in either of the two forms, is sought to be answered by economic historians in different ways and their individual answers are mainly conditioned by the theoretical framework and tools of analysis which they have chosen to employ in their studies. Those who build on the model of a stagnant social base controlled from above by an 'Asiatic Despotism' naturally tend to minimize the significance of the above features treating them as a phenomenon confined to the coastal regions that left, by and large, the core of the social structure untouched.[3] On the other hand, many of the scholars in India as well as a number of Soviet Indologists who have not hesitated to apply Marxist tools of analysis for the general study of the origins of capitalism to the conditions obtaining in Mughal India (and have also gone deeper into sources other than the European records mainly relied upon by the exponents of 'Asiatic Despotism') tend to take a more optimistic view of the discernible possibilities.

Social Environment and Categories

For instance, Chicherov in his study of the economic development in India during the sixteenth to eighteeth centuries holds that towards the second half of the eighteenth century India appeared to be "approaching the beginning of the manufactory stage in the development of capitalism within the framework of her general feudal economy" and attributes the eventual scotching of this trend to the impact of European colonial expansion.[4] While Irfan Habib, who apparently has an open mind on some of the basic questions relating to the Marxist framework as applicable to the study of Indian history and whose sifting of the source material is much more thorough and systematic than Chicherov's, is not so sure about the possibilities inherent in the situation. Though refuting the widely accepted notion that 'political environment' or 'caste' played a decisive role in checking commercial expansion, he cautions against making too much out of the evidence suggesting widespread prevalence of money economy, for,according to him, the rural monetization was "almost entirely the result of the need to transfer surplus agricultural produce to the towns".[5]

In the context of these different approaches to the study of social change in Mughal India and the specific problems with which the economic historians are concerned these days, the role played by the groups belonging to the middle stratum or middle class assumes particular significance. Here I am using the word 'middle stratum' or 'middle class' in a slightly different sense from the one in which it has been used in England. As K N Raj points out, in the context of early nineteenth-century England it covered the rising industrial entrepreneurs as well as a range of occupations which had a common identity with them. Marx has used the term 'middle class' mainly in this sense, the slight ambiguity noted by KN Raj notwithstanding.[6] This concept has been developed in Marxist literature to make it "wide enough to embrace all those strata which stand between the two main antagonistic classes" in a given historical situation. As E M S Namboodiripad puts it, in a feudal setting, "the middle class consists of all those who do not belong to either of the two classes (the feudal lords and their serfs)". For the purposes of the present study, I have used the concept 'middle class' or 'middle stratum' with the wider meaning suggested by E M S Namboodiripad.[7]

Non-feudal Property

The most important question that one is called upon to answer in a study of such strata would naturally relate to their possible role as the harbingers of a truly industrial bourgeoisie. This would require first and foremost a detailed examination of the available evidence for testing the appropriateness of our assumpation that the diverse mercantile and professional groups together constituted a distinct social stratum having common economic interests and a similarity of cultural behaviour. Another important object of such a study would be the nature of contradictions between this stratum as a whole as well as its particular components on the one hand, and the dominant feudal interests, the jagirdars, zamindars and the organized manifestation of feudal property, the imperial state, on the other. And finally one will also have to trace the economic and cultural constraints inhibiting this stratum from contributing in a sustained and vigorous manner to the process of primitive accumulation of capital if such a process, as Chicherov seems to suggest, had already begun in a small way towards the second half of the eighteenth century.

A good deal of research has already been done on the economic and political role of groups like traders, *sarrafs* and *mahajans*. These studies leave little doubt that these groups represented, within the feudal framework of the society of Mughal India, a form of property which, according to Marx's well-known dictum, should have exercised "more or less a dissolving influence on the existing organization of production". Even scholars who do not rate highly the capacity of these groups to play a leading role in society, concede the wealth and power of certain sections

of the mercantile class. This feature, according to them, is discernible in the coastal regions down to the first quarter the eighteenth century.[8] Again, a recent study of the role of mahajans in the interior of the country tends to show that their influence in the rural economy was steadily growing throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. By the middle of the century the mahajans had emerged as formidable competitors of the jagirdars and zamindars for exercising control over the peasant communities.[9] These studies help to identify the merchants, sarrafs and mahajans as important components of the social stratum representing one or the other kind of non-feudal property rooted in money economy.

Urban Intelligentsia

The position, however, of the professional and service groups representing the broad category of the urban intelligentsia is not so clear. The role of these groups as a social category has not yet been fully studied. There is uncertainty even with regard to such questions as the nature of the various forms of payments to them by their feudal employers. Did these payments amount to a share in the feudal property, or should they be regarded simply as income derived from an essentially contractual relationship between the possessors of certain skills and those who hired their services? Moreland, for instance, holds that the market for their "professions and services" was narrow and that a member of this class "could hope to obtain an adequate income only by attaching himself to the imperial court or to one of the principal governors." While he takes note of the specialized nature of the work performed by certain categories of accountants and clerks, making their services indispensable for the state and the nobles employing them, he does not assign to them any role in the production relations beyond that of contributing to "an imperfect and precarious measure of security". On the whole, he tends to regard them as a parasitical group.[10] He thus appears to ignore the high degree of specialization that existed in Mughal India in such fields as revenue administration, production and use of firearms and management of the complex and massive construction projects. His interpretation apparently rests on an implicit understanding that, unlike merchants and artisans, the intelligentsia were joined to feudal property by customary ties.

It will here be worthwhile to consider K N Raj's sociological definition of 'specialized skill' as "property taking a different form."[11] This definition, when applied to functionaries doing specialized jobs for the state and nobles in Mughal India, would lead to the characterization of their income, including salaries paid by the feudal authorities, as a form of non-feudal property. For the purposes of this study, Raj's definition as applied to the professional groups of Mughal India may be accepted as a working hypothesis.

It is difficult to give, in the absence of sufficient data, even an approximate assessment of the levels of income obtaining among different professional groups. But there can be little doubt that a considerable demand existed in the government as well as in society at large for the services provided by some of the middle-class professions like clerks, accountants, physicians and teachers. Thus, it was possible for members of these groups to become sufficiently rich on the strength only of their skill and specialized knowledge.

Well-heeled Revenue Officials

The information we have regarding certain categories of the revenue officials tells us that they formed a very prosperous group. This prosperity was discernible down to the lowest rungs. We gather, for instance, from the *Tazkira-i-Pir Hassu Teli*, a book compiled in 1644-47, that its author, Surat Singh, who never served in any capacity higher than that of a *karkun*, purchased a house for Rs 700 in a respectable locality of Lahore.[12] We learn from the same source that in 1630-31, Khwaja Udai Singh, a petty official, spent Rs 3000 on the construction of a well attached to a *dargah* at Lahore.[13] Again, according to Surat Singh, his elder brother, Ganga Ram, had grown fabulously rich during the time he was serving as the *'amil* of Jahangirpur.[14] His salary as 'amil would have come to Rs 130 per month.[15] From contemporary standards this would no doubt be regarded as a fairly good income. But it could not have been sufficient to meet the expenses of the ostentatious style of living depicted by Surat Singh. Another *pargana* level official, Khwaja Hari Chand, is also mentioned by Surat Singh as leading an ostentatious life. He distributed gold and cows among Brahmans. Each morning he would eat with Brahmans and would offer meals to the members of all the thirtysix castes.[16] A similar case can be cited from Aurangzeb's reign. Abdus Samad Khan, tbe *amin* and *faujdar* of Jahanabad had established a *pura* (small township) in the name of his son which brought considerable income to his descendants down to 1130 (A D 1717-1718). This property, according to I'timad Ali Khan, included orchards, *sarai* and Turkish baths (*hammam*).[17] It was perhaps on account of this prosperity of the revenue officials, who belonged mainly to castes like Brahmans, Kayasthas, Khatris and Banyas, that Shah Waliullah, in one of his letters to Ahmad Shah Abdali, complained about the 'Hindus' appropriating most of the wealth on account of their monopoly of the "offices of *mutasaddis* and *karkuns*."[18]

Likewise, there is ample evidence indicating the exceptional prosperity of the accountants, clerks and other officials connected with the revenue administration or doing other kind of specialized jobs in the provincial and central establishments. Just to cite a few cases at random, a certain Muhammad Shafi *Bayutat* had built a mosque in *'muhalla* Talla' of Lahore some time before 1644[19] and I'timad Ali Khan, the

author of *Miratu-l Haqaiq* while all the time complaining of his 'poverty', admits to owning a *haveli* at Ahmadabad.[20] Another such case was that of Shaikh 'Abdul Wahid, the *munshi* (letter-writer) of Shaista Khan. He was getting only Rs 100 per month, but the way he was leading his life rivalled that of high nobles.[21] Many more examples of this nature can be cited. At a more general level, a vague idea of the wealth that had accumulated in the hands of this category of people in Gujarat towards the first quarter of the eighteenth century can be had from the fact that in 1725, the political authorities succeeded in extorting Rs 5,73,000 from eight officials residing at Ahmadabad.[22] Similarly, we know that in 1739, out of the total amount of rupees 17 crores and 12 lakhs collected by Nadir Shah in cash from the nobles and common people of Delhi, rupees 15 crores were realized from the high nobles and the remaining rupees 2 crores and 12 lakhs came from other sections of the people. With the help of the available lists of the persons from whom comparatively larger sums were realized it can be seen that out of the amount of rupees 2 crores and 12 lakhs extorted from the 'commoners', 31 lakhs were taken from the eleven rich officials who were serving as *diwans*, *bayutats*, *peshkars* and *khazanchis* in the *sarkars* of individual nobles or occupied similar positions in the royal establishments.[23]

How They Made It

The amount of wealth possessed by this group cannot adequately be explained on the basis of their salaries alone. Regarding the revenue officials serving in high positions at the central and provincial levels we may safely assume that their salaries would rarely go beyond the limit of Rs 500 per month mentioned by Abul Fazl.[24] A few of them holding considerable *mansabs* were perhaps the only exceptions. The salaries of the local officials serving at the pargana level like the *qanungo*,[25] *muharrir*,[26] *nawisanda*,[27] *tappadar*,[28] ranged from Rs 10 to 17 per month. Comparatively better-paid local officials like the 'amil[29] (as also the *karori*)[30] the amin[31] and the accountant serving under the 'amil[32] were getting Rs 133, Rs 116/8, and Rs 50. These salaries could not have been the only basis of large properties created by many of the revenue officials. To trace the real sources of income contributing to the prosperity of the revenue officials one should look elsewhere.

Apparently, a major part of the income of revenue officials came from large-scale defalcation of revenue collections on the one hand and from different kinds of side businesses like cultivation, usury, speculation, horticulture, revenue-farming, management of rent-yielding properties in the towns, on the other. In addition to all this was the income ensured by the system of presents and bribes which carried almost a customary sanction.

The ingenious methods used by the officials for cheating the state and the nobles make interesting reading. An intelligence report from

Aurangzeb's reign accuses an amin and karori in *suba* Ajmer of "conspiring with *fotedar* (treasurer) to deposit the cash collected by them with the mahajan for long periods at interest and profit for themselves."[33] Yet another method of earning profit on the amount collected as revenue was to change the nature of the coins in the process of transmitting the collections to the central treasury. There is on record a complaint that *batta* charged on Shahjahani rupees in the market of Haibatpur and Firuzpur (suba Multan) was much below the official rate or *dastur*. The revenue officials, therefore, realized the revenue in Shahjahani rupees and then changed them in the market for "Alamgiri rupees, of which they thus got a larger number than were obliged to hold according to the official rate."[34] That this practice was not confined to suba Multan is borne out by a letter written by Balkrishn Brahman to a mahajan of Hissar, Lakhim Das, complaining bitterly against his insistence on having the amount deposited with him accounted in Alamgiri rupees only, irrespective of the kind of rupees originally handed over to him by the official. It was, apparently, a rare case of a mahajan not observing the rules of the game. Hence Balkrishn's pained remark: "If a person like Chaudhuri Lakhim Das could behave in this manner what is one to say of others?"[35]

Aiding and Abetting Revenue Embezzlement

A particular kind of cheating practised by the qanungo with the help of the *patwari* involved the manipulation of village records (*kaghazi-kham*) maintained in Hindi, which were mainly relied upon by the state for verifying the actual revenue realization (*hal-i hasil*) of each village. Taking advantage of the difficulty that a higher noble or for that matter even an average official of the central or provincial *diwani* would have in identifying and understanding the village records properly, the qanungo, the record-keeper at the pargana level,in collaboration with patwari would often fake village records with the aim of covering up the defalcation of reuenue collections. In one such case reported from Shahjahan's reign this kind of operation had become necessary to cover up the misappropriation of a considerable amount from the *mahsul* of a pargana by the '*shiqdar*'.[36] When many such cases of the faking of the village records were discovered, during Shahjahan's reign, the post of a special officer with the designation of amin was created in every *mahal*. The main duty of a pargana level amin was to check the irregularities of the qanungos and 'amil.[37] But this measure instead of solving the problem would have only added to the number of people conspiring together at the sarkar and pargana level to defalcate large amounts from mahsul. The role played by the newly appointed pargana amins may by judged from the behaviour of one of them who is reported to have helped Surat Singh to evade enquiry into his conduct after he had come to be suspected by the karori and *mal guzar* ('amil) of having embezzled the revenues.[38]

It seems that helping a colleague to evade enquiry into charges of corruption against him was quite consistent with the professional ethics of the local officials. Faking of records to mislead the higher authorities inquiring into the conduct of an official would be regarded by his colleagues almost as an act of piety. This is borne out so clearly by the manner in which Surat Singh refers to the conduct of his preceptor, Shaikh Kamal, who had extended his moral support to a qanungo's forging the village records with the object of frustrating an enquiry into the conduct of a shiqdar.[39] Even in case of a serious quarrel between two officials they were expected by their colleagues not to carry it to the point of exposing each other's weaknesses before the authorities. In most cases, quarrels between two members of the profession would be speedily settled with the help of mutual friends. In one such case adjudicated by Bhimsen, the parties involved were not only persuaded to make up with each other but they "agreed to pay a nominal amount of fine."[40] It is not known how the money raised through such fines was used. One can only conjecture that it would either be spent on celebrating the reconciliation among colleagues by having a feast or would go to some kind of common pool.[41]

Frykenberg Fabrication

Some idea of the routine manner in which the local officials were capable of defalcating the revenues can be had from the experience of the officials of the East India Company who were called upon to run the revenue administration inherited by the British from the earlier regimes. In a report prepared by Walker Elliot on the basis of minute scrutiny of village records of Guntur district, a case was made out that "in less than twelve years the Company's government had lost over 74 lakhs which was more than six times the annual revenues from the district."[42] If this was the position under the comparatively efficient and purposeful government of the East India Company, one can well imagine the extent of the power and independence enjoyed by the official at the sarkar and pargana levels under the 'softer' administrations of the Mughal empire as well as the successor regimes during the eighteenth century.

A study of the *jama'* statistics and the dastur-rates given in the *Ain-i Akbari,* undertaken by Shireen Moosvi, suggests "that the incidence of jama' did not amount to even half the average dastur-rates in the heartland of the Empire."[43] It is difficult to explain this wide gap between jama' and the real amount that should have been collected according to dastur-rates. I would, however, venture to suggest that at least partly this was caused by the large-scale defalcation of revenues by the officials mainly through their clever manipulation of the records.

To emphasize the role of the local officials in making the operation of central authority ineffective at the sarkar and pargana levels, R E Frykenberg has been tempted to fabricate a mock-up concept of

'anti-state'.[44] Whatever one might think of the usefulness of 'mock up concepts' as tools of study, it must be recognized that Frykenberg's description of the local administration as 'anti-state' does help in focusing our attention on the deep-rooted contradiction existing between the feudal elements and the state dominated by them on the one hand, and certain sections of the urban intelligentsia on the other. Frykenberg is, however, not on firm ground in assuming that these officials derived their power to defy the higher authorities from the customary ties binding them closely to the village, caste and family units. This emerges from the evidence cited by Frykenberg himself. While carrying on a war of wits against the "exogenous system of power" the record-keepers did not spare the village chiefs either. They were often found maintaining three sets of records, two of them being fake versions meant to mislead the higher authorities and the zamindars respectively. There exists ample evidence of the severity with which the revenue officials would generally deal with the peasant communities. There were a number of cesses which these officials continued to realize from peasants in defiance of explicit orders of the central authority forbidding such exactions. At times the cesses imposed by the revenue officials would come up to a third of the total jama' of a village. While trying to realize these cesses, the officials would treat the peasants and small zamindars with the utmost severity. Sometimes, they went to the extent of even "selling the sons and cattle" of the *ri'aya* for realizing their demand.[45] In Gujarat, the revenue officials used to impose cesses even on merchants and other holders of urban property. One cess of this kind mentioned in one of Aurangzeb's *farmans* was realized at the rate of 2 per cent of the price fetched by a house. According to Ali Muhammad Khan, the excesses of the qanungos of Cambay had assumed such proportions that the merchants of that place were being forced to shift to Surat.[46] Apparently, Frykenberg's difficulty on this point arises mainly on account of his inability to see that the local officials in Mughal India were actually fighting for securing the interests of the social category to which they belonged, namely, the urban intelligentsia, rather than to protect or insulate the village communities from the control of an "exogenous system of power".

Deterrence of Potential Enemy

It is only in this perspective of growing clash of interests between the feudal elements and certain sections of the professional middle class that one can fully appreciate the bloodthirsty attitude of the imperial authority towards the revenue officials serving at pargana level as well as those doing specialized jobs in higher echelons of the administration. In the Mughal empire, "the essentially *humane* approach" to individuals constituting the nobility[47] was in sharp contrast to the treatment meted out to the revenue officials suspected of dishonest practices. The evidence on this point is literally unending, and it is full of sickening details of

torture perpetrated against the persons of the officials and their families.

This description seems to apply to the revenue officials during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as well. It is borne out for instance by one of Kabir's poems included in the *Guru Granth Sahib* wherein the recall of the 'amil for settlement of accounts is compared to death "when man is called for a similar purpose by the Creator".[49] Badauni's description of the punishment received by the karoris at Todar Mal's hands in Akbar's reign is classic: "Many good men died", he writes, "from the severe beatings which were administered and from tortures of the rack and pincers".[50] Many of the karoris imprisoned by Todar Mal in early 1580s were still languishing in prison in 1594.[51] This kind of treatment of the revenue officials is found through the Mughal period. For instance it is reported that Shahjahan's minister Sadullah Khan was responsible for keeping a number of karoris in prison for more than twenty years.[52] A casual remark of Surat Singh alluding to the repeated imprisonment of a certain Khwaja Mathuradas goes to show that this was almost a routine matter.[53] The situation so far as the revenue officials were concerned remained more or less the same under Aurangzeb and his successors. In one of his orders addressed to the diwan of suba Ahmadbad, Aurangzeb instructs the provincial authorities to the effect that the cases of 'amils languishing in prison for long periods be revicwed and their terms of punishment specified.[54] But Bhimsen's description of the tortures inflicted upon Dilar Khan's munshi, Pir Muhammad Khan, to force him to disclose the wealth left behind by his master[55] makes it evident that, under Aurangzeb, the treatment of the revenue officials and clerks was basically the same as during the reigns of his predecessors. Regarding the punishment of the revenue officials and clerks under the later Mughals innumerable cases can be cited. I'timad Ali Khan has also recorded a number of such cases. By way of example, one may cite the rather casual entry made by him in his journal of 29 December 1725 noting that "seven cart-fulls of 'amils brought to Ahmadabad from parganas some time earlier, were being interrogated."[56] In the light of such evidence, it would not be wrong to say that in Mughal India revenue officials as a category were regarded as the potential enemies of the ruling classes.

Private Medical Practitioners

In connection with the relationship between the different sections of the urban intelligentsia and feudal property, brief reference may also be made to the physicians, *jarrahs* and others earning their livelihood by treating people for different kinds of afflictions.

In line with his general view of the economic position of the professional groups in Mughal India, Moreland seems to think that the social demand for the service of a physician was very limited. It flows from this understanding that the members of the medical profession could

hope to obtain a respectable income only by attaching themselves to the court or the sarkars of the high nobles. Thus the salaries earned by them in the service of the state or the nobles would be characterized as feudal patronage rather than payment for a service in demand.[57] But one may argue that in drawing this one-sided picture Moreland seems to have ignored a whole set of evidence indicating that in a major part of northern India public demand for the services of the physicians was quite large.

We come to know from a casual remark attributed to Pir Hassu Teli that towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, services were available of private practitioners in the market places of Lahore (*tabiban-i kocha o bazar*). In the *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, there is a specific reference to Hakim Basant who practised at Lahore during Shahjahan's reign. He is mentioned in connection with the illness of the wife of a petty official who was under Hakim Basant's treatment for some time.[58] An idea of the wide demand that existed at Lahore for medical services during Aurangzeb's reign can be had from Manucci's memoirs. After his service in Dara Shukoh's artillery ceased abruptly with the defeat of that prince, he established himself at Lahore as a private practitioner. The first person whom he treated successfully was the wife of a *qazi* who had been given up as a hopeless case by "all the Persian and Indian physicians". This made him very popular among the nobles as well as the 'lower order'. "So great was my name that I had of being fortunate with the cases that I undertook", writes Manucci, "that they came from many places distant from Lahore to call me in to visit patients." It seems that Manucci's income from his private practice at Lahore was much greater than what he could hope to earn in the service of a noble. When Muhammad Amin Khan, the governor of Lahore, offered to employ him as a physician, Manucci politely declined the offer since he considered the proposed salary insufficient.[59]

Quacks and Specialists

From Badauni's stray remarks about some of the lesser known *tabibs*, one gathers that they lived mainly on private practice. For example, while mentioning the antecedents of Shaikh Bina, an accomplished jarrah in Akbar's service, Badauni informs us that his father, Shaikh Hasan, was a medical practitioner of Sirhind (*mutatabbib-i Sirhindi*). Some of these physicians were no better than quacks. One such quack (*na-tabib*) of Fatehpur Sikri was responsible for the death of a well-known poet, Qaidi Shirazi. There were others like Jalal Tabib, who despite their standing in the profession had come to earn an ominous reputation.[60] Similar evidence can also be cited from the whole of the Mughal period suggesting that in places like Jaunpur, Khairabad, Banaras, Kalanaur and Hissar, there were private practitioners whose service could be procured on payment. Banarsidas, author of *Ardha-Kathanak*, informs us that in

1591, he was under the treatment of an 'expert physician' of Jaunpur for about one year. In 1602, Banarsidas fell ill with syphilis at Khairabad. On that occasion, he was under the treatment of a *nai* (barber) for six months. After his recovery, he awarded the nai handsomely. When Banarsidas's father fell ill at Banaras in 1616, he was examined by a local physician who declared the illness incurable.[61] We also know about a petty official of Shahjahan's time, who, on being bitten by a dog at Kalanaur, was carried by his relations to a local physician apparently considered a 'specialist' for treating such cases. According to our source the medicine that this 'specialist' administered to the patient was so potent that it turned the man almost insane for some time.[62]

From a letter written by an official stationed at Hissar in the early years of Aurangzeb's reign we come to know that at the time of writing it he was under the treatment of a local tabib, Balram Misr. The same official also refers to another local physician Manka Tabib who belonged to an old family of tabibs and possessed particular skill in the arts of pulse-reading and prescription. Apparently, Manka had an extensive practice at Hissar.[63] The fact that a French doctor, Martin, had established his private practice at Delhi during the second quarter of the eighteenth century[64] was yet another indication of the wide demand that existed for the services of the physicians in places like Delhi and Agra. Lastly, in this connection, it is worth remembering that Tavernier's oft-quoted observation testifying to the 'absence' of physicians only refers to the territories of Carnatic, Golconda and Bijapur. In this statement of Tavernier, it is clearly implied that his impression regarding the situation in northern India was quite different.[65]

Exclusive Clientele

From the cases cited above, it would appear that demand for the services of physicians mainly existed among (a) petty officials, (b) merchants and traders, and (c) persons belonging to the category of urban intelligentsia in general. Perhaps certain better-off sections of artisans would also be occasionally going to medical practitioners. At Agra, Delhi and Lahore, naturally, a majority of the persons consulting private doctors would belong to the categories of the petty *mansabdars* and gentlemen-troopers but in places like Banaras, Jaunpur, Kalanaur, Khairabad and Hissar the clientele of the medical practitioners would largely consist of traders, artisans and literati, who did not depend for their livelihood on feudal property.

It is quite understandable that the physicians attending upon the king and high nobles would be more prosperous. Such persons must have naturally enjoyed greater social prestige. Some of them like Jalaluddin Muzaffar Ardistani, Hakim 'Alimuddin (entitled Wazir Khan) and Hakim Daud (entitled Taqarrub Khan) even succeeded in rising to the positions of nobles. But it is worth remembering that the total number

of physicians enjoying feudal patronage was very small. They apparently represented a very small fraction of the total number of the people active in the profession. If one is to go by the number of physicians listed in the chronicles as serving the king and high nobles at different points of time, it would appear that after Akbar the feudal patronage to physicians was steadily shrinking.[66] Moreover, a majority of those enjoying feudal patronage were foreigners, mainly Persians. The shrinking of feudal patronage to physicians after Akbar appears to have mainly affected those of Indian origin.[67] It can thus be seen that towards the middle of the seventeenth century the total number of physicians living entirely on feudal patronage was negligible; and that these people were mainly foreigners, who should essentially be treated as members of the feudal class rather than those of the medical profession.

In State Employ

The real scope for large-scale employment of the physicians in the service of the state existed only in the lower echelons. They would be employed for instance as consultants looking after the health of troopers commanded by the ordinary mansabdars.[68] It is plausible that in many cases such consultants would be employed by the manasbdars on a part-time basis. One may imagine that the physicians attached to the contingents of mansabdars would also be responsible for treating the persons wounded in action which might suggest that their duties were quite strenuous and the service provided by them was indispensable for the efficient functioning of the imperial war machine. Apparently, the total perquisites of the tabibs employed by the mansabdars were quite attractive. In this connection one may take note of the evidence indicating a tendency on the part of the tabibs of smaller towns to seek employment under the mansabdars. In the *insha* collections, one often comes across copies of letters by local dignitaries recommending one or other tabib to a mansabdar for employment. One such letter, while praising the skill of the tabib, records: 'A large number of people have benefited by associating with him". This would suggest that the man seeking employment was already having considerable clientele in his own locality.[69]

Hospitals established by the state and nobles in some of the towns were yet another agency providing employment to the ordinary physicians. The hospitals run by the state in larger towns particularly for the benefit of travellers were established by Jahangir.[70] Such hospitals continued to the end of Aurangzeb's reign. If one goes by the information contained in the *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, it would appear that sometimes such hospitals existed even in small places if these happened to fall within the *altamgha* assignments of the high nobles. There is a reference in the *Mirat-i Ahmadi* to a complex containing a school,a mosque and a hospital built by Saif Khan at Jeetalpur in 1032 (A D 1622-1623).[71]

From these examples it can be inferred that the number of

ordinary physicians finding employment with the official agencies in minor positions was quite large. But, in view of the specialized nature of their work and essential service that they rendered, the position of physicians employed in the contingents of the mansabdars and *shifa-khanas* established by the state were identical with that of the members of other learned professions serving the state and the nobles as petty officials.

Having noticed the economic basis of the contradictions obtaining in Mughal India between the groups constituting the middle stratum and the owners of feudal property, we may now focus attention on certain aspects of the overall behaviour of these groups that suggest their identity as a distinct social stratum.

Crossing Traditional Barriers

In this respect evidence having a bearing on the degree of inter-professional mobility discernible among groups constituting the middle stratum would be of particular interest. There exists ample evidence that individual members of the groups had considerable opportunities to move on from one profession to another notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the caste system and other traditional divisions. A quite early example of this kind of mobility can be cited from the family history of Banarsidas, the author of *Ardha-Kathanak*. His grandfather, Muldas, was the *modi* of a Mughal nobleman of Humayun while his father, Kharagsen, served till 1569 as a fotedar under Sirimal Rai Dhanna, Diwan of Sulaiman Kararani. Subsequently, he deserted his post and set up some kind of business at Agra.[72] It is possible to cite many more cases pointing to growing mobility between the artisan and merchant groups on the one hand and learned professions like teaching, accountancy, record keeping, priesthood or literary writing, on the other. To give only a few random examples, three noted poets of Akbar's reign, namely, Ghubari, Mahmi and Qasim Hindi, were the sons respectively of a *baqqal* (grain-merchant), a *tir-gar* (arrow-maker), and a *fil-ban* (elephant-keeper) and Qazi Jalaluddin Multani was originally a trader who switched over, at a later stage in his career, to the teaching profession[73]. Similarly the prominent trading families of Rustamji and Abdul Ghafur of Surat were founded in the seventeenth century by persons of priestly background, while the father of Seth Dayaram, the broker of the Dutch East India Company in 1720s, was munshi at the Dutch warehouse at Surat.[74] One also comes across cases of persons who were engaged in commercial and literary professions simultaneously. The positions of *khazinedar* (treasurer) and diwan in the sarkars of the nobles were invariably held by money-changers who in addition to their official duties also conducted their normal business. From the first quarter of the eighteenth century we begin to come across many cases of traders and mahajans obtaining appointments in local administration as

chaudhuris and qanungos.[75]

There was another significant feature. In many cases, the clerical staff in the service of the king and nobles were recruited from the trading communities, the most conspicuous examples being furnished by the Khatris and Jain Banyas of northern India. The tradition of the Khatris taking up jobs as accountants and record keepers in the service of the feudal authorities goes back to the middle of the fifteenth century. Guru Nanak's father, a Bedi Khatri, was an accountant under a local chief.[76] A large number of Khatris were in the employment of the state and nobles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Side by side with their rise in the clerical jobs under the Mughals, the Khatris continued to participate in trade and commerce on a big scale. Writing in 1643, Manrique testified to the enormous wealth possessed by the Khatri traders of northern India.[77] By the end of the seventeenth century, a large number of Khatri families had settled in the commercial centres of Gujarat.[78] The Khatris who settled in places like Ahmadabad and Surat followed the professions of trade as well as accountancy. Among these people, a considerable degree of caste solidarity existed. This is borne out by an episode recorded by I'timad Ali Khan. On 15 July 1726, the *mutasaddi* of Surat sent his men to arrest Kishan Das Bhatiya, the diwan of a deceased noble. Failing to apprehend Kishan Das, they took into custody one of his neighbours. This greatly provoked Khatris who came out to resist the troops. Armed clashes ensued, which led to the suspension of business in the whole town. The situation could return to normal only after Kishan Das agreed to meet the mutasaddi personally.[79] Similar evidence is also available about the Jain Banyas settled in the Gangetic plains[80], tending to suggest that close social and cultural ties existed between the mercantile and professional groups.

Two-fold Mobility

The impression that various mercantile and professional groups essentially represented one and the same social category is further heightened by the remarkable extent of geographical mobility among the individuals belonging to groups constituting the middle stratum in Mughal India. In many cases migration of individuals from one place to another synchronized with a change in their professions. A well-known example of this kind of two-fold mobility was the stages through which the family of Jagat Seths of Murshidabad rose to prominence. This family originally belonged to Nagaur (Rajasthan). One of their ancestors, Hiranand Shah, a sarraf by profession, migrated to Patna and then to Murshidabad towards the middle of the seventeenth century. It was in the course of their moving from Nagaur to Murshidabad that they entered the service of the Mughal state as khazinedars which made them so rich and important.[81] The history of the family of Banarsidas, the author of *Ardha-Kathanak*, represents yet another case of the same

nature, dating back to the sixteenth century.[82]

The way in which members of the family of Jadudas, the first English broker at Surat got dispersed to different stations where the English had their establishments and sought to monopolize positions of brokers at all these places is a unique case pointing to the remarkable degree of geographical mobility existing in the seventeenth century. According to Mundy, in 1632, the English brokers at Surat, Patna, Agra, Broach and Burhanpur belonged to the same family[83] A similar picture emerges from the evidence relating to the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The *Miratu-l Haqaiq* mentions a number of sarrafs of Ahmadabad and Surat serving as diwans or khazinedars in the royal establishments as well as in the sarkars of the nobles at Delhi. An interesting case is that of Banarsidas who, towards November 1726, was working at the court as *wakil* while his son, Bhukandas, looked after his family's business at Surat.[84]

Mercantile-Professional Linkage

There is also ample evidence available indicating the movement of whole communities or clans of merchants and traders from one part of the country to another. We have already noticed the existence of considerable population of Khatri traders at Surat. It can be inferred that these people came to Gujarat from the Punjab and the Gangetic plains during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, there are also allusions to colonies of Kashmiri and Central Asian traders at Surat.[85] From Ali Muhammad Khan's description of a strike in 1713 by the Gujarati sarrafs having their shops "inside the *Urdu-i mualla*" (Imperial Court) one gets the impression that, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, a sizable community of Gujarati sarrafs did their business in Delhi.[86] This kind of movement of whole groups and communities of traders from one region to another was discernible as early as the first half of the sixteenth century. Moreover,this phenomenon was not confined to big adminstrative or commercial centres like Delhi, Agra, Ahmadabad, and Surat. The author of *Ardha-Kathanak* refers to a whole locality at Fatehpur which consisted exclusively of Oswal traders, who, as their group designation indicated, originally belonged to a small place in Marwar.[87]

A significant aspect of geographical mobility among the groups constituting the middle stratum was the tendency on the part of the individuals belonging to the category of urban intelligentsia to move from one place to another in search of suitable employment. During his service career, an average accountant, recordkeeper, or *insha* writer would be serving in such far-flung places as Kabul, Lahore, Agra, Gujarat, Bengal and Deccan. This tendency would stem mainly from three factors: (a) establishment of a uniform pattern of local administration all over the empire with Persian as the official language; (b) the demand for the

services of persons well-versed in accountancy, insha and recordkeeping being greater than the available personnel; (c) the high degree of freedom which the office workers seem to have enjoyed in relinquishing or accepting a job.

To illustrate the manner in which a person possessing required training in accountancy and Persian insha moved from place to place changing frequently his employers, one may refer to the career of Surat Singh's brother, Ganga Ram. He was born and brought up at Natesari in the pargana Patti Haibatpur (now Patti in Amritsar district). The first job taken up by Ganga Ram was that of the *waqa 'i nigar* of Lahore. Subsequently, he became a pargana official in Gujarat. After his return from Gujarat he remained unemployed for some time but eventually became the 'amil of pargana Jahangirpur, in which position he served for a long time. On leaving Jahangirpur, Ganga Ram accepted a position in the *khalisa* establishment of pargana Batala. Some time later, he shifted from Batala to Bhatinda to serve as the diwan of a certain noble, Rai Todar Mal. At a still later stage, he went to Agra as the wakil of another noble Rai Behari Mal. On his return from Agra, he stayed at Lahore for some time and then went to Kabul where he took up service as *khan-i saman* in the sarkar of Safshikan Khan. But within a few months of accepting employment under Safshikan Khan, he became dissatisfied with him on account of his relying too much on the advice of his khazinedar and left his service. It would appear that towards the end of his career Ganga Ram was in the service of 'Aqil Khan.[88]

Origins of Modern Middle Class

This discussion of the economic basis of the mercantile and professional groups and the degree of professional and geographical mobility displayed by them has shown that both these sections had an essentially common position in society. Our evidence has further suggested that these groups may be treated as constituting a social category that subsisted largely on appropriation based on non-feudal property.

It would of course be unreasonable to be dogmatic when a number of important factors are unknown or barely discernible, and when the facts that I have adduced are necessarily only a part of the total evidence. However, I should like to end here with the hope that this article by bringing out some features that have not been given sufficient attention so far, would provoke further enquiry into that most interesting subject, the origins of the modern Indian middle class.

1 Historians are sharply divided on the question whether it would be correct to use the concept 'feudalism' for explaining the nature of economic structure obtaining in Mughal India. In this respect, the use of the concept 'feudalism' as a tool of analysis is not to be equated with the virtual acceptance of the formula of classical develop-

ment: Takahashi, in any case, suggests that the truly representative feudal form might be discoverd in Asian societies (*The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism—A Symposium* London, 1954, p 35). This suggestion appears to have sanction in the post-1857 writings of Marx and Engels. As Irfan Habib has shown in a different context, a passage in *Anti-Duhring* can be interpreted as indicating that, according to Engels, the Turkish conquest led to the introduction of feudalism in India ("Problems of Marxist Historical Analysis", *Enquiry*, New Series, vol III, no 2,1969, p 59), For a rather cursory attempt at describing the distinctive features of Indian feudalism see my paper "Social Contradictions of Indian Feudalism in Mughal India", *The Radical Review*, vol 3, no 2, Madras, April-June, 1972, p 12.

2 Cf. Moreland, *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, reprint, Delhi 1972; C W Smith, "The Middle Class in the Mughal Empire", *Islamic Culture*, October 1944; Irfan Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalist Development in the Economy of Mughal India,", *Enquiry*, New Series, vol III, no 3, Winter, 1971; Chicherov, *India; Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries*, Moscow 1971; Pavlov, *The Indian Capitalist Class:A Historical Study*, English edn, Delhi 1964; Satish Chandra, "Some Aspects of the Growth of Money Economy in India during Seventeenth Century", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* vol III, no 4, December 1966.

3 *India at the Death of Akbar*, reprint, Delhi 1962, pp 247-48. According to Moreland, the exceptional prosperity of the merchants on the coast

> is probably to be explained by the privileged status of the Moslem merchants, and by their importance for the maintenance of the customs revenue, and the supply o rare commodities; being free to live well, they acted in accordance with their inclinations, while the merchants of the interior were very far from being free, and led the quiet and unostentatious life required by the *circumstances of their position.*

For Moreland's view of the control exercised by the imperial administration on the economic life of the people, see *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, New Delhi 1972,p 233: "in the India of our period the working of the administration was, next to the rainfall, the most important factor in the economic life of the country."

4 Chicherov, op cit., p 236.

5 "Potentialities of Capitalist Development in the Economy of Mughal India", *Enquiry*, New Series, vol III, no 3, Winter, 1971, p 55.

6 K N Raj, "Politics and Economics of Intermediate Regimes", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol VIII, no 27, 7 July 1973, p 1191.

7 E M S Namboodiripad, "More on Intermediate Regimes", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol VIII, no 45, 1 December 1973, p 2136.

8 Cf. Ashin Das Gupta, *Presidential Address*, Medieval India section, Indian History Congress, Calcutta 1974, p 11.

9 Dilbagh Singh, "Role of the Mahajans in Rural Economy of Rajasthan", *Social Scientist 22*, May 1974.

10 *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp 73, 77, 78.

11 KN Raj, "Politics and Economics of Intermediate Regimes", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol VIII, no 27, 7 July 1973, p 1191.

12 Cf. *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, MS. Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) f. 181b, 151b. For a note on Surat Singh's biography, see Athar Ali, "Sidelight on Ideological and Religious Attitudes in the Punjab during the 17th Century", *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 1969, p 314.

13 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 176a.

14 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 122a.

15 Towards 1730, the salary of an *'amil* in the Amber territory ranged from Rs 1400 per annum in *paragana* Malarna to Rs 1600 per annum in *paragana* Malpura. *Arhsattas*, *paragana* Malarna VS 1787/1730 and *pargana* Malpura VS 1788/1731 (For references to the *Arhsattas*, I am beholden to my colleague, S P Gupta).

16 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 75a and b.

17 *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, mainly comprising of a diary of an official, I'timad Ali Khan, for the period 18 Safar 1130 (21 January 1717) to 27 Jumada I, 1139 (19 February 1727) MS. Fraser, no 124, Bodleian Library, Oxford, f. 139a.

18 *Shah Waliullah Dahlvi Ke Siyasi Maktubat*, Aligarh 1950, p 51.

19 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 181b.

20 *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, f. 152b.

21 Bhimsen, *Tarikh-i Dilkusha*, JN Sarkar (tr.) Bombay 1972, p 31.

22 I have worked out this figure on the diary of information containad in I'timad Ali Khan who was staying at Surat during this time. Details of the amounts paid by individual officials are as follows:

Name	*Office*	*Amount in rupees*	*Folios*
Rawal	*Muharrir sar daftar Kachehri*	70 000	344b
Atma Ram	*Wakil* of a noble	50 000	324a
Jagat Rai	*Diwan* of Rustam Ali Khan	50 000	325a
Murli Dhar	*Diwan* of Hamid Ali Khan	25 000	392a
Kishor Das	Ex-servant of Safdar Khan Babi	2 00 000	330a
Sur Das	*Diwan* of the Maratha chief Kantha	8 000	339b
Bansi Dhar	*Amil* of another Maratha chief	1 50 000	348b
Lakhmi Chand	*Naib kotha parcha*	20 000	280a
		5 73 000	

28 Cf. *Muharba-i Muhammad Shah w Nadir Shah*, a day-to-day account of Nadir Shah's stay at Delhi by an anonymous writer, who, apparently, had first-hand information about the way amount levied by Nadir Shah was being collected. MS. Bodleian, Ethe 1/263. Details of extortions from 11 richer officials are as follows:-

Name	*Office*	*Amount in rupees*	*Date of realization*
Khushal Chand	*Peshkar* of *Mir Bakhshi*	2 75 000	9 Muharram 1152H/18 April 1739
Shaikh S'adullah	*Diwan-i tan*	2 50 000	..
Nagar Mal	*Diwan-i khalisah*	3 50 000	..
Sita Ram	*Khazanchi* of the *Khazana-i 'amrah*	2 50 000	..
Rai Nondah	*Peshkar-i diwan-i tan*	1 50 000	..
Sujan Rai	*Wakil* of Ali Dost Khan	1 50 000	..
Rai Nondah	On behalf of the *muharrirs* of *khalisah*	2 75 000	..
Raja Majlis Ram	*Diwan* of Itimaduddaulah	4 00 000	27 Muharram 1152/ 6 May 1739
Sita Ram	*Khazanchi* of Itimaduddaulah	6 00 000	..
Rai Nondah, s/o Rai Bhok Chand	*Peshkar-i khalisa*	2 00 000	..
Muinuddin Khan	*Diwan-i buyutat*	50 000	..
		31 00 000	

24 Nawal Kishore, *Ain Akbari*, vol I, p 132. Cf. Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, Archibald Constable, (tr.) 1916, pp 215-16, who includes this category of the officials among the 'rauzindars'.

25 For the *qanungo*'s salary in the districts of Bihar at the time of Permanent Settlement see "George Shee to the Court of Directors", Macartney Papers, no 91, p 35, cited by B K Sinha, "The Office of *Qanungos* in Bihar", *Bengal Past and Present*, vol LXXXVI, p I, 1967, p 12.

26 Cf. Balkrishn Brahman's letter to a relation contained in the collection of *Maktubat* MS., Rieu iii, 837, Add. 16859, f.61b.

27 *Arhsatta, pargana* Niwai: 1797 V S/A D 1740.

28 *Arhsatta, pargana* Malpura: 1789 V S/A D 1732.

29 *Arhsatta, pargana* Malpura: 1787 V S/AD 1730.

30 On the authority of *Khulasat-us Siyaq*, N A Siddiqi holds that the *karori* was paid 5% commission as collection perquisites. Apparently, in this respect he was at par with *'amil*, who was also entitled to 5% of total collection as commission (cf. *The Land Revenue Administration of the Mughals*, Bombay 1970, pp 81, 82). From this one may guess that some kind of parity would obtain in their salaries as well.

31 *Arhsatta, pargana* Malarna: 1787 V S/AD 1730: The salary of the *amin* is given as Rs 116/8 per month.

32 Balkrishn Brahman's letter to Har L'al, *Maktubat*, f. 58 a and b. In the eighth regnal year of Aurangzeb, Saiyed Salih, who worked as an accountant under the *'amil* of *pargana* Bhatnir was getting Rs 50 per month as his salary.

33 *Waqa-i Ajmer*, Rajab, 21st regnal year, Aligarh transcript, p 27, cited by Irfan Habib, 'Usury in Medieval India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol VI-no 4 July 1964, p 413.

34 *Nigarnama-i Munshi*, f. 99b, cited by Irfan Habib, "Banking in Mughal India", *Contributions to Indian Economic History*, edited by Tapan Roychaudhuri, Calcutta 1960, p 7

35 *Maktubat*, ff. 27a and b.

36 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f.112a and b.

37 Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, p 276; N A Siddiqi, *The Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals*, pp 83-84.

38 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, ff. 151 b-152a. Apparently, by the time Aurangzeb came to the throne, the *pargana amin* had become as corrupt and unreliable as any other category of revenue officials. Compare Aurangzeb's *farman* to Rasikdas, art. XI, where it is laid down as one of the tasks of the auditors of village accounts to discover how much the *amins* and *'amils* realized from the peasants. Cf. *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, p 173.

39 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 112a and b.

40 Bhimsen, *Tarikh-i Dilkusha*, J N Sarkar, (tr.) Bombay 1972, pp 111-112.

41 It seems that feasts attended by officials belonging to different communities were quite common. Compare *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, ff. 180b-181a, 183b, 382a.

42 Robert Eric Frykenberg, "Transitional Process of Power in South India," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol I, no 2, 1963.

43 Shireen Moosvi, "The Magnitude of the Land-Revenue Demand and the Income of the Mughal Ruling Class under Akbar", *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, vol IV (in the press).

44 *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. I no 2, 1963,

45 *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp 242, 247-48

46 *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, vol I, Bombay, pp 274, 278.

47 Cf. Athar Ali, *The Mughal Empire in History*, Presidential Address, Medieval India Section, Indian History Congress, 1972, p 8.

48 *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Elliot (tr.); *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians* John Dawson (ed.) vol III, reprint, Allahabad, p 183.

49 Cf. Irfan Habib, "Evidence for Sixteenth- century Agrarian Conditions in *Guru Granth Saheb*", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol I, no 3, January-March 1964.

50 *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, vol II, Calcutta, 1869, pp 189-90, Wolsley Haig (tr.) pp 192-93.

51 *Akbar Nama*, vol III, p 57.

52 *Char Chamani Barhaman*, Add. 16, 863, f. 32a,cited by Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, p 280, n 39.

53 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, f. 128a.

54 *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, vol I, p 279.

55 Bhimsen, *Nuskha-i Dilkusha*,MS., British Museum, Rieu, 271, or 23, f. 83d.

56 *Miratu-l Haqaiq* f. 372a.

57 *India at the Death of Akbar*, p 79.

58 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, ff. 48b, 171a.

59 Niccolao Manucci, *Storia Do Mogor or Mughal India*, 1653-1708, William Irvine (tr). vol II, London, 1907, pp 176, 179, 214, 227.

60 *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, vol III, pp 170, 315, 163.

61 *Ardha-Kathanak*, R C Sharma (tr.) *Indica*, vol 7, no 1, Bombay, pp 57, 64, 110.

62 *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, ff. 125b-126a.

63 Balkrishn Brahman's letter, *Maktubat*, ff. 125a, 31a and b.

64 W Irvine, *Later Mughals*, vol I, J N Sarkar (ed.) p 274.

65 Tavernier, *Travels in India*, V Ball (tr.) London 1889, pp 300-301, Cf. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p 79, n 1 and B B Misra, *The Indian Middle Classes*, p 59.

66 The total number of 'distinguished' physicians of Akbar's reign mentioned by Abul Fazl, Badauni and Nizamuddin Ahmad is 39, while the corresponding figure for Shahjahan's reign based on the lists given in the *Badshah Nama* is 11 only.

67 The relative strength of the Indians and Persians among the physicians mentioned by the chronicles as serving the king and high nobility under Akbar and Shahjahan respectively can be gauged from the following chart, which has been prepared with the help of the lists given in *Ain-i Akbari*, *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh* and *Badshah Nama* of Lahori:

	Persians	*Indians*	*Others*	*Total*
Under Akbar	14	12	13	39
Under Shahjahan	7	3	1	11

(I am grateful to Inayat Ali Zaidi, Research Fellow, Department of History AMU, for help in preparing this chart.)

68 In the *Mirza Nama*, a satirical treatise compiled by a certain Mirza Kamran (not to be confused with Babur's son) probably some time during Jahangir's reign (there is a reference to Mirza Rafi Shirazi who compiled his book, *Tazkirat al-Muluk* in 1017 H (A D 1608-1609 as a contemporary), there is a casual remark advising a *mirza* (gentleman-trooper?) that as long as he was in Hindustan, he should avoid falling ill so that he may not be obliged to see the physician of his *mansabdar* (*tabib-i mansab-darash*). Cf. *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1913.

69 Balkrishn Brahman's letter, *Maktubat*, f. 31b.

70 Jahangir's twelve edicts, cf. *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, Aligarh 1864, p 4.

71 *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, vol I, pp 376,209.

72 *Indica*, vol 7, no 1, Bombay, pp 52, 55-56.

73 *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, vol III, pp 78, 242, 261, 289.

74 Ashin Das Gupta, "The Merchants of Surat" in *Elites in South Asia*, Edmund Leach and S N Mukherjee (eds.) p 206.

75 Cf. Dilbagh Singh, "Role of the Mahajans in Rural Economy of Rajasthan" *Social Scientist 22*, May 1974, pp 26-27.

76 Cf. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, vol I, New Delhi 1963, pp 21-22.

77 Cf. *Travels of Fray Sabastian Manrique*, C E Luard and H. Hosten (trs.) 1927, vol II, p 156, cited by B B Misra, *The Indian Middle Classes*, pp 23-24.

78 Cf. *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, p 355b: On 16 September 1725, I 'timad Ali Khan records the razing, by Hamid Ali Khan's order, of forty houses at Ahmadabad belonging to rich Khatris.

79 *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, f. 430.

80 Cf. *Ardha-Kathanak*, (tr.) in *Indica*, vol 7, no 1. Banarsidas's father Kharagsen, who belonged to a family of Jain traders was serving during 1563-69 as a *fotedar* of four *parganas* in Bihar. According to Banarsidas, five hundred Jains of Singharb *gotra* were serving as fotedars in the Afghan kingdom of Bengal and Bihar about this time.

81 B B Misra, *The Indian Middle Classes*, p 24.

82 *Indica*, vol 7, Nos 1-2.

83 Cf. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p 157, n 1.

84 *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, ff 482a, 485a.

85 On 6 August 1725, Hamid Ali Khan, a rebel, extorted Rs 50,000 from 'the Mughal and Kashmiri merchants'. *Miratu-l Haqaiq*, f. 348b.

86 *Mirat-i Ahmadi*, vol 1 p 433.

87 *Indica*, vol 7, no 1, p 60 and n 107.

88 Cf. *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, ff. 121b-122a, 126a, 154b-155a, 162a-164b.